COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE IN OLIVER GOLDSMITH'S MAJOR WORKS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Oliver Goldsmith began his writing career as a reviewer and an essayist.[1] He had many opportunities to read with a critical eye various literary works and to deal with the moral, social, and political issues of his time. Throughout his career Goldsmith was true to his promise in his opening editorial to The Bee, the weekly magazine he started in October, 1759:

> Like The BEE, which I had taken for the title of my paper, I would rove from flower to flower, with seeming inattention, but concealed choice, expatiate over all the beauties of the season, and make my industry my amusement.[2] (1:354n)

A quick look at some of the subjects discussed in The Bee reveals that, despite the miscellaneousness of its articles, all of them discuss social or literary problems: "Remarks on our Theatres," "On Dress," "On the Use of Language," "The Comic Elegy on that Glory of her Sex, Mrs. Mary Blaize," and "Of the Opera in England." In addition to the reviews and essays, Goldsmith wrote biographies, a novel, poems, plays, prefaces, and introductions, and a few miscellaneous pieces.

This study argues that Goldsmith's major fictional works, taken individually or collectively, reveal a great concern with the family as a very important social entity, which simultaneously takes care of the individualistic and social interests of its members. At the same time, Goldsmith's works satirize individualistic traits of characters, especially those who do not live in a family or who come from partial families. The principal works this study discusses are The Citizen of the World, The Vicar of Wakefield, The Traveller, The Deserted Village, The Good Natur'd Man, and She Stoops to Conquer. In each of these works, there is a conflict between the family and some other characters who conduct their lives on purely individualistic and selfish bases. I will argue that there is enough evidence in these works showing that the family theme unites each work and links it to the other works. I will also show that Goldsmith gives priorty and preference to the family over individualism. In Goldsmith's major works the characters who represent individualism, such as Squire Thornhill and Tony Lumpkin, are laughed at, and the characters who are members of stable and harmonious families, such as Kate Hardcastle,end up living happily.

The discussion in this and the ensuing chapters will focus on four components which contribute to forming a family: courtship, marriage, the home, and friendship. I think that the focus on the family serves three purposes. First, it takes care of the unity and development of each

work, and links it to the other works. Second, it shows Goldsmith's dissatisfaction with the increasing emphasis on individualism, which started in the late seventeenth century and continued during the eighteenth century. Third, since the exact balance between the individual and the social group is difficult to obtain, then any deviation from this balance would enable Goldsmith to use either comedy or satire to criticize the character's mistakes. If the character tends to separate himself from the family, like Tony Lumpkin, then he becomes a target of comedy or satire, depending on how far he distances himself from the family. If the character is excessively and irrationally good-natured (like young Honeywood in The Good Natur'd Man), he will be laughed at or satirized.

The rest of this chapter will focus on the following points: first, most social historians think that there was an increasing emphasis on individualism which started in the late seventeenth century and continued throughout the eighteenth century. Second, I will argue that in his major works, Goldsmith is against individualism and for defending the family as socially more appropriate and constructive. Thus, the purpose of including social historians like Lawrence Stone is to present the widely held opinion that individualism was a new and powerful rising social power during the eighteenth century.[3] Then, the rest of the this study will argue that in each of Goldsmith's major works there are characters who represent individualism compared to

others who stand for the family. Ultimately, family life and manners are favored over individualistic approaches.

Chapeter II concentrates on The Citizen of the World. I will discuss how the story of Lien Chi Altangi and his family provides narrative continuity to the miscellaneous 123 letters of The Citizen. Chapter II will also focus on Altangi as a character who plays the roles of a reasonable and emotional man. His problem is that he unknowingly plays the two roles separately. I will argue that taken to the extreme, reason becomes associated with individualism, while too much emotion lead to more sociability. Goldsmith's works satirize both extremes and call for a middle position which could be appropriately presented by family life. Therefore, The Citizen marks the beginning of Goldsmith's concern with the family as an important theme which draws his works together, and shows the problem of the decline of the family in the eighteenth-century society. In The Citizen, the reader waits for the coming letters to see what happened to Hingpo or Altangi's family.[4] We read the letters trying to find out, among other things, what is going to happen next in terms of Altangi's family story. When he began The Citizen, Goldsmith did not have any overall plan in mind. His agreement with Newbery was "to furnish papers on amusing character twice a week"[5] (2: IX).

The family theme in Goldsmith's subsequent works is used for additional purposes. For example, the story of the Primrose family in The Vicar pulls the work together as it

does in The Citizen, although much more firmly. The Citizen has no plot, while The Vicar is very carefully planed, as Frederick W. Hilles has shown.[6] What becomes more important throughout the novel is the conflict between the family and Squire Thornhill. Therefore, in chapter III, I argue that in The Vicar of Wakefield the story of the Primrose family both pulls the novel together as it concentrates on the conflict between the family and individualism, represented by Squire Thornhill. Two major elements prepare for the confrontation between the family and the Squire: first, the family accidentally losing its fortune, and second Olivia and Sophia being at the appropriate age to get married. As a result, the family needs a new source of living, besides Dr. Primrose's low income, and the family tries to find good husbands for Olivia and Sophia. The moment the Squire visits the family is the beginning of a long period of misfortunes for the family members. Goldsmith uses courtship between the Squire and Olivia as a vehicle to reveal the truely negative nature of the individualistic Squire and the importance of the family for all its members. Each of the Primroses is very careful to keep the family united, the thing which ultimately serves his own personal interests and the constructive social role of his family.

The family theme recurs in Goldsmith's two major poems: The Traveller (1764) and The Deserted Village (1770). The two poems, discussed in chapter IV, deal with another side of family affairs. Both poems discuss the abuse of luxury

at the hands of the few and its harmful influences on the overall society. The Traveller discusses the problem of an English traveler who has gone to Europe looking for a better life. But to his disappointment he finds that the people in the four European countries he visits, or imagines visiting, suffer badly because of the unwise use of luxury. The traveler laments having left the family life and expresses his great desire to reunite with his family, where he believes he can find a simple and happy existence. In a more direct way, The Deserted Village discusses the negative influence of luxury on the families of an English village named Auburn. The speaker condemns the act of depopulating the village and destroying its peaceful life at the hands of a wealthy individual. This individual is going to use the whole land of the village for his own selfish and luxurious needs. The poem reveals the great catastrophe which happened to the families who were forced to leave their homes and lands. Therefore, similar to The Vicar, the two poems discuss family problems which mainly happen because of the individualistic tendencies in the English society. In The Vicar, the focus is on the harmful influence of an evil individual like Squire Thornhill and on a family which tries to secure sound living and good marriages for its daughters. Here, in the poems, the focus is more on the economic side. Luxury or extra wealth is used badly so that it hurts the poor part of society, where family ties are still alive and important.

Working again with the family theme in his two plays, The Good Natur'd Man and She Stoops to Conquer, Goldsmith argues that family background has a vast influence on people. Young Honeywood in The Good Natur'd Man is excessively generous and sociable. Being an orphan, Honeywood never had a chance to live a normal family life. As a result, he befriends everybody, looking for love and protection. If Squire Thornhill and the wealthy individual in The Deserted Village are too individualistic, unlike them Honeywood goes to the other extreme in being much too sociable. Therefore, he loses touch with common sense and reasonable thinking, which usually govern an ordinary person's life. Some other characters in The Good Natur'd Man suffer from the problems of belonging to partial families. In part 1 of chapter V, I argue that because Honeywood and other characters like Olivia did not have ordinary and stable family lives, they face difficult social problems. The second part of chapter V deals with She Stoops to Conquer, Goldsmith's second comedy and his last major work. This play shows the fully developed stage of Goldsmith's artistic abilities. It discusses other sides of family problems. Although they live under the same roof as members of the Hardcastle family, Kate Hardcastle and Tony Lumpkin represent the family theme and individualism, respectively. The play makes it clear that the major difference between the two characters which makes them of different natures is their familial backgrounds. Tony is

the son of Mrs. Hardcastle from a previous marriage, while Kate is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle. As a result, Tony is an individualistic, selfish, spoiled, and corrupted person, whereas Kate shrewdly keeps the balance between her personal needs and her role as a member of the family. To satisfy his individualistic desires, Tony creates all kinds of problems for the family. On the contrary, Kate always plays a constructive role for herself and the family's future.

Thus, my interpretation of Goldsmith's major fictional works focuses on the conflict between the family as the most important social institution and the purely individualistic tendencies of certain characters. I argue that this conflict occurs throughout Goldsmith's major works. Although there is no obvious conflict between the family and individualism in The Citizen of the World, I see this work as the beginning of a larger plan by Goldsmith to discuss the conflict between the family and individualism. The importance of The Citizen stems from the frame tale of Altangi's family, which pulls the work together and accounts for the continuity of the narrative. I believe that Goldsmith's plan becomes clearer if we read his major works chronologically. My interpretation does not obliterate or contradict many other readings of Goldsmith, especially the satiric and ironic interpretations. For example, I find Ricardo Quintana's, Robert Hopkins's, and Peter Dixon's interpretations valid and important, although their

conclusions are somewhat different.[7] However, I think that their discussions focus mainly on how Goldsmith deals with certain problems in his works, while my interpretation centers on why Goldsmith presents these problems. Therefore, what is new about my approach in this study is the attempt to show Goldsmith's ideological intent in writing his works. I agree with John Bender's announcement that he wants to "reach beyond the assumption that literature and art merely reflect institutions and attitudes: art, culture, and society are not separate or separable"[8] (1). I believe that Goldsmith's works, discussed in this study, are primary historical and ideological documents. I also believe that Goldsmith was a conservative thinker who used the available ideas of his age to point at future dangers to his society. In other words, Goldsmith was aware of the risks of sacrificing the family for the sake of individualism. To know exactly why Goldsmith defended the family and considered it the most important social institution, one need only look around to see the various social problems with which Western societies nowadays live. Goldsmith's works are strong social and political warning statements against what he saw as the undesirable move towards individualism during the eighteenth century, though, of course, they are also works of literary art.

Writing during the second half of the eighteenth century, Oliver Goldsmith was preceded by an age of changing

attitudes towards individualism most of which mainly started in the late seventeenth century. Most social historians of the period agree that considerable social changes started to take place after 1660 and continued throughout the eighteenth century. Goldsmith was not completely satisfied with the ongoing movement towards individualism which started to take place in late seventeenth century England. Many late seventeenth--and eighteenth--century writers were encouraging more individualism at the expense of what Ian Watt calls "collective entities" such as the family. Lawrence Stone describes the gradual changes in late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as follows:

> The sixteenth-century trend towards increasingly authoritarian relationships within the middle-and upper-class family was progressively overtaken in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by an opposite trend toward greater freedom for children and a rather more equal partnership between spouses. (221)

The main cause underlying these developments is what Stone calls "the spirit of secular individualism emerging out of the ashes of religious enthusiasm after 1660" (227). According to Stone, there are three major aspects of individualism: first, the remarkable interest in writing about "intimate thoughts and feelings in both fiction and non-fiction." The second aspect was "the growing resistance to attempts to put extreme pressure on the individual's body

and soul" (229). Third, there was "a progressive reorientation of culture towards pursuit of pleasure in this world, rather than postponement of gratification until the next" (232). Stone considers this change to be "One of the most important intellectual innovations of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (236).

Such a notable tendency towards individualism had an obvious influence on family relationships, especially the questioning of the authority of the father in the family. Stone designates a section called "Attacks on Patriarchy" (239-244) to explain that the decline of the father's authority was a result of more independence for the members of the family. He cites numerous examples of writings which encourage the parents to treat their children with respect as they expect their children to do. Respect, love, and obedience should be reciprocal among all family members. Another influence of individualism was the decline of family prayers, as Stone states:

> The general decline in religious enthusiasm in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries carried away with it the role of the husband and father as the religious head of the household, symbolized by the regular assembly of all members, often twice a day, to hear him lead the family in prayer and obtain his blessing. (245)

The causes of the rise of individualism are complex and gradual. Stone notices that "they involve a complex of

semi-independent developments spread out over more than a century, each evolving at its own tempo" (258).

It might be helpful to compare the changes that happened in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the dominant social characteristics of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries:

> This was a society where neither individual autonomy nor privacy were respected as desirable ideals. It was generally agreed that the interests of the group, whether that of the kin, the village, or later the state, took priority over the wishes of the individual and the achievements of his particular ends. (Stone, 4)

In his important study, The Rise of The Novel, Ian Watt persuasively argues that the conflict between individualism and collective unities such as the family had been resolved conclusively in favor of individualism.[9] I think that Watt's discussion of the rise of the novel is strongly relevant to my central discussion of the rise of individualism. I follow Watt's discussion to argue that individualism was the new rising power which started to be gradually influential in the late seventeenth century. I will also argue that individualism had grown at the expense of collective social institutions like the church and the family. My main focus, though, is going to be on how Goldsmith viewed the conflict especifically his representation of the negative influence of individualism on

the family. In each of the works discussed in this study, I will show that Goldsmith favored the family over individualism, and he considered individualism to be a serious threat to the family.

I agree with Michael McKeon that Watt's study is mainly concerned with the social and literary changes of the early eighteenth-century:

> with an insistence that pervades the entire book, Watt is concerned to argue a connection between the rise of the novel and the transformation of the social context of early eighteenth-century England. The philosophical, the novelistic, and the socioeconomic are united during this period in their validation of individual experience, of one or another sort of 'individualism,' which is manifested in the realm of the social by a number of inseparable phenomena.[10] (2)

McKeon's argument reinforces Watt's announcement early in The Rise Of the Novel that the early eighteenth-century novelists were more "beneficiaries" of the literary and social situation than its inventors. Watt assumes that

> the appearance of our first three novelists within a single generation was probably not sheer accident, and that their geniuses could not have created the new form unless the conditions of the time had also been favourable, it attempts to discover what these favourable conditions in the literary and social

> situation were, and in what ways Defoe, Richardson and Fielding were its beneficiaries. (9)

Thus, Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding did not create the literary and social conditions of their time, but they reflected it in their novels. My interpretation of Goldsmith's major fictional works will show that he both reflected the existent social and literary conditions of his times and made it his great concern to change those conditions. Therefore, I use Watt's argument to prove that individualism was the new and powerful rising social, economic, and literary power during the eighteenth century.

According to Watt, eighteenth-century society was no longer based on any collective unit like the family or the church but entirely on the individual:

> For those fully exposed to the new economic order, the effective entity on which social arrangements were now based was no longer the family, nor the church, nor the guild, nor the township, nor any other collective unit, but the individual: he alone was primarily responsible for determining his own economic, social, political and religious roles. (61)

Incidentally, Watt's argument stands in sharp contrast to Goldsmith's advertisement for The Vicar of Wakefield where he says that "The hero of this piece unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth; he is a priest, an husbandman, and the father of a family" (4: 14).

Discussing Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding, Watt focuses on the sense of challenge which characterizes the relationship between the characters and their social and economic surroundings. They live every moment of their lives asserting their individualism. Watt believes that Defoe's main characters embody "economic individualism" (63); they have little or no place for passions, feelings, or sentiments of any kind:

> Crusoe, one feels, is not bound to his country by sentimental ties, any more than to his family; he is satisfied by people, whatever their nationality, who are good to do business with; and he feels, like Moll Flanders, that 'with money in the pocket one is at home anywhere'. (66)

Watt's theory of "formal realism" places the social conflict mainly between the individual, guided by reason, and the status quo. Pamela is reasonable enough not be tempted by the rakish squire. What is new in Pamela is Richardson's attributing "chastity as a supreme value" "to a servant girl" (Watt, 165-66). Instead of leading to her surrender, Pamela's isolation gives her a full opportunity to depend on her personal judgment in defending her virtue. This new approach in handling one's affairs works on two levels: personal and public. The personal suffering endured in reaching a reasonable judgment should be privately handled. On the contrary, when expressed publicly, personal sentiments are governed by rationality.

In her letters, Pamela does not hide the great agonies she experiences until she reaches the final triumph. At the same time, she hides her weaknesses or employs them wisely when dealing with Mr. B. Through purely personal experience, she becomes aware of her own strengths and weaknesses, and she uses both to convince Mr. B. of her agenda. Pamela becomes confident of her abilities to the degree of not asking for any help from others.[11]

Watt's focal point is the progress of the middle class toward economic and social independence. In Defoe, as Watt argues, it is the "Rational scrutiny of one's own economic interest [which] may lead one to be as little bound by national as by family ties" (66). In Richardson, the emotions and sentiments are no longer guided by the traditional criteria, what Watt calls "the body of past assumptions and traditional beliefs" (12). Pamela succeeds because she chooses the right judgments for her life. On the other hand, Clarissa's agonies, and at the same time her excellencies, are the result of her own "error of judgment" (213). While Defoe gives his characters a kind of guaranteed final success, at least economically and financially, if they make their ultimate concern to be economical independence, Richardson leaves the door wide open for inner, personal, and social powers to collide. Yet, what is essential in Pamela and Clarissa is the heroine's personal judgment.

In Goldsmith the character's personal judgment is important and encouraged as long as it does not harm the relationship of the character with his family or society at large. Unlike Robinson Crusoe, Pamela, or Clarissa, Goldsmith's characters, such as Dr. Primrose, Olivia, Miss Richland, or Kate, keep consulting their families. They do not leave home to find themselves in situations where they have to make personal judgments based solely on their own rationality. If they happen to leave home, as in the case of Olivia, they appear as victims waiting for their families to rescue them, and discuss their personal problems as familial issues. In other examples where characters leave the family, as in the case of George Primrose, characters keep strong ties with their families. They are very concerned also about going back home whenever they are done with their business. Initially, an essential part of their leaving home has to do with helping their families.

What is new in Pamela for Nancy Armstrong in her book Desire and Domestic Fiction is that Pamela "possesses some kind of power other than that inhering in either the body of a servant or in that of a prominent family" (113). Pamela's main power is language: she is a "body of words," and "she is nothing but words" (116), and she possesses the "language to rationalize" (117). Obviously, Pamela is going to exhaust her personal power of rationality in facing Mr. B before taking refuge in "the language of theological tradition," as suggested by Armstrong. If we carefully read

the two passages which Armstrong quotes from Pamela, it becomes obvious that her analysis overlooks a crucial point in what she calls "the sexual contract" between Mr. B. and Pamela. Initially, Pamela's response to Mr. B's offer of 500 guineas fits perfectly into Armstrong's conclusion that:

> we can see Richardson counter the power available in the aristocratic tradition by drawing on the language of theological tradition for the terms of Pamela's resistance. 'Hope,' 'reflection,' 'reproach,' as well as 'soul' describe the feelings of a woman bent on preserving control over her body in the face of a system that gives license to sexual assault. Richardson does not settle on this language because he is particularly interested in representing the condition of her soul. He uses this terminology to give her value as a partner in marriage. (114)

But the problem with Armstrong's conclusion arises when we read Article VI of Pamela's response. Before "drawing on the language of theological tradition" (114), Pamela relies on her own rational powers to resist Mr. B:

> All that I can do, poor as it is, I will do, to convince you that your offers shall have no part in my choice; and if I cannot escape the violence of man, I hope, by God's grace, I shall have nothing to reproach myself, for not doing all in my power to avoid my disgrace; and then I can safely appeal to

> the great God, my only refuge and protector, with this consolation, That my will bore no part in my violation.[14] (200, Richardson's emphasis)

In its final shape, Armstrong's conclusion in asserting Pamela's personal power is valid and important. The only problem with it is Armstrong's reversal of priorities in Pamela's response. Reading Pamela's response carefully, we realize that she actually starts by focusing on her personal powers in opposing Mr. B. Then, if she fails, Pamela will yield to "language of theological tradition," as it is called by Armstrong, as the final resort for resistance. Pamela starts by employing her personal powers to convince Mr. B. of her cause, then she explicitly states: "and then I can safely appeal to the great God." All through her struggle with Mr. B, Pamela's main source of power and resistance is her personality and ability to rationally defy Mr. B's schemes. As an early example of the gradual movement towards individualism in the eighteenth-century, Pamela emphasizes the tendency to give the individual the chance to rely on his/her own ability to interpret events.

Thus far, I have presented Stone's, Watt's, and Armstrong's studies which argue that individualism was being increasingly emphasized over family after the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century. But as I have argued in this chapter, Goldsmith's major fictional works strongly favor family over individualism. These works show that individualistic characters are selfish

and therefore harmful to the society. In contrast, characters who are members of a stable and harmonious family serve themselves and their society in constructive and virtuous ways. Moreover, partial or disturbed families badly influence their members' lives, though not to the degree which individualism does. However, in certain cases, like that of Honeywood, the absence of family life leads characters to be excessively sociable so as to protect themselves and compensate for the absense of family life. In each of his major fictional works, Goldsmith discusses how the major characters perceive themselves and he also shows how these characters relate to their families. For example, In The Citizen of the World Altangi explains himself and how he perceives English society as an outside observer from China. Then through his letters to his son Hingpo, and Hingpo's letters to him, Altangi tells us about his family. As we shall see in Chapter II, some of the letters in The Citizen account for pulling the work together forming a frame-tale that tells the story of Altangi and his family, and the courtship and marriage of Hingpo and Zelis, who has turned out to be the niece of the Man in Black. The majority of the letters convey Altangi's personal observations of the virtues and vices of the English society.

Reading Goldsmith's subsequent works, we find that many of their characters and ideas have their origins in The Citizen. There are many similarities between Altangi and

Dr. Primrose. The most obvious one is that both characters are middle-aged fathers who care about their families and are interested in securing good marriages for their children. The courtship and marriage idea in The Citizen recurs in the treatment of the relationship between Squire Thornhill and Olivia, and Sir Thornhill and Sophia in The Vicar. As I will argue in Chapter III, Goldsmith uses the courtship and marriage theme in The Vicar to show the conflict between the Primroses as a united family and Squire Thornhill who exhibits an individualistic and selfish nature. Letter 11 of The Citizen discusses the benefits of luxury, and how it could be, if used wisely, a source of happiness to society.

The Traveller and The Deserted Village, discussed in Chapter IV, discuss the influence of luxury when it is unwisely used by a few individuals. The discussion in The Citizen focuses on the mutual benefits of luxury for the rich and other society members who "furnish happiness" (2: 52). But the luxurious individuals in The Traveller and The Deserted Village use their wealth for purely selfish and individualistic purposes. The rich man in The Deserted Village buys the village and depopulates it only to fulfill his luxurious needs.

The Good Natur'd Man is another example of a major work which has its origin in letters 26 and 27 of The Citizen. Like the Man in Black and his father, Young Honeywood is excessively generous and benevolent. Befriending everybody,

Honeywood is unreasonably sociable and generous. But unlike the short description of the Man in Black, The Good Natur'd Man gives a more detailed and deep analysis of Honeywood. In the play we have enough information about Honeywood's familial background as an orphan who looks for protection and acknowledgment from others. In general, the play focuses on the theme of partial families and the problems that happen to their members. The family theme recurs in She Stoops to Conquer but in a different perspective. Kate Hardcastle is the outcome of a stable and harmonious family life, while Tony Lumpkin performs selfish and individualistic actions as a result of a disturbed familial background. Kate is a beautiful and shrewd girl. She could be considered a realization of the beautiful Zelis in The Citizen. Hingpo describes Zelis as a very reasonable and beautiful girl. But unlike Kate, Zelis never materializes into a fully developed character.

From the above mentioned examples, it is obvious that The Citizen of the World was a beginning which Goldsmith developed in his subsequent major works. The family theme in The Citizen holds the miscellaneous pseudo letters together and presents a narrative continuity. The letters on Altangi's family and the courtship between Hingpo and Zelis work as a frame-tale which ends in the last letter with the happy marriage of the children and brings the families of Altangi and the Man in Black into closer relationship. The next chapter will discuss in detail the

frame-tale and the character of Altangi as an outside and inside observer of the English and Chinese societies.

NOTES

1- For more details on Goldsmith's career as a reviewer, see Peter Dixon's Oliver Goldsmith Revisited (London, 1991), 22-37.

2- All quotations from Goldsmith throughout the present study are given from the text of the Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith, ed. Arthur Friedman, 5 vol. (Oxford, 1966). Volume and page numbers of this edition are cited.

3- The Family, Sex and Marriage in England: 1500-1800 (London, 1977). For more details see Chapter 6 (221-269), where Stone discusses the changes towards individualism especially in relationship to the literary canon of the eighteenth-century.

4- See Hamilton Jewett Smith's discussion of the frame tale Oliver Goldsmith's The Citizen of the World (Yale Studies in English), 22. Smith shows that the frame tale occurs in letters 6, 22, 35, 36, 37, 47, 59, 60, 61, 94, and 113. Chapter II of the present study discusses the frame-tale in more detail.

5- See Friedman's introduction to The Citizen (vol 2), where he gives a comprehensive account of the

"Composition, publication, and reception" of The Citizen.

6- Introduction to The Vicar of Wakefield by Goldsmith (New York, 1951), xi. Quoted in Samuel H. Woods, Jr. Oliver Goldsmith: A Reference Guide (Boston, Mass., 1982).

7- Quintana's Oliver Goldsmith: A Georgian Study (New York, 1967) argues that Goldsmith "was a genius and the greatest master of comedy to appear during the second half of the [eighteenth] century" (116). In The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith (Baltimore, 1969), Hopkins attempts satiric interpretations of mainly The Citizen and The Vicar. Dixon's Oliver Goldsmith Revisited (London, 1991) argues that Goldsmith's works are a mixture of different modes: "teasing, paradoxical, confection, simultaneously sweet and sharp" (141). Dixon's study offers subtle and persuasive arguments on each work, but it does not focus on any major theme that provides an underlying unity or development in Goldsmith's major works. I think that these three studies deal with how Goldsmith presents events and characters. They do not go deeper to discuss why Goldsmith uses certain techniques like comedy or satire. In the present study I argue that comedy and satire are either vehicles or by-products of Goldsmith's conservative ideology in his effort to value and defend family, the most important social

institution, against individualism. Goldsmith goes beyond describing the present social conditions of his time to analyzing them and predicting future consequences. Judged by Goldsmith's fictional works, family is good and must be protected, whereas individualism is bad and must be abandoned.

8- Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England (Chicago and London, 1987).

9- Since its publication in 1957, Watt's study has been influential. However Diana Spearman's The Novel and Society (London, 1966) was the most notable attempt to question the validity of Watt's theory. Spearman suspects the dominance of "economic individualism," suggested by Watt. For a valuable discussion on Watt and Spearman see J. A. Bull, The Framework of Fiction: Socio-Cultural Approaches to the Novel (London, 1988), 59-85, where Bull argues against the flaws Spearman sees in The Rise of the Novel.

10- The Origins of the English Novel: 1600-1740 (Baltimore and London, 1987).

11- As early as her first physical encounter with Mr. B., where he tries to seduce her, (Letter XI), Pamela is able to defend herself mainly on rational grounds. The fact that she hesitates to leave the house immediately after the incident indicates how powerful and confident a young girl she is.

12- Desire and Domestic Fiction (New York, 1987). Nancy Armstrong has no objections to Watt's theory concerning the rise of "economic individualism" in the eighteenth-century. But she thinks that "Watt's historical explanation fails to consider why 'the majority of eighteenth-century novels' were written by women" (7). For more details see Armstrong's discussion of Pamela, 108-34.

CHAPTER II

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

The story of Lien Chi Altangi and his family in The Citizen of the World (1762) shows the beginning of Goldsmith's concern with the family as the most important social institution. This idea becomes much more obvious when we chronologically read Goldsmith's major fictional works, starting with The Citizen and ending with She Stoops to Conquer. I do not mean to indicate that by the time he wrote The Citizen, Goldsmith had a premeditated plan for developing the family theme, but we do have the great advantage of reading Goldsmith's works, after he had written them. Reading the major works chronologically, I think that Goldsmith discusses the conflict between family and individualism. The Citizen was just a beginning. Each of the subsequent major works discusses a certain side of the families' conflict with individualism. It is important to hold our final judgment of The Citizen until we read the subsequent works. Only then, we will be able to realize the importance of The Citizen as an appropriate and significant beginning for the exploration of the family theme throughout

the six major works. As Robert Hopkins puts it: "The entire corpus of Goldsmith's work read chronologically in the order in which it was written show an underlying unity and development"[1] (233).

Contrary to Hopkins, Wayne Booth argues that any interpretation of The Citizen which looks for unity has nothing to do with the work itself but with the critics' presuppositions (307).[2] I agree with Booth that the frame-tale discussed by Hopkins as a unifying factor in The Citizen, does not account for the majority of the 123 letters. What Booth does not mention is that the letters sent by Altangi and his son to each other is the only part of The Citizen which gives a narrative continuity to the whole series. I do not think that these 11 letters unite and organize the whole work. My concern in including The Citizen in this study centers on two points. First, the family story of Altangi accounts for a narrative continuity from the beginning to the end. Second, Altangi demonstrates reason and feeling despite his insistence that he is only a man of reason. I think that the limited use of the family theme was just a beginning, and that it was to be much more developed in all the subsequent fictional works.

The presence of the family theme in The Citizen is important because it becomes the central theme in The Vicar, The Traveller, The Deserted Village, The Good Natur'd Man, and She Stoops to Conquer. In each of these works, Goldsmith shows a conflict between the family and

individualism. Each work discusses a certain side of this conflict. The Vicar deals with the conflict between the family of Dr. Primrose and Squire Thornhill. The family is stable, unified, and harmonious. With the arrival of the individualistic Squire, the family's problems start and then intensify. The Traveller and The Deserted Village show the harmful influence of luxury when it benefits only one man as opposed to the collective life of the villagers. The two speakers in these poems are members of families who suffer from the misuse of luxury by wealthy individuals. The family theme takes a different shape in The Good Natur'd Man. Young Honeywood is an orphan who tries to compensate for the absence of family life by befriending everybody. Instead of being individualistic and selfish, he takes the other extreme. That is, Honeywood turns out to be an excessively generous and sociable person. In general, The Good Natur'd Man shows the various social problems resulting from the absence of a stable family life. Honeywood has no family, and the Croakers lead a disturbed family life. However, Sir William and Miss Richland are examples of reasonable characters who keep the balance between individualistic and social roles. Despite the differences between Mr. and Mrs. Croaker, the very fact that they keep the family going, helps their son Leontine to live a relatively stable life. The influence of the family on its members is similarly used in She Stoops to Conquer. Kate Hardcastle lives in a stable and harmonious family.

Opposite to her is Tony Lumpkin. He is very selfish and individualistic. Tony is the son of Mrs. Hardcastle from a previous marriage. Unlike Kate, Tony has no concern or respect for his family. Instead, he creates various problems for other family members.

The previous account of The Vicar, the two poems, and the two plays reveals that Goldsmith always advocates a stable family life against what he saw as problematic individualistic tendencies. The use of the family theme in The Citizen was a beginning which Goldsmith developed in The Vicar, the two poems, and the two plays. In The Citizen, Goldsmith use of the family theme gives narrative continuity through the entire series. The other importance of the family theme has to do with Altangi's character. Altangi tries to play two different roles: the father of a family who keeps the balance between reason and emotions, and the completely objective outside observer who detaches himself from his Chinese heritage and the vices of the English society. I believe that Altangi fails to play such individualistic role because he cannot empty himself of his Chinese heritage. Therefore, Altangi's role as a father is constructive and successful, whereas his role as an objective observer fails and makes him a target of satire. In this specific context, I agree with Quintana's and Hopkins's ironic and satiric interpretations of Altangi's role in trying to be an objective observer. I will focus on Altangi's claim in letter 3 when he says "I consider myself

here as a newly created being introduced into a new world." My conclusion is that in an attempt to separate himself from the balanced social role as a father of a family and a Chinese citizen, Altangi only deceives himself. The way Altangi conducts his life defeats his announced purpose to be an objective observer. He unsuccessfully tries to reveal himself as a completely rational person who gives no importance to emotions. But his letters to Hingpo and his relationship with the Man in Black reveal him to be a reasonable man on certain occasions, while on other occasions he is remarkably emotional. In his letters to Hingpo, Altangi plays the role of the wise father who cares about his son and directs him against emotional reaction in courtship to Zelis. In a similar way, Altangi criticizes the excessive generosity and goodness of the Man in Black in letters 26 and 27. But on many other occasions Altangi reveals himself as a self-deceiver. In letters 8 and 9, where he narrates his adventure with the London prostitute, Altangi fails to play the role of the rational objective observer. He reacts emotionally to the prostitute's beauty and elegant appearance, only to discover shortly after that he has been deceived.

The letters exchanged by Altangi and his son Hingpo tell us about the difficult circumstances of their family since Altangi decided to flee China. There are a few other letters which discuss family relationships, especially those discussing the Man in Black and Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs. This

chapter will discuss first the family theme as a frame tale that gives thematic unity to the letters. Second, there will be a discussion of Altangi as a character who tries to play the role of the independent and individualistic observer of the English, Chinese, and to a certain extent, European societies. Altangi tries to be a completely rationalistic person who objectively and independently observes society. But as readers, we see him showing feelings and emotions both in his letters to Hingpo, and in his real encounters with the English society. In other words, Altangi's roles as a father of a family and as a person who loves to socialize undercut his claims of rationality and individualism. His intimate ties with his family and his sociability defeat his persistent efforts to distance himself from family and society.

In his study Oliver Goldsmith's The Citizen of the World, Hamilton Jewett Smith was the first to discuss the frame-tale that embraces the work.[3] Smith argues that by using the frame-tale Goldsmith achieved three purposes: first, Altangi could easily introduce his acquaintances (22). Second, through his letters to his son, Altangi could show his own wisdom, "by means of maxims of Confucius" (23). Third, the frame-tale allowed Goldsmith to continue writing the letters until he "saw the popularity of his letters declining" (23). At that point, Goldsmith concluded his letters with the marriage of Hingpo and Zelis, forming a

"close to the entire series" (23). Smith summarizes the frame-tale as follows:

> By leaving China without permission, Lien the philosopher angered the emperor. His money and estate were confiscated, his wife cast into prison, and his son narrowly saved from the same fate, through the aid of a faithful friend. The son, Hingpo, fled from China, and had various adventures in Persia. There he saved Zelis, a beautiful Christian captive, from the harem of Mostodad, and fled with her into Russia. Here they were attacked by pirates, and separated. Zelis turned out in the end to be the niece of the Man-in-Black, the Chinese philosopher's constant companion and guide in London. When Hingpo joined his father in the city, he met with his beloved, who had arrived safely from Russia, and a happy conclusion followed. (22)

Smith mentions the 11 letters in which the family's story occurs. We might add here that in addition to the 11 letters which Smith cites, there are at least 26 other letters that deal with family relationships, including those on the Man in Black and the Tibbs.

As early as letter 6, Fum Hoam starts narrating the story of Altangi and his family:

> Your wife, daughter, and the rest of your family have been seized by his [the emperor's] order and appropriated to his use; all except your son are

> now the peculiar property of him who possesses all; him I have hidden from the officers employed for this purposes; and even at the hazard of my life I have conceal'd him. The youth seems obstinately bent on finding you out, wherever you are; he is determined to face every danger that opposes his pursuit. Though yet but fifteen, all his father's virtue and obstinacy sparkle in his eyes, and mark him as one distined to know mediocrity of fortune. (2: 38)

In subsequent letters the relationship between Hingpo and Zelis seems to rely on reasonable thinking.[4] Emotions are controlled with reason. Right from the beginning Hingpo tells his father that his courtship with Zelis is not based on passionate love but the results of reasoning:

> But let not my father impute those uneasy sensations to so trifling a cause as love. No, never let it be thought that <u>your</u> son, and the pupil of the wise Fum Hoam could stoop to so degrading a passion. (2: 153-154. Goldsmith's Emphasis)

Hingpo stresses Zelis's refined understanding more than her beauty:

> though I find my heart at intervals give way to unusual passions, yet such is my admiration of my fair companion, that I lose even tenderness in distant respect. Though her person demand particular

> regard even among the beauties of Circassia; yet is her mind far more lovely. (2: 245)

Hingpo does not rely entirely on reasoning. Instead, he advocates the necessity of passions in human relations. What is important is that reason should always have the upper hand. Altangi explains in letter 47 that passions are essential for us as a source of pleasure:

> Philosophers, my son, have long declaimed against the passions, as being the source of all our miseries; they are the source of all our misfortunes I own; but they are the source of our pleasures too: and every endeavour of our lives, and all the institutions of philosophy, should tend to this, not to dissemble and absence of passion, but to repel those which lead to vice, by those which direct to virtue.
>
> The soul may be compared to a field of battle, where two armies are ready every moment to encounter; not a single vice but has a more powerful opponent; and not one virtue but may be overborne by a combination of vices. Reason guides the bands of either host, nor can it subdue one passion but by the assistance of another. (2: 201)[5]

Reason and feeling are both essential for goodness. Yet reason should end up being the leading power. Altangi stresses the present conflict among the three forces: reason, vice, and virtue. It would be really impractical to

try to draw the line anywhere in such a complex matter. Altangi himself is the first victim of what he condemns. But, throughout his letters to Hingpo, Altangi presents himself as a wise father who reasonably instructs his son. Altangi wants Hingpo to avoid excessive emotionalism in his relationship with Zelis. He knows that a teenager like Hingpo is not mature enough to prefer Zelis's mind to her beauty. Therefore, in his response to letter where Hingpo claims to be wise and reasonable, Altangi wants his son to know that it is fine to fall in love. Passions are necessary and acceptable as long as they are ruled by reason. Altangi understands that Hingpo is trying to defend himself against being a weak victim of Zelis's beauty. That is why Hingpo insists that he loves Zelis's mind much more that her attractive beauty. Obviously, such a move does not work very well with the middle-aged father. Thus, as a father, Altangi keeps the balance between his passion to protect his son, and his reasoning about Hingpo's exaggeration in trying to reveal himself as a purely rational son.

But when he leads his personal affairs, Altangi tries to play a different role from that of Hingpo's father. He reveals himself as an objective observer who evaluates things on a purely reasonable basis. He claims to be a newly born individual who has nothing to do with his own inherited Chinese social values and traditions. When we compare this role with the role Altangi plays in his letters

to his son, we might think of Altangi as a person with two different and separate natures. The first Altangi is the head of a family who cares about his son's life and future. The second Altangi is the one who tries to detach himself from society, to step out of it, and to satirize it. Obviously Altangi succeeds as a father and sociable individual, but he fails to separate himself from the Chinese and English societies. Therefore, in his correspondence with Hingpo, Altangi is a balanced person who thinks reasonably about life. He is a wise father who understands his son's romantic relationship and helps him accordingly. We can say that on the theoretical level, Altangi is consistent. But Altangi's inconsistency appears whenever he narrates his practical experiences. Here Altangi, despite his claims to be a man of reason, is an emotional observer. As we shall shortly see, letters 8 and 9, where he meets the London prostitute, reveal Altangi's superficial judgment based on emotional reaction.

Altangi has enough time for reflection. His credibility is always put into question by the information he passes to the reader. He cannot escape being involved in the very story he narrates. Every letter conveys a social picture. Despite the very wide variety of the subjects of his letters, Altangi finds himself under pressure to define his own position. In a way, Altangi is "split" into two characters: the Chinese family man who left his country in pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, and the social observer who

finds himself among the English people. Sometimes he becomes anglicized to the degree of questioning his original identity as a foreigner. Such interaction leads Seamus Deane to conclude that Altangi "is in fact an insider who has created a form of freedom for himself by the pretense of being an outsider" (34). If it leads anywhere, such a conclusion emphasizes Goldsmith's way of presenting how strong and necessary the link is between the individual and society. Being a citizen of the world, Altangi shows how necessary and unavoidable interaction is among fellow human beings. It is critical and problematic to keep an equal percentage of being an independent and individualized person, and at the same time a member of a social group.

Entering English society, Altangi considers himself to be "newly created":

> I consider myself here as a newly created being introduced into a new world, every object strikes with wonder and surprise. The imagination, still unsated, seems the only active principle of the mind. The most trifling occurrences give pleasure, till the gloss of novelty is worn away. When I have ceased to wonder, I may possibly grow wise, I may then call the reasoning principle to my aid, and compare those objects with each other which were before examined without reflection. (2: 21-22)

This seemingly smart move by Altangi to separate himself from his Chinese heritage and family entraps him more in the

very thing he tries to avoid. Altangi wants the readers to believe that he is entirely an objective observer who can disregard his Chinese thoughts. But what about the numerous comparisons he makes between Chinese and English societies? Where does he get his ideas about China from? As early as letter 2, Altangi compares China to England using factual details of architecture and manners, to conclude that as a nation England "is actually poor" (2: 20). Altangi is deceiving himself when he claims that he can empty himself of social and familial ties. Like a child, every object strikes Altangi with wonder and surprise (Letter 3). Altangi hopes that when "the gloss of novelty is worn away" he might "grow wise" and then "call the reason principle" to his aid and "compare those objects with each other which were before examined without reflection." Thus, Altangi would go through three stages: first, he receives through the senses ideas from the outside world; second, he examines the ideas based on how wondrous and surprising they are; and third, he compares the ideas to each other by the aid of reason. This is a non-stop process. Anytime, and at any age, man faces new ideas or experiences, he will go through the three stages. Individual differences among people are sometimes misleading in the sense that we try to make arbitrary generalizations dividing people into behavioral categories, like men of reason and men of feeling.

Goldsmith demonstrates that such sharp divisions between the individual and society do not exist and are

always put into question by the very fact that the individual cannot be separated from his surroundings. Anytime the individual gets in touch with the outside world, like society or nature, he has to start with emotional reactions of wonder and surprise. Yet, it is true that if he has already experienced similar situations, his emotional reaction will be less than when facing the experience for the first time. The seemingly high degree of familiarity does not completely obliterate the emotional reaction, simply because we do not live the exact same situation more than once.

Shortly after Altangi announces that he has become familiar with social life in London (2: 42), especially with women, he is deceived by the prostitute. It takes Altangi only a little while to announce that he has become better informed about English society. But the very judgment he passes on the English people reveals him comparing the Chinese and English societies. What Altangi does not know, but we as readers see clearly, is that he can never play the role of the objective observer. His great concern about his family and his original country determines a considerable part of his personality.

Seamus Deane's and Peter Dixon's articles on The Citizen end up focusing on Altangi's inconsistency. Both scholars question the neatness of The Citizen's conclusion and the credibility of Altangi as a representative of the

Man of Reason. Deane criticizes the ending of The Citizen as artificial and

> perhaps nothing more than a desperate attempt on Goldsmith's part to have done with the Chinese letters, even if it meant catering to the sickly sentimental taste which he had so insistently satirized.... Reason and Feeling, Stoicism and Sentimentality are united in circumstances which indicate how distanced these great abstractions are from the practical exigencies of daily existence.[6] (45-46)

Deane also very shrewdly points out that Altangi's sentimentality is demonstrated in Letter 117, "the famous city night-peace" (46). Similarly, Dixon believes that "For Goldsmith's satirical purposes Altangi has to be inconsistently both a shrewd and a naive observer" (48).[7] He cites some examples where Altangi is easily deceived or disillusioned (49-50). Dixon is more cautious in his conclusions. Unlike Deane, he does not jump to the conclusion that Altangi is the rational man who turns out to be "a *devotee* of feeling." Instead, Dixon demonstrates that Altangi is intentionally presented as, at the same time, a man of reason and a man of feeling.

Discussing reason and feeling in Letter 47, Altangi emphasizes two ideas: first, feelings, as the source of pleasures and endeavors in our lives, are inevitable, and second, there is at every moment of life a conflict between

virtue and vice. Using reason as a guide, humans might reach what Goldsmith in his December, 1760 essay, entitled "Some Remarks on The Modern Manners of Preaching," calls neutral tranquillity:

> This method of preaching is, however, by some called an address to reason and not to the passions; this is stiled the making of converts from conviction; but such are indifferently acquainted with human nature, who are not sensible, that men seldom reason about their debaucheries till they are committed; reason is but a weak antagonist when headlong passion dictates; in all such cases we should arm one passion against another; it is with the human mind as in nature, from the mixture of two opposites the result is most frequently neutral tranquility. Those who attempt to reason us out of our follies begin at the wrong end, since the attempt naturally presupposes us capable of reason; but to be made capable of this, is one great point of the cure. (3: 151-52)

As a positive power, reason is the mental ability which helps the good passions to subdue the bad ones. In addition, reason cannot be a permanent state of the mind or behavior because it is the result of a moment-to-moment decision. No human being can claim that he always follows reason throughout his life. What Goldsmith calls "neutral tranquillity" seems to be an ideal state of mind which can

never be tested. "Neutral" suggests inaction and lack of interest. In any given situation, the action is determined or executed by the control of either passion or reason. The more reasonable an action is, the closer it comes to "neutral tranquillity".

From Deane's and Dixon's ideas about The Citizen one can deduce two important points: first, action is not purely passionate or reasonable; second, it is much easier to think reasonably in theoretical matters or when one is only an outside observer. It is really difficult to stick to reason in personal matters in which the individuals' emotions are involved.

In general, Altangi is mostly an outside observer. In his first letter Altangi says "sure fortune is resolved to make me unhappy, when she gives others a power of testifying their friendships by actions, and leaves me only words to express the sincerity of mine" (2: 17). Shortly after this (in Letter 6) Fum Hoam reprimands Altangi for his one-sided idea of living: "how long, my friend, shall an enthusiasm for knowledge continue to obstruct your happiness, and tear you from all the connexions that make life pleasing?" Hoam differentiates between two kinds of pleasure: the sensual and the sentimental. The sensual person is "the savage who swallows down the drought of pleasure without staying to reflect on his happiness." The sentimental, on the other hand, is "the sage who passeth the cup while he reflects on the conveniencies of drinking" (2: 38). Hoam considers

Altangi to be the sage who seeks "happiness from the mind alone." In Letter 7, Altangi is a Confucian who encounters the miseries of his family by holding up the volume of Confucius in his hand, and as he reads grows "humble and patient, and wise" (2: 39). Altangi's first experience in London reveals his naiveté and sheds more light on how questionable his credibility as an independent observer is. Shortly before meeting the London prostitute, Altangi claims to be better reconciled to the English people, to their manners and customs. He describes the girl as pure and innocent. He happily gives her his broken watch to be repaired by her relative. When he realizes the truth, Altangi consoles himself in Letter 9 by rationalizing the incident:

> I have been deceived; she whom I fancied a daughter of Paradise has proven to be one of the infamous disciples of Han; I have lost a trifle, I have gain'd the consolation of having discovered a deceiver. I once more, therefore, relaxed into my former indifference with regard to the English ladies, they once more begin to appear disagreeable in my eyes; thus in my whole time passed in forming conclusions which the next minute's experience may probably destroy, the present moment becomes a comment on the past, and I improve rather in humility than wisdom. (2: 44)

Altangi is unaware of the double and frequently confusing role he plays regarding himself and the English and Chinese societies. On the one hand, he left his native country, China. Mentally, he strives to distance himself from both Chinese and English societies. As early as Letter 3, Altangi begins his tormenting self-contradiction. Within 13 lines he expresses the problem of separation from one's homeland:

> The farther I travel I feel the pain of separation with stronger force, those ties that bind me to my native country, and you are still unbroken. By every remove, I only drag a greater link of chain. (2: 20-21)

Then Altangi expresses his complete isolation and separation from any social bonds: "I consider myself here as newly created being introduced into a new world, every object strikes with wonder and surprise." Such a duality sounds peculiar and tragic at the same time. Altangi is aware of his being an inseparable part of Chinese society and culture. Altangi thinks that he is now isolated, but most of his ideas of social norms remain Chinese. Ironically enough, he seems to be unaware of his attempts to separate himself from both Chinese and English societies. Expressing cultural shock after the harlot's deceit and his decision to withdraw, he is imposing on himself the role of the "newly born" independent observer who has committed only a wrong judgment. Doing this, Altangi refuses to play the balanced

role he is supposed to. Altangi appears to the reader to be playing two contradictory and separate roles: the man of reason and the man of feeling. Whenever he theorizes about social events, Altangi demonstrates reasonable tendencies. But whenever he narrates real experiences, Altangi appears to be emotional.

Commenting on the English and Chinese societies, Altangi discloses the follies and vices of a variety of social situations in each society. At the same time, he insists on his independent, individualistic, and reasonable judgment. Tending to believe whatever he satirizes in both societies, we are confused with his own role as an independent observer. Our problem is very much less with other major characters. We can safely assume that the Man in Black, the pawn-brokers's widow, and the Tibbses are mostly characters of feeling, while Hingpo and Zelis are seemingly presented as characters of reason. Altangi himself is confusing. The narrative frame involves him and his family, but at the same time he insists on a withdrawal and separation from his family and the two societies. He cannot withdraw completely from English society, except that, to some extent, he stands outside it to satirize it.

In the next chapter, we will see the similarities between Altangi and Dr. Primrose. We will also see how Goldsmith develops the ideas of courtship and marriage hinted at in the last letter of The Citizen of the World. As Goldsmith's first major fictional work, The Citizen is an

important place to begin to start understanding his subsequent works. Therefore, we will find the family theme to be more obvious and dominant in The Vicar, The Traveller, The Deserted Village, The Good Natur'd Man, and She Stoops to Conquer. In The Vicar, we see Dr. Primrose, like Altangi, as the head of a family who combines reason and feeling, but in a much more balanced way. Instead of the scattered family sketches we find in The Citizen, in The Vicar there will be a whole family living together and dominating the story from beginning to end. Courtship and marriage (of Hingpo and Zelis), which mainly serves as the main part of the frame-tale in The Citizen to give a kind of narrative continuity, appears in The Vicar as a central theme throughout the whole work. The courtship and marriage of Olivia and Sophia to Squire Thornhill and Sir William Thornhill, respectively, are used in the novel as vehicles to demonstrate the conflict between the family and the individualistic Squire Thornhill.

Thus, starting from The Vicar, Goldsmith departs from the general familial sketches he drew in The Citizen to discuss more detailed and specific events in the conflict between family and individualism. Instead of discussing innumerable social problems as he does in The Citizen, Goldsmith focuses in The Vicar mainly on the relationship between the Primrose family and Squire Thornhill. In most cases, we will see this relationship taking the direction of a conflict between the family and the individual. In the

works discussed, the individual usually does not live with his family and is not willing to sacrifice his own selfish interests for the sake of others. But other characters who live with their families are ready to reach a compromise between their own interest and other family members' interests. Ultimately, each work ends with favoring the family over individualism. Throughout The Vicar Squire Thornhill is selfish and his main interest is to seduce girls and resist marriage. He refuses to abide by the normal and accepted social traditions. The idea of a conflict between family and individualism appears strongly in Goldsmith two major poems: The Traveller and The Deserted Village. But the family theme in these poems takes a different shape. The conflict is between the persona as a family member who wishes to rejoin his family after a long absence, and luxury as the economic side of individualism. In both poems the speakers show that the misuse of luxury has resulted in strengthening individualism and at the same time doing a great harm to the family. Young Honeywood in The Good Natur'd Man is too sociable and eager to live with a family. She Stoops to Conquer discusses the conflict between the Hardcastles and Tony Lumpkin. Tony is very individualistic and refuses to abide by the family rules. He creates all kind of problems for his mother, his stepfather, and his stepsister. His individualism becomes more obvious when he is compared to Kate, who is wise enough to compromise her own interests for the sake of her family.

The next chapters will discuss in detail how each of the previously-mentioned works covers a certain aspect of the conflict between the family and individualism.

Altangi is a less developed version of Dr. Primrose. Altangi is the narrator of most of the letters, the head of a family, and to a certain extent a central character in the letters. The epistolary nature of The Citizen of the World and its focus on the different aspects of English and Chinese societies diminishes the role of Altangi as the central character. Yet many elements in The Vicar find their origins in The Citizen: the similarity between Altangi and Dr. Primrose and the courtship and marriage of characters in both works. Both Altangi and Dr. Primrose are first-person narrators. Both are middle-aged fathers and husbands. Both have children who are about to get married. Both are interested in social and political issues. Both are more successful on the theoretical level than practical ones. Both are the central characters in the very stories they narrate. Besides the difference in the natures of the works they narrate, Altangi and Dr. Primrose live in two different worlds. Altangi is a Chinese adventurer who lives in England thousands of miles away from his wife and children. He knows nothing about his family except for the story of his son Hingpo who is, for years, a captive in Persia. Altangi tries, not very successfully, to separate himself from English society and to keep the role of the outside observer. Yet, the 18 letters exchanged between

father and son help draw the whole 123 letters of The Citizen together. Similar to Mr. Burchell and Sophia's courtship and eventual marriage in The Vicar, Hingpo and Zelis (who has turned out to be the niece of the Man in Black) have built up a romantic love story which ends with their marriage.

Compared to the enormous variety of subjects of the letters in The Citizen, Hingpo and Zelis's tale does not go beyond, technically, holding the letters together. Many of the letters (such as Letter 116), besides being narrated by Altangi who is the father of a family, discuss subjects closely related to family matters. In addition to the eighteen letters which directly discuss family subjects, including those of the Man in Black and Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs, the rest of the letters discuss a variety of subjects, most of which deal with social problems. Thus, The Citizen can be considered a point of departure for The Vicar, where family matters, used in the former mainly as a frame-tale, becomes a developed and comprehensive plot.

NOTES

1- The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith (Baltimore, 1969).

2- Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism (Chicago and London, 1979).

3- Oliver Goldsmith's The Citizen of the World. Yale Studies in English. Smith shows that the frame tale occurs in letters 6, 22, 35, 36, 37, 47, 59, 60, 61, 94, and 123.

4- It should be noted here that Hingpo expresses his ideas concerning reasonable thinking in a specific context. Hingpo is a young man, inexperienced in the ways of the world, while his father, separated from him by many, many miles, is quite alarmed by his growing interest in a young woman, about whom the father knows virtually nothing--her family, her upbringing, etc. Thus, the reader who follows Hingpo's growing interest in Zelis realizes that at first he believes he admires her interesting mind, then he becomes aware (or tells his father) of her physical beauty, and finally he writes that he loves her, something Altangi suspected from the beginning. Hence his almost frantic advice in his letters to his son.

5- The main emphasis throughout this study is on ideas as they appear in Goldsmith's major fictional works. They, of course, should not be taken as necessarily expressing Goldsmith's own ideas, though undoubtedly some of them do.

6- "Goldsmith's The Citizen of the World." The Art of Oliver Goldsmith. Ed. Andrew Swarbrick (London, 1984), 33-50. Deane's fine essay is one of the few critical essays on The Citizen.

7- Oliver Goldsmith Revisited (Boston, 1991).

CHAPTER III

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE IN THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

Since its publication in 1766, The Vicar of Wakefield has invited different and sometimes controversial interpretations. Directly after its publication the Monthly Review, (XXXIV) May 1766, reviewed The Vicar. The reviewer expressed his puzzlement in characterizing it:

> Through the whole course of our travels in the wild regions of romance, we never met with any thing more difficult to characterize, than the Vicar of Wakefield; a performance which contains beauties sufficient to entitle it to almost the highest applause, and defects enough to put the discerning reader out of all patience with an author capable of so strangely under-writing himself. (4: 9)

Ever since, most critics of The Vicar agree on its ambiguity. At the same time, it remains "one of the best read of all the eighteenth-century novels..." (Sven Bäckman, 10).[1] The main problem which still faces any interpreter of the novel is the seemingly obvious and complete difference between what might be called its two halves, marked off by the elopement of Olivia in Chapter 16. Frederick W. Hilles

(1951) was the first to notice the division of the novel into two equal parts:

> The first three chapters serve as a kind of prologue. The story proper begins in the new home described in Chapter IV. And balancing the prologue are the final three chapter in which the various threads are held together. The central part of the book falls into two roughly equal parts.[2] (xi)

In the first half Dr. Primrose and his family enjoy a happy, stable, and quiet life, while in the second half Olivia's elopement and the following by many difficulties encountered by the whole family make things move abruptly and dramatically.[3] The other major problem in interpreting the novel includes the seemingly imposed ending, and Dr. Primrose being at the same time the first-person narrator and the central character.

So far, most critics have not interpreted The Vicar as the story of the Primrose family or fully discused the courtship and marriage of Olivia, Sophia, and, to a certain extent, George. As I will show, however, the whole novel from beginning to end explores the conflict between the Primrose family and the individualistic and selfish Squire. The novel also relates the various problems the Primrose family faces when dealing with Squire Thornhill as a potential husband for Olivia. Dr. Primrose and every other family member are careful to preserve the unity of the family, despite the problems they face. They lead their

lives collectively, and at the same time keep their own individualistic identities. There are continuous consultations among the family members to keep the family united. Generally, Dr. Primrose considers himself the head of the family, but we soon realize other members play equally important roles in some matters, courtship, for example. However, merely having good intentions does not prevent bad judgments, especially by Dr. Primrose, Mrs. Primrose, and Olivia.

Most critics focus on how Goldsmith managed or failed to manage to maintain a narrative and artistic unity throughout the novel. A considerable number of critics, however, has defended the novel from what others have attacked as artistic flaws. This chapter shall try to find not only how but why Goldsmith does what he does in The Vicar.

Scholarship on The Vicar during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was mostly general and brief. Samuel Johnson's sale of the novel was the first indication of its literary value. Very likely he sold it to John Newbery.[4] Johnson must have thought the manuscript had some merit or he would not have been willing to try to sell it, and he was successful in his first effort. Likewise, Newbery hardly ever bought unfinished manuscripts, though in this case, he seems to have, perhaps because he trusted Johnson and had bought enough work from Goldsmith to know his work was highly marketable. But in 1778, in his remarks to Fanny

Burney, Johnson found The Vicar "very faulty,...a mere fanciful performance," with "nothing of real life in it, and very little of nature."[5] Goethe praised it for its "high benevolent irony."[6] Later, Henry James praised it, even if in a generalized way.[7]

Twentieth-century interpretations fall mainly into five categories: the religious, the satiric and ironic, the comic, the narrative and structural, and the autobiographical. Religious interpretations consider Dr. Primrose as a Job or Christ-like figure.[8] Satiric and comic interpretations deal mainly with Dr. Primrose's inability to see through superficial appearances, and the discrepancy between his ideal beliefs and worldly interests. Some other critics believe that the novel, through Dr. Primrose, portrays Goldsmith's father and his brother Henry. However, few studies, especially those which discuss The Vicar and Goldsmith's other major works, have interpreted the novel in a more comprehensive way.

In this chapter, I argue that The Vicar of Wakefield centers on the Primrose family. The family theme gives The Vicar its unity. The novel presents Goldsmith's concern in defending the importance of the family in keeping society as a whole stable, coherent, and productive. For Goldsmith, the family combines the parents and their children in one united and coherent group, yet at the same time preserves each of its members' independence and uniqueness. Along with Goldsmith's other major works, discussed in this study,

The Vicar deals with the conflict between the family and individualism. Despite the difficult problems the Primroses face throughout the novel, their conflict with Squire Thornhill, who represents individualism, ends up with the family's triumph. The family's greatest concern is to secure good marriages for Olivia, Sophia, and George, all of whom will end up forming new families. Hence, throughout The Vicar the main focus is on the ideas of courtship and marriage. Dr. Primrose plays an important role in the novel as, at the same time, a narrator, a head of the family, and a central character.

I pause here to mention some important points necessary for understanding why the family theme dominates The Vicar. First, within the Primrose family decisions are made collectively. The importance of Dr. Primrose lies mainly in his role as a father. Dr. Primrose is the head of the family, but he consults with his wife and children in making any major decision. Therefore, as a wife, Mrs. Primrose has a strong say in the family and on many occasions she greatly helps her husband in running the family life. I will concentrate on the role Mrs. Primrose plays on behalf of her family to try to convince Squire Thornhill to marry Olivia. I think that she is an early version of other female characters in Goldsmith's subsequent works. She could be grouped with Miss Richland and Kate Hardcastle as examples of shrewd women who keep their familial roles and at the same time show a great deal of personal independence.

Second, as a united family, the Primroses are religious. In contrast, Squire Thornhill is a free-thinker who does not respect religion. The family has to deal with the Squire on merely materialistic bases. Throughout their conflict with the Squire, we notice that religion recedes and becomes of secondary importance outside their home. The only time Dr. Primrose has a chance to preach his beliefs outside the family is in prison. Therefore, the sermon does not alleviate the family's misfortunes. Third, the picture drawing scene in Chapter 16 prepares the reader for Olivia's elopement. It summarizes the prior conflict between the family and the Squire. His insistence on being considered a member of the family, predicts the clash between Squire Thornhill and the family which culminates soon in Olivia's elopement with him. Fourth, in a society where individualism, represented by Squire Thornhill, is socially and economically powerful and dominating, a family like the Primroses has no other choice but to be exposed to such harmful individualism. The two main reasons for the interaction between the family and individual are social and economic. Socially, the Primroses have to find husbands for Olivia and Sophia. On the economic level, the poor Primroses have to find sources of income to live on. Fifth, throughout the novel, up to the ending, the individualistic Squire has the upper hand. In the end, Goldsmith uses poetic justice to reward the good family and punish the bad

Squire. In a circular move, the ending reminds us of the first three chapters of the novel.

The first sentence of the novel sets the tone for the whole novel:

> I was ever of the opinion, that the honest man who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single, and only talked of population. (4: 18).

And as early as Chapter 2, Dr. Primrose informs the reader of the first marriage arrangement between his and the Wilmot family, to marry his son George to Wilmot's daughter Miss Arabella. Directly after that, the great concern over Olivia and Sophia's futures dominates the third chapter. The future husbands Squire Thornhill and Mr. Burchell (Sir William Thornhill in disguise) enter the story. Despite their latest misfortunes (losing their fortune and the profits of their living of "thirty-five pounds a year" and then their decision to leave to the house and land they rented from Squire Thornhill), Dr. and Mrs. Primrose both lose no time in thinking about and planning for finding suitable husbands for their daughters. When they are on their way to their new residence, the inn keeper tells Dr. Primrose that Squire Thornhill is a womanizer, yet the whole family seems willing to take the risk and try entrap the Squire. Knowing that "scarce a farmer's daughter within ten miles round but had found him [Squire Thornhill] successful and faithless", only gives Dr. Primrose "some pain." Sophia

and Olivia "brighten with the expectation of an approaching triumph." Mrs. Primrose is confident of her daughters' "allurements and virtue" (4: 27).

The first three chapters, related through Dr. Primrose as a first-person narrator, set the scene for the whole novel. Chapter 1 starts with Dr. Primrose's belief that everyone should have a large family. The second chapter begins with a description of the distribution of authority between Dr. Primrose and his wife: "THE temporal concerns of our family were chiefly committed to my wife's management, as to the spiritual I took them entirely under my own direction" (4: 21). The second paragraph of Chapter 2 starts with a statement similar to the first sentence of the novel: "Matrimony was always one of my favourite topics..." (4: 22). Then the central subject becomes the engagement of George and Miss Arabella Wilmot and the obvious concern over Squire Thornhill and Mr. Burchell as possible future husbands for Olivia and Sophia. Compared to the attention paid by the parents give to the three children who are at the age of marriage, naturally less attention is given to the youngest children: Moses, Dick, and Bill. Dr. Primrose says:

> My second boy Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of miscellaneous education at home. But it is needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people that had seen but very little of the world. (4: 21)

Therefore, Mr. and Mrs. Primrose focus their efforts on taking care of the future of their adult children who are about to form new families, through marriages. Dr. Primrose is very interested in keeping the family united and marrying his children. To accomplish these two purposes, he is willing to share with his wife and children any suggestions or plans they find necessary. Most of the time, he leaves it to his wife to decide for the whole family. But Dr. Primrose is not blind or stupid to what goes on around him. The top priority for him is not how he appears to the people or the readers, but only whether his family is happy, united, and able to secure a better future for its members.[9] Throughout the novel, especially the first half, Mrs. Primrose, Deborah, plays an important role in the family. During the first half she takes the lead as a matchmaker, especially in trying to prepare marriages for Olivia and Sophia. On many occasions, despite Dr. Primrose's objections, Mrs. Primrose remarkably exceeds the role he initially gives to her. The truth is that Mrs. Primrose definitely shares with her husband the decision-making in both external and internal affairs of the family. A good example of this is the incident of her sending Moses to sell the Colt in the fair. Although Dr. Primrose narrates the incident in a comic way, he reveals his wife's remarkable influence on him and the whole family:

> As the fair happened on the following day, I had intentions of going myself; <u>but my wife persuaded me</u>

> that I had got a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. (4: 65. Emphases added)

Whenever a dispute arises between him and his wife, Dr. Primrose is willing to make compromises in order to keep his family united and preserve peace in the family. His reaction to his wife's hasty and emotional decisions varies from a smile to silence to sullen looks. Such situations reinforce Dr. Primrose's role as a father of the family. During Olivia and her mother's talks with Squire Thornhill, Dr. Primrose appears as a father whose only concern is to protect the unity of his family. Clearly, both Mrs. Primrose and Olivia have not kept him informed of the state of affairs with the Squire or their own positions in the negotiations.

Dr. Primrose's role as a central character diminishes gradually during the first half but is restored, in a different way, during the second half. Starting with Chapter 4, Mrs. Primrose takes the lead in the family and represents it in dealing with Squire Thornhill and Mr. Burchell. Dr. Primrose retreats into silence or merely commenting on the action that takes place in his house. The only exception is his failed mission to the fair, to sell his horse, where he is duped by the same Ephrain Jenkinson who sold Moses the spectacles.

The first two chapters cover about 20 years of the family's life. We have to assume that the Primrose family

lived in the same house from Dr. Primrose's marriage up to their "migration," 70 miles away. The rest of the novel covers a little more than one year: Olivia is said to be 18 years of age (4: 21); then "She is now nineteen years old." (4: 85). Before leaving Wakefield, Dr. Primrose is the narrator, the central character, and the father who believes he exerts full paternal authority over his family. He describes the family's life as happy, stable, and comfortable. The relationships with neighbors and relatives are highly selective. Dr. Primrose is "by nature an admirer of happy human faces" and makes sure that a bad guest "never come back." Obviously, the family's economic independence contributed to a large degree to their social independence. And the distribution of roles between Dr. Primrose and his wife worked fine. Mrs. Primrose is an excellent housewife. Dr. Primrose makes decisions concerning George's engagement to Miss Arabella Wilmot, he leads discussions on matrimony, and writes many sermons and tracts upon the subject. For at least twenty years, they lived peacefully. Their relationships mainly had to do with generosity and charity. They had "no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo" and their "adventures were by the fire-side" and their migrations were "from the blue bed to the brown" (4: 18). Nothing is mentioned here about their daughters getting married.

Starting with Chapter 3, Dr. Primrose gradually loses his previous control over his wife and daughters. Dr.

Primrose seems to be aware that responsibility should be distributed among the family members. Especially in matters like marriage, the wife and daughters have to share considerably in making decisions. That is why Dr. and Mrs. Primrose, Olivia, and Sophia are all central characters in the novel. And Dr. Primrose willingly agrees to divide responsibilities among his family members. As Ricardo Quintana shrewdly puts it: "The Vicar and his family are all central characters in the dramatic fable that is unfolded" (108). Yet, the very fact that Dr. Primrose narrates the events, Quintana believes, helps greatly in keeping his presence important to the readers.[10] He mainly, however, becomes a narrator for what Mr. Burchell, Squire Thornhill, Mrs. Primrose, Olivia, and Sophia think and do. The economic and social circumstances of the family leave him helpless and weak. Lamenting the passing of the years they spent in Wakefield, Dr. Primrose says: "we shall never more see such pleasing hours as were once spent by our fire-side at Wakefield. My little family are now dispersing very fast, and poverty has brought not only want, but infamy upon us" (4: 104). When Dr. Primrose tries to do something and fails, his great concern is not his failure but how his wife and daughters are going to reprimand him. Duped at the fair, failing to receive any money for selling his horse, Dr. Primrose contemplates;

> Though I was already sufficiently mortified, my greatest struggle was to come, in facing my wife and

> daughters. No truant was ever more afraid of returning to school, there to behold the master's visage, than I was going home. I was determined, however, to anticipate their fury, by first falling into a passion myself. (4: 76).

For many years, Dr. Primrose used to have a stable life not as a prudent and experienced father but as a well-to-do one. Now, however, he arrives home to face an even greater problem: Olivia has eloped with the Squire. He fears the Squire will dupe her into a non-canonical marriage, a fear that turns out to be unfounded.

Since he lost his fortune, Dr. Primrose's poverty and great concern for the future of his children, especially the daughters, have become the most important things for him and the family. To better his and the family's life, Dr. Primrose has no choice but to move to Squire Thornhill's estate. In trying to help her family, Mrs. Primrose accepts the big responsibility of trying to convince the Squire to marry Olivia. Even before meeting Squire Thornhill, Dr. Primrose had had sufficient knowledge of his bad reputation as a womanizer, yet he and his wife took the risk in hopes of securing a husband for Olivia or Sophia: "the hopes of having him [Thornhill] for a son-in-law, in some measure blinded us to all his imperfections" (4: 81). In fact Dr. Primrose approves, although sometimes reluctantly, whatever his wife sees as necessary to convince Thornhill to propose. Obviously, he has no alternatives to his wife's plans. The

comfortable life his wife and children lived in Wakefield convinced them that the good husbands are the rich ones. For his part, Dr. Primrose does not mind marrying his daughters to poor but good husbands: "I could have been better pleased with one that was poor and honest, than this fine gentleman [Thornhill] with his fortune and infidelity..." (4: 44). Dr. Primrose is aware that his wife and daughters would never agree with such an idea. Given the fact that his ultimate aim is to keep his family happy and united, Dr. Primrose is the one who relinquishes his principles. For instance, although he does not believe in fortune-telling, Dr. Primrose agrees to give his daughters some money to give to the gypsy: "I was tired of being wise, and could not help gratifying their request, because I loved to see them happy" (4: 57).

Regardless of the different and many times conflicting views over how to deal with things, Dr. Primrose and his wife agree on securing good husbands for Olivia and Sophia. The Vicar is mainly concerned with Dr. and Mrs. Primrose's extraordinary efforts to secure the future of their daughters through good marriages.

Most events in the first half of The Vicar reveal that Dr. Primrose's family always make decisions collectively. The distance between Wakefield and Squire Thornhill's estate is 70 miles, and the move for the family is the beginning of a completely new life. Now they are poor. They have to take care of two important things: their living and their

children's marriages. Thornhill happens to be not only the rich landlord but the young man who would be a suitable husband for one of the girls. Dr. Primrose's family knows it for a fact that Thornhill is a rake who wants to take advantage of them. He is willing to spend his money satisfying his sexual desires. Olivia and Sophia were preceded by many other local girls in being the targets of Thornhill's flirtations. Mrs. Primrose thinks that she is smart enough to take the risk of tempting Thornhill and then convincing him to marry one of the girls. Dr. Primrose is aware of his wife's plan and decides to accept it, for the lack of "good" alternatives.[11] Both girls are also willing to do whatever their mother sees as necessary for a better future. The effort in The Vicar is always collective. The whole family participates in executing the plan. Despite the many differences among the family members in running their lives, especially concerning their views towards Burchell and Thornhill, they never reach the point of unsolvable disputes. The members of Dr. Primrose's family are individualized only to the degree of not endangering the unity of the family.

As a father, Dr. Primrose is a conservative who is for "and would die for, monarchy, sacred monarchy" (4: 102). For him, to defend the monarchy is a must:

> It should be the duty of honest men to assist the weaker side of our constitution, that sacred power [the monorchy] that has for some years been every

> day declining, and losing its due share of influence in the state. But these ignorants still continue to cry for liberty, and if they have any weight basely throw it into the subsiding scale. (4: 98)

John Bender shrewdly observes that Goldsmith was definitely a monarchist. He was against the rule of individualism and always called for a conservative social order.[12] Therefore, temperament and moderation characterize Dr. Primrose's thinking and ruling of his family. Instead of enforcing things, he would rather point out the danger, then leave it for his wife and children to decide how to deal with it (4: 38). The family members make decisions after extensive discussions. What prevails is the general characteristics of the family as one unit. At the end of the first chapter, and after describing the physical and mental qualities of the family members, Dr. Primrose concludes:

> In short, a family likeness prevailed through all, and properly speaking, they had but one character, that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive. (4: 21)

When Burchell and Thornhill get acquainted with the family, we notice that each of them socializes with the whole family at once. Dr. Primrose narrates his and other members' reactions to each suitor. The sudden and dramatic shift in the novel occurs only when Olivia elopes. Burchell over time becomes the friend of the whole family. They first meet him on their way to live in their new house. In his

first visit Burchell is welcomed by the whole family as "little Dick officiously reached him a chair" (4: 38). The little ones, Dick and Bill, warmly agree to offer Burchell their parts of the bed. Moses would let Dick lie with him. Mrs. Primrose prepares the supper and generously offers her gooseberry wine. Working with them on the farm, Burchell assists Sophia "in her part of the task."

Burchell's only problem as a suitor is his poverty. Mrs. Primrose likes him but always protests that he lacks birth and, most importantly, fortune to be qualified as a son-in-law (4: 31). Both Dr. Primrose and Sophia like him even more than Mrs. Primrose does. He saves Sophia from drowning. During his first visit he treats her very nicely, and he appears to be "a very fine gentleman" (4: 41). Her father notices how she feels from "The readiness with which she undertook to vindicate herself, and her blushing" which were symptoms that he [Dr. Primrose] "did not internally approve" (4: 41). What Dr. Primrose dislikes about Burchell is his courtship of Sophia: "My only dislike arose from an attachment he [Burchell] discovered to my daughter" (4: 45). Dr. Primrose cannot conceive why Sophia prefers the poor Burchell to the rich Squire Thornhill's chaplain: "nor could I conceive how so sensible a girl as my youngest, could thus prefer a man of broken fortune to one whose expectations were much greater" (4: 52).

Sophia's tender feelings towards Burchell evaporate as soon as he leaves the house: "Mr. Burchell had scarce taken

leave, and Sophia consented to dance with the chaplain..." (4: 53). There is a striking difference in the way the family treats Burchell compared to Thornhill and his chaplain. It is similar to the difference between poverty and richness. Burchell's wisdom, simplicity, amiability, gentle manliness, helpfulness, and friendliness do not cover up his poverty. In contrast, Thornhill's wealth is more than enough for Dr. Primrose and his family to accept his womanizing, ruthlessness, and pride. On their way from Wakefield to Thornhill's estate, the family learns, from the inn's owner, about the scandalous record of their new landlord. Yet their reaction indicates that they are going to try their luck in tempting Thornhill to be their son-in-law:

> Though this account gave me some pain, it had a very different effect upon my daughters, whose features seemed to brighten with the expectations of an approaching triumph, nor was my wife less pleased and confident of their allurements and virtue. (4: 27).

Preparing for Thornhill's first visit, the family makes great efforts "to make an appearance" in the hope of impressing him. Mrs. Primrose insists on entertaining not only Thornhill but his chaplain, feeder, and servants, leaving the family "pinched for three weeks after" (4: 42). Shortly after the visit, Mrs. Primrose brags that she is the one who "instructed" Olivia and Sophia to "encourage"

Thornhill's "addresses" (4: 44). Surprisingly, Dr. Primrose's reaction contradicted what he said about Burchell's courtship of Sophia:

> 'for my part I don't much like it; and I could have been better pleased with one that was poor and honest, than this fine gentleman with his fortune and infidelity; for depend on't, if he be what I suspect him, no free-thinker shall ever have a child of mine'. (4: 44)

Dr. Primrose is against Burchell as a possible husband for Sophia because he is poor. At the same time, he is against Thornhill, the rich Squire, for being a free thinker. Mrs. Primrose and the daughters definitely prefer Thornhill to Burchell. Dr. Primrose is confused between what he knows to be true and just in Burchell's case, and the social reality that money is a very essential factor in life. The perfect case would have been to have a suitor who possesses Burchell's goodness and Thornhill's fortune, and in the romance-plot the novel uses Burchell, who finally reveals himself as the rich and virtuous Sir William Thornhill and solves everyone's romantic problems.

Dr. Primrose's first major decision after losing his fortune is to break the engagement between George and Arabella Wilmot, something her father eagerly agrees to do. Dr. and Mrs. Primrose believe that for a marriage to be successful, it should be based on a sound financial basis. Such a belief blind them to Thornhill's imperfections (4:

81). On the contrary, Burchell's goodness never blinded them to his poverty. It would be unrealistic to go too far in this matter and to accuse Dr. Primrose of being merely "a fortune-hunter" whose main target in life is to accumulate money. Robert H. Hopkins's (1969) The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith marks a radical breakthrough in the scholarship on Goldsmith.[13] This study is remarkable for its comprehensiveness and subtlety. Yet, in his Chapter on The Vicar, Hopkins overdoes the discussion concerning Goldsmith's satiric intent throughout the novel, especially when discussing the second half and especially in his view that Dr. Primrose is a greedy parent looking for rich suitors for his daughters. He believes that

> Dr. Primrose is an object of satire who is both a clergyman and fortune-hunter, as well as a professor of optimistic platitudes. His complacency is nauseous, and there is a smugness about the vicar, who is writing his own romance with himself as the hero, who has seen his platitudes vindicated by experience, and who is in effect telling us that he was right all along. (207-8).

Hopkins argues that the satire in The Vicar is obvious in the first half, while in the second half

> the satire becomes more subtle and goes underground as Primrose's narration becomes more subjective... This underground satire takes the form of verbal irony both in the text and in the chapter headings--

> patterns of verbal irony that reflect the ambivalent attitudes of Dr. Primrose in looking upon his children as annuities and upon benevolence as a good business investment. (209).

In the first half of the novel satire is obvious because in many instances there is a discrepancy between Dr. Primrose's rhetoric and his action:

> His benevolence lies in his rhetoric and his actions often belie what he professes. His hypocrisy reflects his dual vocations as both a clergyman and an entrepreneur. (188).

Hopkins never tells why the satire in the second half goes underground.

For Hopkins, satire in the second half relies heavily on what he calls "verbal clusters" which "have been prepared for ...in the earlier part of the novel" (209). Dr. Primrose equates earthly happiness with material prosperity and relies on his children to provide "future happiness by marrying into money" (212). Hopkins cites the repetition of the word "treasure" as an obvious example of Dr. Primrose's great love for money. Hopkins seems to overlook that Dr. Primrose is the same man who for years used to give away "thirty-five pounds a year" to orphans and widows of the clergy (4: 21). When Dr. Primrose lost his fortune, his first reaction was to insist more on his principles on monogamy. And his greatest concern was not the loss of fortune, but the effects of this loss on his family (4: 24-

25). Hopkins argues that Dr. Primrose's "benevolence lies in his rhetoric, and his actions often belie what he professes" (188). But is Dr. Primrose giving away thirty-five pounds a year a rhetorical or a real act of generosity? Hopkins strives to dismiss such a practical act of generosity, through interpreting it as an act of smugness. Therefore, Hopkins decides to take this act at face value. In other words, the fact that Dr. Primrose tells the readers of his motives for giving away the money, is enough evidence for Hopkins to accuse Dr. Primrose of smugness and vanity. Why then does Hopkins give the word "treasure" meanings beyond what Dr. Primrose uses it for? Here Hopkins insists on taking the word "treasure" used by a father to describe how much he loves his children too seriously. Hopkins believes that when Dr. Primrose rescued his children from death in the fire, he at the same time was thinking of money. If so, on many other occasions Dr. Primrose could have preached to the reader on charity and generosity without giving away any money. Thus, Hopkins' conclusions concerning at least the second half of The Vicar are contradictory.

Leaving Wakefield, Dr. Primrose and his family are in a difficult situation. They are not in a position to dictate their conditions to others. This does not in any way suggest that they made a right decision in attempting to trap Thornhill. Doing this, they definitely become a target of satire. But still, satiric intent is not Goldsmith's

main intention in The Vicar. Rather it is a partial and secondary one. The novel discusses how difficult and problematic it was for eighteenth-century middle class families to find good and reasonably rich husbands for their daughters. Before leaving Wakefield, the family had lived long enough in prosperity. They considered themselves to be equal to rich people: "The year was spent in moral or rural amusements; in visiting our rich neighbours, and relieving such as were poor" (4: 18). It is not easy for them to completely change their life-style or even the mentality of belonging to the upper-middle-class.[14] Dr. Primrose is at least theoretically convinced of the necessity for change. Shortly after losing his fortune, he explains to his family the many things they are supposed to be aware of, and many others they should change:

> We are now poor, my fondlings, and wisdom bids us conform to our humble situation. Let us then, without repining, give up those splendours with which numbers are wretched, and seek in humbler circumstances that peace with which all may be happy. (4: 26)

Dr. Primrose's message is clear but difficult to put into action. Ever since the loss of his fortune, he himself has kept wavering between what he believes in and what actually takes place. To get his daughters married, and given the difficult financial circumstances of the family, Dr. Primrose has had to compromise a lot of his principles. He

does not believe in dictatorship. Even if he did, his wife and daughters would have resisted any decisions on his part to stop the plan to trap Thornhill. Moreover, his remarks on Burchell's poverty reveal his complete awareness of the mentality of his wife and daughters. In fact, he himself finds it difficult to accept Burchell as a son-in-law. It seems that Dr. Primrose would accept coping with poverty himself, but he does not accept the same fate for his daughters.

The events of the second half of the novel are dramatic and sudden. However, there is enough evidence in the first half to show that Olivia's elopement is a natural result of Thornhill's planning. The family knows for a fact that Thornhill is ruthless and untrustworthy. Yet they made every possible effort to entrap him. On his part, Thornhill is very hesitant to give any promises or to propose. He always says and does things which indicate that he is not serious when it comes to marriage. We can call him an "honest" villain. Shortly before Olivia's elopement, Dr. Primrose explicitly discloses his wife's continuous efforts to tempt the Squire:

> It must be owned that my wife laid a thousand schemes to entrap him, or, to speak it more tenderly, used every art to magnify the merit of her daughter. (4: 81)

In the same paragraph, Dr. Primrose tries unconvincingly to justify his wife's persistent effort to convince Thornhill to marry Olivia:

> These instances of cunning, which she thought impenetrable, yet which every body saw through were very pleasing to our benefactor, who gave every day some new proofs of his passion, which though they had not arisen to proposals of marriage, yet we thought fell but little short of it; and his slowness was attributed sometimes to native bashfulness, and sometimes to his fear of offending his uncle. (4: 82. Emphasis added)

Is not Dr. Primrose here talking about the same Squire Thornhill who has offended him since his first visit by being a "free-thinker," and rich but infidel? (4: 44). Thornhill makes every indication possible to let the family know that he believes in love but not matrimony. The main problem is that Dr. Primrose and his family do not want to believe what they hear and see. When finally Mrs. Primrose asks Thornhill if he knows any person who would be a proper husband for Olivia, his answer is straight forward: "'No, madam...'" (4: 85). For Olivia, Thornhill's complimentary remarks on her beauty and his refusal to say why he rejects farmer Williams as a husband, still leave some small hope. Finally, Dr. Primrose reaches the conclusion that Thornhill is far from being interested in marriage: "it seemed to me

pretty plain, that they [Thornhill's fine sentiments] had more of love than matrimony in them" (4: 85-6).

The picture-drawing episode in Chapter 16 concludes the action in the first half and prepares the scene for the dramatic events of the elopement and the second half.[15] In this scene, the family seems helpless to stop the intrusion of Squire Thornhill. They have become to involved with the Squire to the degree that he believes it is his right to be a member of the family. At the same time he insistently refuses to marry Olivia. The picture drawing scene, therefor, is symbolic of the Squire's triumph over the family. The details of the scene leave no doubt about how harmful the Squire has become to the family. Obviously, he finds it very entertaining to flirt with Olivia. As we shall see in the elopement scene, the Squire finally succeeds in his attempts to seduce Olivia and consequently torture the whole family. Mrs. Primrose, Olivia, and Thornhill choose to appear as, respectively, Venus, an Amazon, and Alexander the great. They are the only ones who choose to appear as Greek and Roman historical and mythical figures.[16] Venus was the "Roman goddess of love" and "was worshipped by the Romans as mother of the race." In Greek mythology Amazons were "a race of warlike women who did not permit men to live among them." Choosing such a mythical reference to present Olivia would make it difficult for Thornhill to marry her. Similarly, looking like Alexander the great, "king of Macedonia and conqueror of the eastern

world," who was very famous for his successful military adventure, Thornhill could be thought of as a rake who runs love adventures. Thornhill "insisted on being put as one of the family... ." Finished, the portrait "was so very large that we had no place in the house to fix it" (4: 83). Besides, the portrait, instead of inviting pleasure, "struck the family with dismay." More importantly, the picture was too large to get through any of the doors of their house. Put together, all the aforementioned historical and mythical details might symbolize what is about to happen next. Olivia is going to elope with Thornhill. Dr. Primrose will leave the house to look for her. And ultimately, the whole house will be struck down by fire (4: 130). In a way, Dr. Primrose's house has become too small to include the problems created by Thornhill's presence, just as it is too small to contain the portrait itself.

Now, the family has come far from those peaceful years at Wakefield, when "all our adventures were by the fire-side..." (4: 18). The "little circle" of those days has grown bigger and bigger as the family has had to interact with other social circles, such as those of Thornhill and Burchell. We should also remember the family's bad experience with Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilelmina Amelia Skeggs, "two great acquaintances" from London, who convinced the family to send Olivia and Sophia to London, both to earn a lot of money and to become qualified as ladies of distinction. Olivia and Sophia were ready to

leave for London despite the little hesitation of Dr. Primrose.[17] Mr. Burchell's threatening letter to the ladies was the only factor which stopped the whole plan. Burchell was the only one who knew the true nature of the two ladies:

> It has never been my way to treat the infamous or the lewd with severity; nor should I now have taken this method of explaining myself, or reproving folly, did it not aim at guild. Take therefore the admonition of a friend, and seriously reflect on the consequences of introducing infamy and vice into retreats where peace and innocence have hitherto resided'. (4: 77)

The Primroses read this private letter without Mr. Burchell's permission, and thus committed an indiscretion. Instead of thanking him, or asking his pardon, the family became so mad when they discovered that Burchell was the real author of the letter, that they treated him as an enemy. They were deceived by the ladies to the degree of accepting Thornhill's offer to assist in inspecting the ladies' conduct (4: 71). At this point, the family was extremely desperate to find anything possible to improve their situation and compensate for their poverty. It is very doubtful that if they were sent to London, the girls would have earned money enough to marry men of quality and be acquainted with the manners and places of London. Dr. Primrose's remarks on the whole matter reveal how confused and desperate he has become. Not he does only not have any

say in what was going on, but he has reached the state of an indifferent observer whose only aim is to avoid the heavy responsibility and blame for his wife's plans:

> 'Tell me, my dear, don't you think I did for my children there?'---- 'Ay,' returned I, not knowing well what to think of the matter, 'heaven grant they may be both the better for it this day three months!' This was one of those observations I usually made to impress my wife with an opinion of my sagacity; for if the girls succeeded, then it was a pious wish fulfilled; but if any thing unfortunate ensued, then it might be looked upon as prophecy. (4: 65)

Another unconvincing, naive, and desperate move on the part of the family is to try to put pressure on Thornhill by having Williams the farmer proposing to Olivia. They and Thornhill know very well it is no more than a maneuver. The family has always looked down upon the neighboring farmers. Being an educated clergyman does not prevent Dr. Primrose from sharing with his wife and children their deep-rooted feeling of superiority over the poor farmers they live among. More important, Dr. Primrose's poverty does not undermine his conviction that he, though only theoretically, still belongs to a higher social class. Chapter 11's heading reads: "The family still resolve to hold up their head." Dr. Primrose begins it by describing a visit to "neighbor Flamborough's" house:

> MICHAELMAS eve happening on the next day, we were invited to burn nuts and play tricks at neighbour Flamborough's. Our late mortifications had humbled us a little, or it is probable we might have rejected such an invitation with contempt: however, we suffered ourselves to be happy. Our honest neighbours goose and dumplings were fine, and the lamb's-wool [a mild alcoholic punch], even in the opinion of my wife, who was connoisseur, was excellent. (4: 60)

It is understandable that Olivia's elopement and the ensuing misfortunes have a devastating influence on her family. Yet, the elopement and other events throughout the second half of the novel should be analyzed by the attentive reader as a logical continuation and natural consequence of what happened in the first half. To accuse Goldsmith of hastiness or artistic failure is at the least an act of unfairness. As shown above, there is enough evidence in the first half of the novel to make the second half a brilliant, artistically necessary, and justifiable continuation of the novel. Olivia and Sophia were taught by preaching and example to pursue rich suitors for husbands regardless of any other consideration. They were raised up to look down at good but poor people and to wish for rich husbands like Thornhill. Their mother has taught them by example that the end justifies the means. Their father says something and then agrees on the complete opposite. He is always wavering

between what he knows and what reality dictates. His "principles" work only when there is no other way out. He goes against the majority only when he feels helpless and desperate. Otherwise, he would speak and act differently. Unlike him, Mrs. Primrose has, long ago, made up her mind to do what she thinks is good and right for her daughters. To go where the money is, is for her legitimate and entirely justifiable.[18] There is no doubt in her mind that rich people make good husbands. For good or ill, the decisions of the family are not made by individuals. During the many discussions they hold, especially after important events, the family members democratically express their views. Decisions are made by the majority. Yet, in most cases Mrs. Primrose, Olivia, and Sophia have similar opinions. The nature of the prevailing subject, matrimony, allows for general agreement among the mother and her daughters. Added to this, Dr. Primrose's inexperience and indecisiveness contribute in most cases.

As expected, the family's reaction to Olivia's elopement is passionate and zealous. Surprising, though, is Moses's reaction. Moses, the young man who is the one who lacks self-control in similar situations, reproves his father and tries to calm him down when he becomes enraged by Oilvia's elopement:

> 'Indeed, Sir,' resumed my son, after a pause, 'your rage is too violent and unbecoming. You should be my mother's comforter, and you increase her pain.

> It ill suited you and your reverend character thus to curse your greatest enemy: you should not have curst him, villain as he is.'---- 'I did not curse him child, did I?'---- 'Indeed, Sir, you did; you curst him twice.' (4: 92)

Moses's words calm Dr. Primrose only a little; then, shortly after, his reaction again becomes passionate. Here Moses and his old father seem to exchange roles. We know that Moses is only a teen-ager, yet he plays the role of father by being calm and reasonable. Moses's words undercut the whole scene, making his father's reaction appear foolish and extreme. Through Moses's reaction we can conclude that the previous events were enough to lead to such a consequence, Olivia's elopement, to the degree that a teen-ager can be aware of. In Dr. Primrose's words, Moses is a teenager who "had seen by now very little of the world" (4: 21). His conclusion was proven true in many occasions. Selling the Colt at the fair, Moses happily returned with a gross of worthless green spectacles (4: 67). In his dispute with Thornhill (4: 23-4), Moses appears to be really inexperienced, uneducated and passionate. During their discussion of the elopement, Moses made a remark that should have definitely calmed his parents down. When asked if Thornhill forced Olivia away, Moses says: "'Ah no, Sir!'... 'he only kissed her, and called her his angel, and she wept very much, and leaned upon his arm, and they drove off very fast'" (4: 92).

Along with the "picture" scene, Olivia's elopement helps to pull the whole novel together. Both scenes reveal the magnitude of the family's problems. Being very large, and including Thornhill as a member of the family, the picture indicates that the family's problems can no longer be contained within the family and its house. Rather, outside social forces like Thornhill and Burchell are going to have a significant influence on the future of the family. The picture scene also suggests that Thornhill, whom we already know a lot about, is going to seek out amorous escapades similar to the military ones done by Alexander the great. There is going to be a conflict between him and the Amazon, Olivia, who, like her race, will not accept his domination of her. Dr. Primrose, with his pointless books on the Whistonian controversy, will not play any significant role in the conflict. He will not transcend his theoretical discussions on monogamy. Venus, Mrs. Primrose, has already done what she could to intensify the passionate love between the lovers. Sophia and Moses are not associated with historical figures. Only Alexander and Amazon have the potential to cause a conflict.

The dramatic changes that take place after Olivia's elopement and throughout the rest of the novel have invited many controversial interpretations of The Vicar. Critics dealing with the changes after the elopement can be divided into three groups: those who see the changes as an artistic flaw in Goldsmith's book, those who consider the influence

of these changes on Dr. Primrose, and those who find them justifiable and logical. Ernest Baker and W. F. Gallaway, Jr. believe The Vicar to be an artistic failure. To them, Goldsmith started somewhere, then lost control over his own creation.[19] Michael E. Adelstein disagrees with both critics and argues that

> Goldsmith did have the general outline of his plot in mind but that he switched from the theme of prudence to that of fortitude. In this process, the central character was transformed from an innocent simpleton to a courageous, resolute hero.[20] (316)

Finally there are the comprehensive and important studies of Ricardo Quintana, Robert Hopkins, and Peter Dixon, who consider the second half of The Vicar as a logical and natural continuation of the first half. Hopkins believes that The Vicar is satiric from beginning to end. But during the second half satire goes underground. To prove this point, Hopkins overstates his case, suggesting that Dr. Primrose is a purely materialistic person.[21] Quintana's study, the best published on The Vicar thus far, interprets the novel as both ironic and comic. To him the novel "breathes the true spirit of comedy" (100). Discussing the first half, Quintana rightly focuses on the Vicar's family. But when he deals with the second half, as "all in the mode of romance" (110), he does not tell us exactly what he means by the "imaginative quality" that accounts for the continuity of the narrative from the first to the second

halves of the novel.[22] In a recent study on The Vicar, Peter Dixon argues that the novel is comprised of different and complicated modes. Dixon makes excellent points by interpreting The Vicar as a work which resists analysis.[23] He reminds us of the statements of Ralph Wardle and Daniel McDonald, who call for enjoying The Vicar and forgeting about analyzing it.[24] Unlike these interpretations, this study finds Olivia's elopement and the rest of events in the latter half of The Vicar to be a completely justifiable continuation of the events in the first half, well planned and thought out by Goldsmith. The Vicar, from the beginning to end, discusses the Primrose family's conflict with Squire Thornhill and focuses on the courtship and marriage of Olivia and Sophia.

I would like to suggest that as a purely individualistic act, and in contrast to George's departure, Olivia's independent, premeditated, and immature decision to leave the family leads to the chaos which prevails throughout the second half of the novel. Up until her elopement, Olivia was an inseparable member of the family. The member who left much earlier was her brother George. Yet, his decision to depart was arrived at in conjunction with his family. It is both his and the family's interest for him to leave. George's departure did not cause any conflict among the family members, while Olivia's is a completely different case. Here, the picture of the family is violated for the second time. The first was when

Thornhill intruded and "insisted on being put as one of the family..." (4: 83). As an immediate result, the family's "tranquillity was continually disturbed..." (4: 84). When she elopes, Olivia decides to separate herself from the family, to violate the family's rules and conventions. There is no doubt that Goldsmith was in control when he wrote The Vicar. As argued by Frederick Hilles, there is enough internal evidence that Goldsmith planned the novel very carefully. On purpose, the first part of the novel, where the family is united, is stable, harmonious, lightly comic, and smooth in movement. Yet, under such a seemingly quiet surface, the reader can see many indications of the coming harsh and stormy second half.[25] The picture-drawing scene has prepared for such a climax of the novel. Summarized very briefly, the first half of the novel could be contained in the following question: what do Dr. Primrose's family , and the readers, expect from a womanizer like Thornhill, who has resisted the many deadly attempts of Mrs. Primrose to get him to propose, but to seduce the girl he lusts for and to convince her to elope with him?!

According to the general scheme of the novel, the consequence of Olivia's mistake is not merely the scandal she brings to the family and to herself. Her mistake transcends her and her family to reflect on a more important and broader social problem: the undoing of the family. The dominance of individualism would leave society to the conflict and chaos of self-centered individuals. By the

same token, the dominance of the family over its members, leaving them to the mercy of a dictator parent would definitely destroy the individual's abilities to participate in building a healthy society. In its over-all design, The Vicar takes a middle stand. The members of the family have the full right to freely express and do whatever they think. At the same time, they ultimately abide by what the majority decides. As we have already seen, Dr. Primrose, his wife, and every one of the children have had numerous opportunities to do whatever they think is right. Dr. Primrose is so democratic a father as to accept the reproofs of his teen-age fourth child, Moses. The family members try to avoid letting outsiders know that they have any kinds of differences among themselves. They never blame or reprimand each other in the presence of anybody outside the family. They pass their messages of dissent through gestures not noticed by non-family members. For example, when the Squire's chaplain offers Sophia the blackbird he had shot, Sophia "was going to refuse, but a private look from her mother soon induced her to correct the mistake, and accept his present, though with some reluctance" (4: 52). On another occasion, when Thornhill suggests that "every gentleman should sit in a lady's lap," Dr. Primrose "positively objected to, notwithstanding a look of disapprobation from my wife" (4: 53). We know how careful Mrs. Primrose is not to object to anything Thornhill proposes in the hope of convincing him to marry her

daughter. Yet, she does not sacrifice the unity of the family by going against her husband publicly. This incident happened during Thornhill's second visit, and Mrs. Primrose was willing to do anything possible to trap the Squire, yet she did not sacrifice any of her family's unity. To compensate for the repressed freedom of speech in the presence of non-family members, or other non-democratic situations, the family usually holds a debate after the non-family members leave. On many other occasions, the family prepares a collective plan of how to proceed next. A typical example is what the family did directly after Thornhill ended his first visit to them: "as soon as he was gone, my wife called a council on the conduct of the day" (4: 37).

Olivia's elopement severely hurts the family's privacy and unity. If we accept the "picture" as a symbolic representation of the family's problems, complicated enough to the degree of exceeding the family's house, then after the elopement the picture has become immensely enlarged to include the whole outside society. Involuntarily, Dr. Primrose and the rest of the family have reached the conclusion that they squarely failed to preserve the privacy and unity of the family. The main reason for this is their definite failure to secure husbands for their daughters who are at the age of marriage. What happens after the elopement are inevitable consequences over which the family will have no control. They tried to rely on discretion and

their judgment once, and given the results of their trial, they will never have the same chance again. Now, it is the turn of other social powers to offer their share.[26]

As a continuation of the courtship and marriage theme which dominates the first half, the second half of The Vicar discusses the results of the family's bad judgment, and its various social dimensions. The family's insistence on securing rich husbands for Olivia and Sophia has led to the ensuing problems. The family blames its misfortunes on Thornhill's ruthlessness. They seem to forget that they are the ones who gave him the chance to do so, to begin with. On many occasions, Dr. Primrose and his wife contaminated the minds of their daughters with the idea that money makes good marriages. They were sick and tired of Burchell's frequent visits, and made it clear that the only reason for that was his poverty. In contrast, they welcomed Thornhill warmly and heartily only for his being rich, despite the fact that he was bad. So, instead of trapping him, the family gave Thornhill every opportunity to deceive Olivia and convince her to elope.

Dr. Primrose's search for Olivia is a failure, until he meets her by mere chance. At the beginning of his search mission, he seems greatly passionate and concerned. Surprisingly, after a short while, he does not appear to be different from the Dr. Primrose we know in the first half. He enjoys his stay at Arabella uncle's house. He is calm. By chance, he meets his long-absent son, George. Dr.

Primrose never mentions Olivia's elopement or the family's misfortunes to George. At the time, George is obviously not in a hurry. He does not have a permanent job to lose. He is an amateur actor "who had never appeared on any stage" (4: 105). He has tried his luck in many countries (Holland, Ireland, and France), and professions (teaching, music and acting), but has not met with any success. However, George has gained some knowledge about the world and mankind. At least his adventures were better than his father's. On his way back to London, George concludes: "'I now therefore was left once more upon the world at large, but then it was a thing I was used to'" (4: 121). At this early stage of his life, George has seen much more of the world compared to what his father has seen in an entire life. He sounds confident even when he narrates the many failures he experienced.

George's long absence did not decrease his attachment to his family. He has not been heard of since his departure, after the family lost its fortune and decided to leave Wakefield (Chapter 3). His reappearance occurs only after Olivia's flight. However, Mrs. Primrose mentions that her letter to George concerning Olivia's elopement was her "last letter" (4: 157), which is an indication that there was a correspondence taking place between George and the family during his absence. When he read the bad news, George rushed to avenge his sister and the family against Thornhill. He risked his life for the honor of the family,

regardless of the rashness and irrationality of his action against Thornhill. Compared to his father, George is a practical man. Given his young age, George has known enough about the world to abandon the fire-side policy of his father. With Dr. Primrose at the center, the family's life had been so self-centered as to isolate the whole family, preventing them from better knowing the outside world. This is Dr. Primrose's special way, though faulty, of protecting his family. Leaving, George has become an exception. The difference between his and Olivia's departure is that he does not go against the rules of the family and society. George's case shows how a family might go right in extending its social role. Olivia's, to the contrary, demonstrates how and why a family's judgments could go wrong.

Like Moses before him, George proves himself to be more reasonable than his father. Upon the arrival of George, wounded and shackled, to the prison, Dr. Primrose reacts passionately. The scene is similar to Dr. Primrose's reaction to Olivia's elopement. At that time, the sixteen-year-old Moses tried to cool him down and acted in a surprisingly reasonable manner. This time, George himself reproves his father for his uncontrolled and highly passionate reaction to Squire Thornhill's evil machinations:

> 'Hold, sir' replied my son, 'or I shall blush for thee. How, Sir, forgetful of your age, your holy calling, thus to arrogate the justice of heaven, and

> fling those curses upward that must soon to crush thy own grey head with destruction! (4: 159)

Both George's and Dr. Primrose's arguments are not free of exaggeration, especially when we know that both of them are going to be fine. Like Moses, George reminds his father that cursing is not appropriate for a religious man. Obviously, George's reproof is harsher than that of Moses. To a certain extent, the whole scene is comic. Again, Dr. Primrose is reacting in a completely different way because he is under pressure. And, as expected, he will soon be back to normal. Last time, after what Moses said, he left the family to wander for a while, eventually enjoying discussions on theater and politics. This time, his reaction seems to be more productive: delivering the sermon.

On a theoretical level, the sermon reveals Dr. Primrose's detachment from this world, and his great focus on spiritual reform. But we should always keep in mind that he is working under great pressure. He lived long enough in relaxed and comparatively well-to-do financial circumstances to make it difficult for him to easily accept misfortunes. His non-materialistic thoughts always remain tentative. The moment the pressure disappears, Dr. Primrose is back to his old ways. At the beginning of the novel, when he leaves Wakefield, Dr. Primrose is already so old that he will not likely undergo any considerable change. Taken on its own merits, the sermon is a great piece of religious thinking.

Yet, what is more important is to see the sermon in the context of the novel as a whole. Like its setting, the prison, the sermon is surrounded by a whole lot of secular events. Let us first recall what Goldsmith says about Dr. Primrose in the advertisement to the novel: "The hero of this piece unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth; he is a priest, an husbandman, and the father of a family." (4: 14). The announcement is correct only if we read the three characteristics backward. Now we know that being a priest is comparatively the least important and appealing in Dr. Primrose's case. But we should keep in mind that Dr. Primrose never denies the importance of the priesthood, though he may, like any human being, be distracted from it. Definitely, each of the three characteristics contributes to Dr. Primrose's character. But the novel focuses mainly on Dr. Primrose being "the father of a family." Dr. Primrose is narrating the story of his family, mainly during the span of about two years. The first three chapters only help to set the scene for the conflict with the Squire and the courtship and marriage of Olivia, Sophia, and, to a certain degree, George. The rest of the novel shows how obsessed an eighteenth-century family could be about the marriage of its children. The first three chapters very briefly summarize at least twenty years of the family's history, while, for example, much larger space is dedicated to Thornhill. Although the title of the novel suggests that it is the story of Dr. Primrose of

Wakefield, yet, reading the novel carefully, the content proves such a suggestion to be largely misleading. It is only partially the story of Dr. Primrose. Reading the novel, our first impression might tempt us to believe that it is the story of its hero and first-person narrator. But as we proceed, we find out that the importance of Dr. Primrose lies mainly in his role as a father of the family.

To understand the novel, we have to think of Dr. Primrose and Mrs. Primrose basically as the parents of Olivia and Sophia, who are at the appropriate age to get married. In the sermon, as well as in many other instances, we see Dr. Primrose acting under great pressure as a result of how he treated his daughters' courtship and marriage. His roles as a husband and a priest reinforce his role as a father. Dr. Primrose never seriously complains about his wife. Even when it comes to financial difficulties, he does not complain of poverty as a hindrance to happiness; rather, he always insists that, like many other poor people, he and his family can make it. The overwhelming influence of poverty becomes obvious only through its great impact on the expected matrimonial life of Olivia and Sophia. Thus, giving the sermon is one of the many things Dr. Primrose does in the absence of alternatives and under pressure. He and George are imprisoned as a consequence of Olivia's elopement. In a state of desperation to accomplish something better, and upon the request of his "dying" son, Dr. Primrose attempts to reform the prisoners. As we shall

see, the sermon has very little, if any, influence on how things go. Moreover, this is the only time in the novel when Dr. Primrose directly practices his vocation as a priest. To choose to deliver the sermon in a prison might be Goldsmith's message that the role of religion was undergoing a gradual decline. As Ian Watt indicated, the general trend during the eighteenth-century was towards more secularism.[27]

The sermon's focus is on enhancing the hope for a better after-life of both the poor and the rich. In a clever way, Dr. Primrose goes a step further to try to convince the poor that their reward in heaven is going to be more enjoyable, since the difference between their lives on earth and heaven is considerable. The important theme in the sermon is the comparison Dr. Primrose builds between philosophy and religion. Philosophy is limited to either a short and happy life or a long and more-open-for-miseries one. Religion on the other hand:

> shews the equal dealings of heaven to the happy and the unhappy, and levels all humans enjoyments to merely the same standard. It gives to both rich and poor the same happiness hereafter, and equal hope to aspire after it; but if the rich have the advantage of enjoying pleasure here, the poor have the endless satisfaction of knowing what it was once to be miserable, when crowned with endless felicity hereafter; and even though this should be called a

> small advantage, yet being an eternal one, it must make up by duration what temporal happiness of the great may have exceeded by intenseness. (4: 162)

The sermon is a good spiritual lesson, strengthening the belief in God and the marvelous life after death. It also enhances the hopes of the poor, especially in this case the prisoners, for a much better eternal life. But the sermon is greatly missing in finding any practical solutions for the problems discussed. It limits the role of religion to the life hereafter. It diagnoses the problems only to show how promising our life is going to be after death. It implicitly suggests that religion has nothing to do with changing our circumstances during our lifetimes. It also suggests that there are other powers which have control over our lives.

As a matter of fact, in his sermon Dr. Primrose has been honest and faithful to what he believes in. To him, religion has only been the last resort. In running his, and his family's daily life, he follows what social and economic circumstances dictate. He tries his best, though unsuccessfully, to better the chances of his daughters for getting rich, and only rich, husbands. In the process, if at anytime things related to religion take place, Dr. Primrose does not hesitate to approve and highly praise them. For example, when "little Dick" generously "offered his part of the bed" to Burchell, Dr. Primrose instantly

jumps into the conversation to celebrate an excellent, pious practice:

> 'Well done, my good children,' cried I, 'hospitality is one of the first christian duties. The beast retires to its shelter, and the bird flies to its nest; but helpless man can only find refuge from his fellow creature. The greatest stranger in this world, was he that came to save it. Deborah, my dear,' cried I, to my wife 'give those boys a lump of sugar each, and let Dick's be the largest because he spoke first.' (4: 39-40)

On an earlier occasion, Dr. Primrose chooses to put the Bible at the end of the list of things he gives his son as he bids farewell to George:

> 'you are going, my boy,' cried I, 'to London on foot, in the manner Hooker, your great ancestor, traveled there before you. Take from me the same horse that was given him by the good bishop Jewel, this staff, and this book too, it will be your comfort on the way'. (4: 26. Emphasis added)

Nevertheless, such an arrangement of priorities should not lead us to conclude that to Dr. Primrose religion plays secondary and unimportant role, especially when compared to economic matters. For Dr. Primrose, religion takes care of good social values and virtuous personal conduct. But religion does not directly interfere with specific daily living matters. Good intentions, and dealing nicely with

others are requirements necessary to conducting one's life, but they are not the only important things in life. Their presence adds greatly to other basic requirements, money in particular. Nobody is, or should be, deprived of the spiritual qualities. When there is a conflict between religion and other aspects of life, Dr. Primrose is willing to compromise and try to keep a balance between them. Despite his awareness of Thornhill's bad reputation, when discussing Thornhill's first visit with Moses, Dr. Primrose is willing to be fair and balanced in his views on Squire Thornhill as a free-thinker when it comes to religion:

> 'Thinking freely of religion, may be involuntary with this gentleman: so that allowing his sentiments to be wrong, yet as he is purely passive in his assent, he is no more to be blamed for his errors than the governor of a city without walls for the shelter he is obliged to afford an invading enemy.'
>
> 'True, my son,' cried I, 'but if the governor invites the enemy, there he is justly culpable. And such is always the case with those who embrace error. The vice does not lie in ascending to the proofs they see; but in being blind to many of the proofs that offer. So that, though our erroneous opinion be involuntary when formed, yet as we have been wilfully corrupt or very negligent in forming

> them, we deserve punishment for our vice, or contempt for our folly.' (4: 44)

What irritates Dr. Primrose most is Thornhill's offensiveness and explicitness in attacking religion: "'for may this glass suffocate me but a fine girl is worth all the priestcraft in the creation'" (4: 42). Dr. Primrose is for the kind of life where one is good and religious at heart, and at the same time runs his life the way he finds appropriate to his circumstances. As John Ficher suggests:

> Immediately upon their exit from prison into the world their faith has won them, the major characters of The Vicar of Wakefield do begin to relax into old habits, and, consequently, the world they move through stiffens into its formal intractable shapes. (29)[28]

After the sermon, business returns to normal.

The concluding chapters (30, 31, and 32) have most often been interpreted as either a hasty move on the part of Goldsmith or a traditional finish for the novel. In both cases the final judgments of many readers tend to consider the seemingly imposed ending to be an artistic failure.[29] In general, satiric and comedic readings of the novel find the ending justifiable and appropriate.[30] As we follow the narration of the ending, it appears that everybody ends up being happy, except for Squire Thornhill. Dr. Primrose and his wife, after long torment and misery, finally achieve, in a stunning way, what they have been looking for. The family

is rewarded with wealthy husbands for Olivia and Sophia, and a wealthy and good wife for George. Dr. Primrose, in a circular move, ends the story where he began it:

> As soon as dinner was over, according to my old custom, I requested that the table might be taken away, to have the pleasure of seeing all my family assembled once more by a cheerful fire-side. My two little ones sat upon each knee, the rest of the company by their partners. I had nothing now on this side of the grave to wish for, all my cares were over, my pleasure was unspeakable. It now only remained that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my former submission in adversity. (4: 184)

To understand the ending, we should judge it by the preceding parts of the novel. I think that, starting with Chapter 4 and up to Chapter 30, the novel concentrates on the conflict between the Primrose family and Squire Thornhill. Chapters 1, 2, and 3 set the scene for the conflict. In Chapters 30, 31, and 32 Goldsmith employs poetic justice to reward the virtuous family and punish the individualistic and selfish Squire. The sudden reversal of events in favor of the family at the end is undoubtedly a forced and arbitrary move. However, this move in ending the novel happily corresponds to the central idea of the whole novel: compared to the evil Squire, the Primroses are good and deserve to be rewarded. By definition, poetic justice is "an outcome in which vice is punished and virtue rewarded

in a manner peculiarly or ironically appropriate" (Webster's Dictionary). Therefore, the ending of The Vicar reemphasizes its stable and harmonious opening depiction of how a family life should be, and how a family is supposed to breed new families. In a normal sense, the Primrose family's responsibility is to provide society with new families through marrying off George, Olivia, and Sophia. The initial and appropriate preparation for the marriages is set in the first three chapters. The sudden loss of fortune forces the Primroses to defer their marriage plans until they find a new source of income. This sudden economic change opens the stage for the powerful and individualistic Squire to intrude into the family. Therefore, the family has no choice but to deal with the Squire, who is their new landlord. What we read in Chapters 4-29 is how the family interacts and reacts to the Squire. Thus, the ending of The Vicar is a continuation of the first three chapters. In other words. Chapters 1, 2, and 3, correspond to Chapters 30, 31, 32. The major points of the ending are: Dr. Primrose luckily recovers his lost fortune, George marries Arabella Wilmot, and Sophia marries Mr. Burchell. Dr. Primrose proves his theory of monogamy through insisting that the marriage of Thornhill and Olivia is final and abiding, and most important, as parents Dr. Primrose and Mrs. Primrose secure, what they believe to be, good marriages for their daughters. The general setting repeats

itself when Dr. Primrose and his family sit around the fire-place similar to the good old days.

To account properly for the ending, we should make the beginning our point of departure. When reading The Vicar, the earliest event readers complain about is Dr. Primrose's abandonment of an annual income of thirty five pounds for a much lesser one of fifteen pounds. Most readers strive to solve this incongruity in the narrative. But we should not forget that this is only a consequence of a larger and more important event. The fact that it is too obvious an event must not divert our attention from Dr. Primrose's loss of fortune to begin with. The incident surprises Dr. Primrose, and to a certain extent the reader, because it is sudden and unexpected. Discussing the subject of polygamy with Mr. Wilmot "on the day before that appointed for the ceremony" of George and Arabella's engagement, Dr. Primrose suddenly receives the devastating news:

> while the controversy was hottest, I was called out by one of my relatives, who, with a face of concern, advised me to give up the dispute, at least till my son's wedding was over. 'How,' cried I, 'relinquish the cause of truth, and let him be an husband, already driven to the very verge of absurdity. You might as well advise me to give up my fortune as my argument.' 'Your fortune,' returned my friend, 'I am sorry to inform you, is almost nothing. The merchant in town, in whose hands your money was

> lodged, has gone off, to avoid a statue of bankruptcy, and is thought not to have left a shilling in the pound. (4: 24)

Dr. Primrose's reaction falls short of the reader's expectations. Dr. Primrose was wealthy to the degree of giving away his church stipend of thirty five pounds "to the orphans and widows of the clergy..." (4: 21). After reading the whole novel, learning of all the consequences of Dr. Primrose's loss, one finds it strange and shocking that Dr. Primrose reacted in such a carefree and cool way. Instead of seriously discussing his catastrophic loss of fortune, Dr. Primrose says: "'if what you tell me be true, and if I am to be a beggar, it shall never make me a rascal, or induce me to disavow my principles. I'll go this moment and inform the company of my circumstances...'" (4: 24). The only follow up to the loss of his fortune is a letter from Dr. Primrose's agent in town confirming the bad news (4: 25). Throughout the novel, Dr. Primrose reacts in a much more passionate way to events far less important than the loss of a large fortune. The happy news, restoring the lost fortune, come in Chapter 32 entitled "The Conclusion." It simply reads:

> First having released me from the settlement that I have made the day before in his [George's] favour, he let me know that my merchant who had failed in town was arrested at Antwerp, and there had given up

> effects to a much greater amount than what was due to his creditors. (4: 182)

Depriving the family of its fortune after years of luxurious living, opens the door wide to all kinds of misfortunes and miseries. Goldsmith, creating Dr. Primrose as first-person narrator, a priest, a head of a family, and the central character of the novel, successfully discusses all kinds of family problems. Of special importance, of course, is his choice of a family with three children at the age of marriage. However, the main focus is on the courtship and marriage of the daughters. Starting with the third chapter, the scene is appropriately set to receive suitors like Burchell and Thornhill. And the scene is wide open for all kinds of events. Yet throughout the ensuing scenes, Goldsmith makes sure never to lose focus on one essential fact: the family of Dr. Primrose might sacrify anything but not its unity and harmony. In such cases, there is always room for mistakes, i.e., Olivia's elopement. But because the family considers her an inseparable part of it, Olivia, after a while, rejoins the group.

Thus, Dr. Primrose's family at the end has to be rewarded. In a form of poetic justice, everyone is rewarded, including Thornhill, but this happens solely for the sake of Dr. Primrose's family. Dr. Primrose and his wife made bad judgments based on good intentions. After all, they seek good husbands for their daughters. The influence of their past life of comfort was too great for

them to relinquish their love of money. Sophia got a good husband and constructed a new family. Olivia repented her mistake and at least, during the elopement, privately got married to Thornhill by a priest in valid orders (4: 127). Her marriage was not normal. The Squire has been sent off to learn the French horn, while she lived with the family. Sophia was patiently awaiting her luck. Mrs. Primrose devoted her time and effort to the matter. Mr. Burchell (Sir William Thornhill in disguise) helped the family and reprimanded his nephew. Squire Thornhill, who deserves punishment, is "punished" with marriage because he definitely prefers to live as a womanizer.

NOTES

1- This Singular Tale: A Study of The Vicar of Wakefield (Lund, 1971).

2- Introduction to The Vicar of Wakefield by Goldsmith (New York, 1951). Quoted in Samuel H. Woods, Jr. Oliver Goldsmith: A Reference Guide (Boston, Mass., 1982).

3- "Dr. Primrose" and "the Vicar" are used interchangeably in the novel and the study. In most cases, and for the sake of clarity, I use "Dr. Primrose" unless it is necessary to use "the Vicar."

4- See Friedman's account of Johnson's sale of the manuscript (4: 4-7).

5- See Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay, ed. C. Barretti, 4 vols. (London, 1893), I, 38.

6- See Carl Hammer, Jr., "Goethe's Estimate of Oliver Goldsmith", JEGP, 44 (1945): 137-138.

7- In his introduction to the first American edition of The Vicar (1900), Henry James called it "the spoiled child of our literature."

8- William Black was the first to make the comparison between Dr. Primrose and Job. See his Goldsmith (New York, 1902). Black argues that "The Vicar of

Wakefield, considered structurally, follows the lines of the Book of Job" (80). For more on religious interpretations on The Vicar, see Richard Helgerson's "The Two Worlds of Oliver Goldsmith." SEngl 33 (1973): 516-534; Oliver W. Ferguson's "Dr. Primrose and Goldsmith's Clerical Ideal." PQ 55 (1975): 323-332. Also see Martin C. Battestin's "Goldsmith: The Comedy of Job." The Providence of Wit. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974. 193-214. Battestin also does not ignore the satiric elements in The Vicar. But to him they are "only a part" of Goldsmith's intension. Also, in Virtue in Distress (London, 1976) R. F. Brissenden compares Dr. Primrose to Parson Adams and Parson Yorick. Like them, Dr. Primrose is a Christian hero. Likewise, James H. Lehman argues that the moral development in The Vicar is closely related to a movement towards the attainment of the sublime. See his "The Vicar of Wakefield: Goldsmith's Sublime, Oriental Job." ELH 46 (1979): 97-121.

9- It is really difficult to accept the suggestion of Paul Crudis that as a central character Dr. Primrose is stupid and blind to what goes on around him (54). See his "The Narrator and The Vicar of Wakefield." Essays in Criticism 1 (1973): 51-66.

10- Ricardo Quintana, Oliver Goldsmith: A Georgian Study (London, 1967). Quintana's is one of the very few studies that shifts the focus from considering Dr.

Primrose as the central character of the novel to all the characters in the Primrose family. Most critics see everything in the novel through Dr. Primrose, which has resulted in all kinds of misunderstandings.

11- Throughout the action Dr. Primrose remains faithful to the general policy he and his wife follow from the second paragraph of chapter I: "There was in fact nothing that could make us angry with the world or with each other" (4: 18).

12- For a political view of The Vicar, see John Bender, "PRISON REFORM AND THE SENTENCE OF NARRATION IN THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD." The New 18th Century. Eds. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York and London, 1987): 168-188. Bender's is an excellent article which focuses mainly on chapter 27 of The Vicar. He observes that "Goldsmith undoubtedly was a monarchist with nostalgic longings for the old constitution; but the textual ideology of his novel--the import of its form--points categorically to the emergence of an-all present state order, not to the personal rule of a benevolent individual" (178).

13- The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith (Baltimore, 1969).

14- Lawrence Stone describes marriages which are similar to what we see happening in The Vicar: "..In the first place the parental motive, at least ostensibly, was the future happiness of the daughter, not the best financial or political interests of the family at

large. Secondly, the means employed to obtain compliance was love not authority. The new affectionate parent-child relations were not used with great effect, especially by mothers, to get their daughters to do what they wanted" (313).

15 As far as I know, no critic of The Vicar has attempted an analysis of the picture-drawing scene. Commenting very briefly on the scene, Clive T. Probyn notices the linkage with Olivia's elopement. See Probyn's English Fiction of the Eighteenth Century: 1700-1789, (London and New York, 1987). 158.

16- Goldsmith knew his readers would recognize these classical figures and see the ridiculous use and incongruity of the pictures taken as a whole.

17- Despite the fact that the ladies'' scene takes place prior to the picture-drawing scene, I find it more appropriate to discuss them in a reverse order. Thornhill's intrusion in the family's intimate affairs is more direct and clearer in the picture-drawing scene.

18- Seemingly, Mrs. Primrose and a heroine like Moll Flanders show what Ian Watt correctly considers to be the rising individualism in eighteenth century novels. Yet, there is a big difference between the two characters. Moll's love for money has to do basically with her extreme individualistic traits (Watt, 111). In contrast, in trying to get rich husbands for her

daughters, Mrs. Primrose works within the acceptable social conventions of her time. Plus, she is not doing this for selfish reasons, but for the overall benefit of her family.

19- The History of the English Novel, 10 vols. (London, 1924), 1: 81. See also W. F. Gallaway, Jr. "The Sentimentalism of Goldsmith." PMLA 48 (1933), 1168.

20- "Duality in The Vicar of Wakefield." College English 22 (1961), 318.

21- The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith (Baltimore, 1969), 172 and 207.

22- Oliver Goldsmith: A Georgian Study (New York and London, 1967), 112.

23- Oliver Goldsmith: Revisited (London, 1991), 96.

24- Oliver Goldsmith (Lawrence, Kansas, and London, 1957), 171. also Daniel McDonald "THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD: A PARADOX." CLAJ 10 (1966), 33.

25- As a representative of individualism in The Vicar, Squire Thornhill's offers different kinds of temptation that are the direct causes for Olivia to leave her family. We can go a step further to suggest that Olivia is contaminated by Thornhill's pure individualistic nature.

26- For a good discussion of how Dr. Primrose as a father loses control over his wife and children, see Raymond F. Hillard's "The Redemption of Fatherhood in The Vicar of Wakefield." SEL 23 (1983): 465-480. Hillard goes

so far as to consider Dr. Primrose a complete failure "as a father--as a governor, guardian, instructor, advisor, provider, comforter, and exemplar" (480). Despite its extremity and its forced approach of imposing on The Vicar the ideas of conduct books written during Goldsmith's time, Hillard's article remains a good addition to scholarship on The Vicar, mainly because it draws our attention, though in a negative sense, to the family relationships running throughout the novel. Another article which deals with the Primrose family is Thomas R. Preston's "The Uses of Adversity: Worldly Detachment and Heavenly Treasure in The Vicar of Wakefield." SP 81 (1984): 229-251. But the main focus of the this article is how Dr. Primrose has confused earthly treasures (his family) with those in heaven.

27- See Watt, 82-83.

28- "'Yet will I trust in Him': Goldsmith's The Vicar of Wakefield." South Central Review 1 (1984): 1-31.

29- In "'The Vicar of Wakefield': A Paradox," Daniel MacDonald believes that the happy ending of the novel violates its moral thesis: "once he [Dr. Primrose] places his confidence in eternal justice rather that temporal rewards, he is overwhelmed with temporal reward" (29). Similarly, Raymond Hillard argues that the ending is as "unrealistic as the biblical promise it adumbrates" (480).

30- See Quintana, 115. See Hopkins, 223-224. See also Richard J. Jaarsma's "Satiric Intent in The Vicar of Wakefield" Studies in Short Fiction 5 (1967): 331-341. For more on the satiric interpretations of The Vicar, see Ronald Paulson's Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England (New Haven and London, 1967). See also Robert Hunting's "The Poems in The Vicar of Wakefield." Criticism 15 (1973): 234-241. Hunting argues that a close study of the poems in The Vicar helps get into the method and meaning of the novel which is satiric.

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE TRAVELLER AND THE DESERTED VILLAGE

So far, the previous chapters have shown the dominance of the family theme in Goldsmith's major fictional works. The use of the family tale in The Citizen is just a beginning for further and more developed treatment of the family theme in the subsequent works. The Vicar fully establishes the family theme with its focus on the conflict between family and selfish individualism. Despite the powerful individualism of Squire Thornhill, the Primrose family ends up triumphant. There is a persistent attempt in The Vicar to present the family as a desirable and most favorable social institution in its struggle against powerful yet destructive individualism. The main focus of the present study is to argue that in his major fictional works Goldsmith chooses the family as the smallest yet most representative social unit for both the individual and society. The family is the most preferable microcosm of the overall society. Goldsmith demands a complete balance between the individual and the social group. That is, the individual has to serve the family, yet at the same time he

has to preserve his own independence. By the same token, the family should serve its own interests without threatening or endangering the individual rights of its members. Practically speaking, such a theory is impossible to apply in full. However, as an artist Goldsmith finds it his duty to look for the best. He raises himself, as a writer, above ordinary and unquestioned social conventions. At the same time, Goldsmith leads the readers in an effort to improve society and change the existing illnesses and corruption. He gives himself the power to criticize or attack, through language, whatever diverts from the criteria he designs for society. The mode of his criticism, whether comic or satiric, depends on the degree of diversion from the criteria. If the error is small, then his reaction is light-handed. He turns into a heavy-handed satirist if the mistake, or diversion is great and difficult to amend. For example, Goldsmith employs light comedy and satire to deal with the faults of the Primrose family, while he is heavy-handed with characters like Lofty and the bailiffs in The Good Natur'd Man.

Goldsmith's socio-political ideas transcend the personal problems of the characters to include wider social problems. Characters like Altangi, Dr. Primrose, Mr. Honeywood, and Kate always face the dilemma of where to draw the line between their selfishness and sociability. The conflict between the two forces is an inseparable part of social problems. In his major fictional works, Goldsmith

draws a line between a character's selfish and social needs. Ideally, a human being must be exactly half-selfish and half-social. Goldsmith is aware that no human can meet such an exact division. In other words, it is human to be either more selfish or more sociable. Yet it is necessary for the good of society to keep a reasonable balance between the interests of the individual and those of society. This remains a complex idea because society is no more than a large group of individuals.

Working with these ideas in his two major poems, The Traveller and The Deserted Village, Goldsmith discusses how the unwise use of luxury by a few rich individuals is very harmful to the stability and happiness of the family and the social order in general. The two poems offer a strong case in defending the family against greedy individualism. The two poems associate the unwise use of luxury with individualism. They also link the family with average people who strive to satisfy their basic economic needs. Therefore, in The Traveller and The Deserted Village there is a call for frugality. The two poems suggest that the misuse of luxury strengthens individualism and consequently makes it difficult for the family and society to maintain frugality. The discussion of luxury presents another dimension of the conflict between family and individualism in the form of frugality versus luxury. Thus, the two poem form an important part of Goldsmith's overall plan in his

major fictional works to celebrate family against selfish individualism.

Unfortunately, Robert H. Hopkins purposely excludes the two poems from his satiric reading of Goldsmith's other major works. He thinks that "Goldsmith's real strength lies in his prose satire and in his stage comedy" (235).[1] It seems to me that Hopkins had Ricardo Quintana specifically in mind when he warns us not "To overrate Goldsmith's 'persuasive strain'" because this would be "harmful in the long run" (235). Quintana's chapter on Goldsmith's poetry is entitled "Poetry's Persuasive Strain." Quintana thinks highly of The Traveller and The Deserted Village and maintains that they stand at the same level, if not a little higher, than Goldsmith's prose (135).[2]

In The Traveller, the persona recalls good memories of childhood and family life and through them judges the lives of the people of Italy, Switzerland, France, Holland, and England. His childhood becomes no longer a personal experience, but a universal and human one. His nostalgia for childhood and family life leads him to judge how good or bad people live socially. In The Deserted Village the persona attacks the depopulation of the village Auburn by a selfish and wealthy individual. In both poems family life is the idealistic social basis against which any other social phenomenon is judged.

The Traveller can be divided into four parts. The initial section consists of the first 30 lines, where the

persona laments his life before he made the wrong decision to become a wanderer. The next part, lines 31-104, works as an introduction for the third part where the poem discusses natural and human life in the four European countries. The closing part, lines 423-438, links the nostalgia of the speaker in the first part to the way the Europeans live as described in parts two and three.

The persona makes it clear from the beginning that it was not his choice to leave home and wander in Europe:

> But me, not destin'd such delights to share,
> My prime of life in wandering spent and care:
> Impell'd, with steps unceasing, to pursue
> Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view;
> That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
> Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies;
> My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
> And find no spot of all the world my own.
>
> (4: 249-250. Lines: 23-30)

Describing nature and humans in Italy, Switzerland, France, Holland, and England, the persona finds out that he does not fit in any of these societies. He thinks of each country as a mother and the people as her children. Before deciding his final attitude, the persona examines the lives of the people in each country and make a careful evaluation of its merits and shortcomings:

> Hence every state, to one lov'd blessing prone,
> Conforms and models life to that alone.

Each to the favourite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends;
'Till, carried to excess in each domain,
This favourite good begets peculiar pain.

(4: 252. Lines: 93-98)

This passage reminds us of Goldsmith's announcement in the dedication of the poem to his brother, Henry, that his aim is to look with an objective and evaluative eye on how different states fail or succeed in bringing happiness for their peoples.[3]

In Italy people enjoy the sensual pleasures of their own country and the colonies which were started in various parts of the world. All kinds of luxuries are available to an excess. The painful consequences of colonization are the decline of Italian society and the depopulation of the towns:

Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail;
While nought remain'd of all that riches gave'
But towns unman'd, and lords without a slave:
And late the nation found, with fruitless skill,
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

(4: 254. Lines: 139-144)

Life in Switzerland seems to be more stable than that in Italy. Despite the harshness of nature, bad weather and barren lands, people are patient enough to endure rough natural phenomena and live happily and quietly. But the

problem with this society is the absence of the good aspects of luxury.[4] The few virtues which remain are as isolated as falcons sitting on their nests:

> Some sterner virtues o're the mountain's breast
> May sit, like falcons crow'ring on the nest;
> But all the gentler morals, such as play
> Through life's more cultur'd walks, and charm the way,
> These far dispers'd, on timorous pinions fly,
> To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.
>
> (4: 259. Lines: 233-238)

Obviously, the speaker is not happy with the way the Swiss people live. His dissatisfaction is the result of reasons different from those that form the basis of his complaints about Italy, France, Holland, and England. The Swiss people, out of ignorance, are happy despite their poverty and solitude:

> Their wants but few, there wishes all confin'd
>
> (4: 257. Line: 209)

The problem with the Swiss people is that their life is much too frugal. They have no surplus wealth to be applied to advancement. However, such a situation is not as bad as the dark side of luxury, where the extra wealth benefits very few individuals, as is the case with Italians, French, Dutch, and English societies. The speaker in The Traveller is aware that the rigid and extremely poor economy of Switzerland prevents it from full development:

But not their joys alone thus coarsly flow;
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low.
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son
Unalter'd, unimprov'd the mannars run,
And love and friendship finely pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart.

(4: 258-259. Lines: 227-232)

Significant, though, is the fact that the Swiss people are ignorant of the absence of refinement and progress in their society. The speaker dwells heavily on this idea so as to emphasize that despite their ignorance of the need for progress, the Swiss people live happily. The speaker very carefully suggests that there are little changes to be made in the Swiss society. He does not want luxury in the French or British sense to "invade" Switzerland. Although the speaker does not want to live among them, he highly praises the family life of the Swiss people. Lines 177-209 present a good Swiss society dominated by a very happy family life. Nothing seems to disturb the poor peasants' social paradise. Swiss family life is very similar to the life of the Primroses before their conflict with Squire Thornhill. After a productive day of working in his land, the poor peasant joins his wife, children, and guests in a highly enjoyable family circle:

Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children looks, that brighten of the blaze:
While his lov'd partner, boastful of her hoard,

> Displays her cleanly platter on the board;
> And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
> With many a tale repays the nightly bed.
>
> (4: 257. Lines: 193-198)

Coming approximately in the middle of The Traveller, this family picture repeats that which the speaker starts the poem with (Lines 11-22). The speaker's only complaint about the life of the Swiss people has to do with its toughness and rigidity. He wants them to improve their economy, and thus reach an acceptable balance of frugality and refinement of manners. In other words, the Swiss people need to educate themselves, to enflame their souls with knowledge, and to know "life's more cultur'd walks" (4: 259). Otherwise, their present family-like life is excellent and to be encouraged. The speaker merely wants the Swiss people to gain the benefits of luxury.

The benefits of luxury are explained in Letter 11 of The Citizen. The title of the Letter reads: "[The benefits of luxury, in making a people more wise and happy]" (2: 50). In this letter, similar to the complaint of the speaker in The Traveller about the tough life of the Swiss people. Altangi starts the letter by asking Fum Hoam:

> Do you sigh for the sever frugality of the wandering Tartar, or regret being born amidst the luxury and dissimulation of the polite? (2: 50-51)

Altangi argues that, treated wisely, luxury or extra wealth improve our knowledge and virtues (2: 52). He wants the

members of society to make luxury a source of happiness and greater ease. Altangi believes that luxury must be used for the mutual benefit of all members of society. In his effort to satisfy his needs, the individual should serve the whole society:

> Luxury is the child of society alone, the luxurious man stands in need of a thousand different artists to furnish out his happiness; it is more likely, therefore, that he should be a good citizen who is connected by motives of self-interest with so many, than the abstemious man who is united to none. (2: 52)

In The Traveller, the Swiss people are in need of new sources of happiness, similar to those Altangi talks about. They need to improve their life conditions, without giving away their family-like life. It is important, though, that the Swiss people not become like the peoples of France, Holland, and England. The misuse of luxury in France has led to pride, in Holland to tyranny, and in England to individualism.

In contrast to Switzerland, France is the "land of mirth and social ease.(4: 241). The problem here is that the French people are proud of their achievement to the degree of selfishness. They not only praise themselves highly, but also expect others to pile praise on them (4: 267-272). Moving to Holland, the persona finds Hollanders patient people in their non-stop challenging of the ocean,

which always threatens to usurp their land. They are also industrious people who have accumulated wealth and progressed in different walks of life. However, they suffer from "all those ills superfluous treasure brings..." (4: 261). The "Industrious habits" rule over the people. As a result, the tendency towards dictatorship has sprung up in Holland. Needy people, looking for luxuries, work hard to sell products to the rich, who become a superior class. The clash between the two classes divides the people into tyrants and slaves.

Looking for a better life, the persona's "genius spreads her wing" to England. Here, unlike in Holland, too much freedom and independence has become a problem:

> That independence Britons prize too high,
> Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie;
> The self dependent lordings stand alone,
> All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown;
>
> (4: 263. Lines: 339-343)

The weakness in British society these lines discuss strongly relates to Goldsmith's dissatisfaction with the individuals' tendency to acquire more freedom and independence at the expense of the vital "social tie" required for a stable and productive society, hence the poem's attack against any attempt to threaten or eliminate monarchy in England:

> Yes, brother curse with me that baleful hour
> When first ambition struck at regal power;
>
> (4: 266. Lines: 393-394)

Like other Europeans, the British people call for more freedom and independence solely in order to gain more wealth and luxury. The results of these ambitions are disastrous:

> Nor this the worst. As nature's ties decay,
> As duty , love, and honour fail to sway,
> Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
> Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
> Hence all obedience bows to these alone,
> And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown;
>
> (4: 264. Lines: 349-354)

After his long and unsatisfactory trip throughout four European countries, the persona makes a full circle move to go back to where he began. This idea can be best seen by referring to two passages, one from the opening part, the other from the closing part of The Traveller:

> Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
> My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee;
> Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
> And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.
>
> (4: 249. Lines: 7-10)

and,

> Why have I stray'd, from pleasure and repose,
> To seek a good each government bestows?
> In every government, though terrors reign,
> Though tyrant kings, or tyrant laws restrain,
> How small, of all that human hearts endure,
> That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.

(4: 269. Lines: 425-430)

There is no change between the persona's initial and final attitudes. He is now more experienced and knowledgeable concerning some countries and their peoples, but he remains the nostalgic and wishful thinker we meet at the beginning. The first 30 lines bear many similarities to ideas recurrent in Goldsmith's other works. The strong bonds the speaker feels to his family, despite the great distance which separates him, remind us of Letter 3 in The Citizen of the World, where Altangi tells Fum Hoam:

> The farther I travel I feel the pain of separation with stronger force, those ties that bind me to my native country, and you are still unbroken. By every remove, I only drag a greater length of chain. (2: 20-12)

This is the same image used in Line 10 of The Traveller. Then, in lines 11-22 the poem describes his brother's happy and generous family. The description is similar to that of the Primrose family in Chapter 1 of The Vicar Of Wakefield.[5]

Thus, The Traveller uses the personal experience of a traveler to discuss the general tendency in Europe at his time to sacrifice social ties for the sake of greater wealth and independence for the individual. The poem presents two kinds of societies: the lost family life which the persona remembers and laments, described in the opening and closing parts; and the present-time society which the persona sees in the countries he imagines visiting. Significantly, there

is no mention of a specific town or country where the speaker spent his early years. It appears as if it is a completely visionary and imaginative place. All we know is that the persona knows very well what kind of family life he and his brother used to enjoy. In contrast, the European countries known to the persona are mentioned by their real names and his descriptions contain many references to specific geographic places in them. The social life in these countries occupies 392 lines out of the 438 lines that compose the poem. Desperate, the speaker loses hope to regain or relive his past good life. The kind of life the speaker laments has become very unrealistic:

> Vain, very vain, my weary search to find,
> That bliss which only centres in the mind.
>
> (4: 268. Lines: 423-424)

As its title suggests, the poem is also about the "Prospect of Society." Prospect "implies expectation of a particular event, condition, or development of a definite interest or concern" (Webster's Dictionary). Goldsmith was viewing the decline of normal or familial social ties throughout Europe, ties giving way to the new and strong wave of economic change and individualism.

In no other part of his writings does Goldsmith more clearly and strongly disclose his socio-political views than in The Deserted Village. In the dedication of this poem to his friend Joshua Reynolds, Goldsmith briefly summarizes his strong attitude against the socially dangerous and

undesirable consequences of luxury and individualism, mainly on the expense of more important social institutions like the family. "Luxury" is the term Goldsmith uses to summarize materialistic progress, while "antiquity" stands for the prior social order:

> For twenty or thirty years passed, it has been the fashion to consider luxury as one of the greatest national advantages; and all the wisdom of antiquity in that particular, as erroneous. Still however, I must remain a professed ancient on that head, and continue to think those luxuries prejudicial and to states, by which so many vices are introduced, and so many kingdoms have been undone. (4: 286)

There is nothing wrong with luxury if it is used properly.[6] To be acceptable, the use of luxury should be guided by reason and taste. In the concluding chapter of An Enquiry Into The Present State of Polite Learning in Europe, Goldsmith explains what kind of luxury he defends:

> The man, the nation, must therefore be good, whose chiefest luxuries consist in the refinement of reason; and reason can never be universally cultivated unless guided by Taste, which may be considered as the link between science and common sense, the medium thorough which learning should ever be seen by society. (1: 337)

Contrary to how luxury is viewed in this passage, The Deserted Village tells us about an unreasonable decision to

depopulate the village Auburn. Luxury is used improperly to destroy a long-lived happy community. Throughout the poem there is a severe attack on the way luxury is wrongly used to justify the destruction of the countryside by the invading wealthy and selfish rich individuals:

> O luxury! Thou curst by heaven's decree,
> How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
> How do thy potions with insidious joy,
> Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
> Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
> Boast of a florid vigour not their own.
>
> (4: 302. Lines: 385-390)

The misdirected use of luxury turns it into a curse on society. The poem shows how the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few devastates the rest of the population and leave them victims of poverty. The persona began his life as a poor farmer, but now he is wealthy enough for a modest retirement. In his youth, the persona used to live among his family and friends happily and peacefully. The first 34 lines describe the life of the happy community of Auburn before the disaster. The whole population of the village used to constitute one big family sharing all kinds of living activities. In contrast, the destruction is caused by one rich tyrant:

> Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
> And desolation saddens all thy green:
> One only master grasps the whole domain,

And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;

(4: 288. Lines: 37-40)

There are many other passages which show the conflict between the single tyrant responsible for devastating and depopulating the village, and the group of people who used to be its population. In most cases, the village and its people appear in social groups, while the one or ones who are responsible for the depopulation appear as an isolated force or person. The family, the church, the house, the village, and the natural surroundings represent Auburn, while singular names like tyrant, master, "The man of wealth and pride," and "erring man" describe the economic and political powers responsible for depopulating the village.

A relatively long part of the poem, lines 139-216, deals with the village's preacher. We see his house and the church he serves as centers which attract the people. They are places where villagers convene for entertainment, worship, and learning. Another long passage, lines 113-136, presents an animated "sweet confusion" of humans, animals, and natural phenomena in Auburn prior to the depopulation. Here, the "mingling notes" of the "playful children," the "noisy geese," the "evening's close," and many other combinations give us a comprehensive view of how happy, harmonious, and stable the life of the village was. However, the passage concludes with a gloomy picture of the village after the rich man's arrival:

For all the bloomy flush of life is fled.

All but yon widowed, solitary thing
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced, in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

(4: 292. Lines: 129-136)

The widowed matron described in this passage as a "solitary thing" is the only remaining sign of the vanished social life. With the arrival of the new owner of the land, every human and natural resource becomes sterile, fruitless, and barren.

Similar to Goldsmith's attitude in the dedication of the poem, the new economic and social changes in Auburn are definitely a devastating curse. Thus, the overall tone of The Deserted Village is that of anger, dissatisfaction, and protest against the, then, new wave of wealthy individuals. The poem courageously addresses the authorities and obviously warns them (lines 265-268) against the dangers of the wealthy individual trying to replace the basic social group, the rural village, merely to entertain himself:

... .The man of wealth and pride,
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
The rope that wraps him limbs in silken sloth,

> His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
> Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
>
> (4: 298. Lines: 275-281)

The protest in this passage comes from a strong and confident observer who has returned to his native village and, who is, a participant in Auburn society. The depopulated village is representative of many other villages which either had or are going to have the same problem. John Montague argues that

> Auburn, in fact, is identefied with the good of society and of England, and The Deserted Village is one of the first statements of a great modern theme: the erosion of traditional values and natural rhythms in a commercial society; the fall of Auburn is the fall of the social order.[7] (103)

The speaker in The Deserted Village sounds like a harbinger of a social and economic national disaster. His voice is loud and powerful. Aided by the poetic muse, the majority of the countryside population, and the righteousness of his claim, he still has some hope either to reverse the depopulation, or at least to stop it half way through: "And half the business of destruction done" (4: 302).

The hope the poetic muse gives is only mental and spiritual. Taking a step further, the poem suggests some practical ways to stop the depopulation. The speaker addresses "statesmen" who are "friends to truth" to evaluate the situation and then give judgment and decision. He tries

his best to explain the seriousness and urgency of the case by linking the problem to British foreign trade. His claim is that "men of wealth and pride" use the money they gain from foreign trading to buy big pieces of land in the countryside, forcing the poor villagers to evacuate. The speaker calls on the statesman to evaluate both the gain and the loss resulting from this act. But the speaker insists that the new wealth "is but a name/That leaves our useful products still the same" (4: 297). Buying large parts of the countryside, rich men, being very few in number compared to the villagers, deprive the country of important human and economic supplies. The evacuated people become economic parasites, and the new owner ends up using the land for his own personal entertainment.

Like The Traveller, The Deserted Village starts with a personal problem of the speaker, who laments the loss of his home and the happy life of childhood and youth. Both poems focus on the importance and necessity of the family and community.[8] The two personas strongly long for their homes. Yet, there are two major differences in the ways each of them handles his problems. First, the traveler seems to be weakened by his long wandering in Europe to the degree of losing hope that he will return home. His mood is more of pining than longing. In The Deserted Village, however, the speaker turns his personal pains into a national affair. He is stronger and more confident of winning the battle against the wealthy but few, individuals, who are depopulating the

countryside. He makes of himself a representative not only of Auburn but of any other village threatened with depopulation. I have to disagree with Donald Davie when he claims that "The Deserted Village prescribes no remedy...[while] The Traveller does prescribe a remedy..." (83). I am not sure how Davie would react to the obvious call for the "statesmen" to interfere to stop the depopulation. More important is the poem's careful evaluation of the great losses resulting from the bad use of wealth. In The Travellers's case, it seems that Davie overlooks two important points. The first is the persona's language of desperation when he asks his brother to "curse" with him the anti-monarchy people (Lines 393-396). The persona laments what happened to the monarchy, but never calls directly for enhancing its power. He is too desperate even to think of such a remedy. In contrast to him, the persona in The Deserted Village openly calls on the authorities for help, making it very clear that he still has some hope. In addition, he believes that poetry can teach people what went wrong and how to fix it. Second, the persona in The Traveller appears completely desperate and hopeless of finding any remedy when, in lines 423-425, he confesses that the kind of life he used to enjoy "'only centers in mind,'" asking himself "'Why have I stray'd from pleasure and repose'" (Line 425).

The Traveller and The Deserted Village side with the family, the home, the community, and any other social group.

In both poems, luxury is strongly associated with selfish individualism, while frugality is associated with the family. They specifically attack the abuse of luxury at the hands of the few. In the two poems luxury is strongly associated with selfish individualism. Goldsmith wants the extra wealth of the country to serve as many members of society as possible. As early as his 1759 BEE, essay number 5, entitled "Upon POLITICAL FRUGALITY," Goldsmith calls for replacing luxury with frugality:

> ...some who have made the eulogium of luxury, have represented it as the natural consequence of every country that is become rich. Did we not employee our extraordinary wealth in superfluities, say they, what other means would there be to employ in it? To which it may be answered, If frugality were established in the state, if our expenses were laid out rather in the necessaries than the superfluities of life, there might be fewer wants, and even fewer pleasures, but infinitely more happiness. The rich and the great would be better able to satisfy their creditors; they would be better able to marry their children, and, instead of one marriage at present, there might be two if such regulations took place. (1: 442-443)

We should notice that Goldsmith believes it is impossible to completely replace luxury with frugality. Realistically speaking, Goldsmith wants the society to, at least, abolish

"some unnecessary expenses, which have no tendency to promote happiness or virtue, and which might be directed to better purposes" (1: 438). If things remain in society as they appear in The Traveller and The Deserted Village, then luxury will only strengthen individualism and weaken the family. The conflict between these two social entities has economics as one of its several dimensions. As we have seen in The Vicar, the conflict centers on the issues of courtship and marriage between the Squire and Olivia. In the next chapter, I shall discuss the plays. In She Stoops to Conquer, the conflict is between Tony Lumpkin and the Hardcastle family, represented by Kate. The son of Mrs. Hardcastle from a previous marriage, Tony's disturbed family background makes him very individualistic. On the other hand, Kate represents those family members who compromise their personal interests for the sake of the family.

NOTES

1- Robert H. Hopkins, The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith (Baltimore, 1969).

2- Ricardo Quintana, Oliver Goldsmith: A Georgian Study (London, 1967).

3- Goldsmith associates himself with the persona when he considers himself a wanderer mentioning his trip to Europe, specifically Switzerland. He praises his brother's decision not only to stay home but to abandon all claims to fame. See Goldsmith's dedication of the poem to his brother, 4: 245-247, especially 245. The dedication and lines 7-22 have many similarities.

4- Peter Dixon gives a good account of the different meanings of luxury for Goldsmith. See Oliver Goldsmith Revisited (London, 1991), 97-101.

5- Arthur Friedman mentions this in a note. "the description of the Primrose family in chap. i of The Vicar of Wakefield" 4:249.

6- Peter Dixon leads a good discussion on the double meaning of luxury in David Hume and Goldsmith, 97-98.

7- See John Montague, "The Sentimental Prophecy: A Study of The Deserted Village." The Art of Oliver Goldsmith. ed. Andrew Swarbrick (London, 1984).

8- Though stated vaguely, Donald Davie's comment that to be fully understood the two poems should be read together is important. See his "Notes on Goldsmith's Politics." The Art of Oliver Goldsmith. ed. Andrew Swarbrick (London, 1984), 88-89.

CHAPTER V

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE GOOD NATUR'D MAN AND SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

This chapter shall concentrate on Goldsmith's plays and discusses several points. I divide this chapter into two parts: part one discusses The Good Natur'd Man, part two She Stoops to Conquer. I shall concentrate on whether Goldsmith is a sentimentalist in the plays, especially, The Good Natur'd Man. Moreover, I shall argue that Goldsmith discusses first the influence of the complete absence of family life on Young Honeywood. I will also discuss the influence of partial families on Olivia and Miss Richland, and the influence of disturbed family life on Leontine. I will argue that the new aspect of the family theme in The Good Natur'd Man, in general, is the absence of ordinary and stable family life. All the characters here have family problems. In the plays, unlike The Vicar, we do not find families like the Primroses. There the conflict is an obvious one between the Primrose family and Squire Thornhill, whereas in this plays, the problem has to do with characters like Honeywood who never experienced ordinary family life.

In Goldsmith's other works, the main idea is the conflict between the family and individualism. In The Citizen, Altangi is confused between playing the role of the family father or being the individualized outside observer who strives to distance himself from family and society. In The Vicar, the Primrose family collectively thinks and acts to secure good livings and husbands for Olivia and Sophia. To reach their two targets they have to confront the bad and individualistic Squire. In a similar way, the personas in The Traveller and The Deserted Village attack the individuals who use luxury for their selfish desires doing a considerable harm to society. The two personas belong to families whose existence has been badly hurt by wealthy individuals. They lament the family life they used to live and put the responsibility for losing it on the bad use of luxury by a few wealthy individuals. Honeywood has a family problem, but it is the opposite of selfish individualism. He is the opposite of Squire Thornhill and the wealthy individuals in the poems. They are extremely selfish and individualistic, while Honeywood is extremely generous and sociable. Moreover, Honeywood does not take the middle stand of the Primroses in The Vicar or Kate Hardcastle in She Stoops to Conquer. Therefore, the first part of this chapter will discuss why Honeywood is excessively good and sociable. Concentrating on him as an orphan who looks for protection and compensation for a family life he never had. I shall also argue that Olivia and Leontine have problems

because their family lives are, respectively, partial and disturbed. Next, I will show how the character of Honeywood finds its origin in The Citizen of the World and some other writings, and then move on to a discussion of how Goldsmith treats Honeywood, Miss Richland, Leontine, and Olivia as people who belong to partial families.

Honeywood is an orphan who looks for protection and friendship through showing excessive generosity and goodness to everybody. Unlike other characters who come from partial families, Honeywood does not have the chance to enjoy any kind of family life, except for a group of corrupted servants. The second part of this chapter discusses She Stoops to Conquer. The play presents two kinds of families: the ordinary and stable family of Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle, and the family of Sir Charles and his son Marlow. Tony Lumpkin and Constance Neville represent partial families. The play discusses how characters who come from ordinary families, like Kate, lead a successful life, while those who belong to partial families, like Tony, face all kinds of social troubles.

Reading The Good Natur'd Man and She Stoops to Conquer the question remains: how far can we go in taking the two comedies seriously? Or can we take them seriously in the first place? Starting from The Citizen of the World and The Vicar of Wakefield, we notice a continuation and further development of courtship and marriage as the central ideas which prevail in the two plays. Fear of spoiling the lovely

comedy in the two plays should not prevent us from taking them seriously, especially when attempting an interpretation. We should keep in mind that the social dimension in the plays does not spoil their comic influence; rather, it increases it. Honeywood and Tony entertain us, yet at the same time they are satirized whenever they deviate from socially accepted conventions. As shrewd girls, Miss Richland and Kate gain our praise. Ricardo Quintana persuasively argues that

> Goldsmith had no intention of merely manipulating the shallow formulas of the then-popular comedy... New devices, new ironies, new insights--these are the important things about The Good Natur'd Man and She Stoops to Conquer. (144)[1]

Goldsmith's valuable contribution to the theater came at a time (1767 and 1773) when excessive sentimentalism was dominating the comedy stage. A major part of Goldsmith's efforts was to react "against excessive emphasis on sensibility..." (Hume, 355).[2] Whether or not the two plays are for or against sentimentalism has been an issue of debate among scholars.[3] It seems that Goldsmith's famous assault on sentimentalism in An ESSAY on the THEATER; OR, A COMPARISON between LAUGHING and SENTIMENTAL COMEDY (1773) has not led many to consider him an anti-sentimental playwright. The essay appeared immediately before the production of She Stoops to Conquer.[4] Reading the essay, it is really difficult to understand how Goldsmith could become

a victim of sentimentalism, even to the least degree. Goldsmith is clearly aware of sentimental comedy's deviation from what a comedy must be:

> a new species of Dramatic Composition has been introduced under the name of Sentimental Comedy, in which the virtues of Private Life are exhibited, rather than the Vices exposed; and the Distresses, rather than the Faults of Mankind, make our interest in the piece. These Comedies have had of late great success, perhaps from their novelty, and also from their flattering every man in his favourate foible. In these Plays almost all the Characters are good, and exceedingly generous; they are lavish enough of their Tin Money on the Stage, and though they want Humour, have abundance of Sentiment and Feeling. (3: 212. Goldsmith's emphasis)

In The Good Natur'd Man (1764) Goldsmith criticizes sentimental comedy, mainly through Honeywood. As he argues in the ESSAY, Goldsmith exposes the vices and follies of the characters. Unlike those in sentimental comedies, most of the characters in the play, especially Honeywood, Lofty, and Bailiffs, are direct targets for comedy and satire. More importantly, Goldsmith looks at the theater as a place for instruction and a place where comedy must not be used as an excuse for absurdity. In 1760, Goldsmith wrote an essay for the Weekly Magazine entitled On the present State of our

Theatres where he attacks the two plays Harlequin's Invasion and The Fair for their absurdity and absence of reasoning:

> Sorry I am to think that the stage which might be turned into a fine school for instruction, should thus be made a scene for absurdity, that men who come to be rationally amused, should, upon recollection blush to think of the futility of their passing the evening. (3: 55-56)[5]

W. F. Gallaway argues that Goldsmith

> is aware that the sentimentalist is an idealist who views life through the false glasses of romance, and not seldom an unconscious hypocrite seeking an escape fro a realism he found unpleasant and morality he found severe. (1180)[6]

Gallaway's view is very important in understanding why Honeywood behaves the way he does. Except for a short passage at the beginning of the play, we do not have any other source to explain why Honeywood is the kind of person he is. Most of the information we get in the rest of the play tells us how Honeywood lives. This major part of the play mostly serves comedic and satiric purposes, not only for Honeywood but for the other characters as well. We can assume that the information we get, for the most part, represents Goldsmith's severe attack on sentimental comedy.

As a sentimental character, Honeywood is under attack by Jarvis, Sir William, and Miss Richland. The contrast between them and Honeywood works fine and gives us a chance

to laugh at him and show our dissatisfaction with his faults. However, the more important lesson is to know why Honeywood is a sentimentalist. Gallaway talks about "an escape from reality" and a severe morality as two reasons for being a sentimentalist. This is exactly the case with Honeywood. The absence of an ordinary family life has led Honeywood to be morally confused. He looks for protection and compensation for his lost family life. A group of morally corrupt but obedient servants enables him to be the head of a family, one who solves problems and takes care of spending. The servants refer to themselves as members of Honeywood's family.[7] Honeywood is willing to endure all kinds of trouble with his creditors but not the poverty of a needy family. Instead of paying his urgent bills, he decides to send ten guineas to "the poor gentleman and his children" (5: 21). His greatest concern is to relieve the poor family even at the expense of his own comfort. In an argument with Jarvis, Honeywood seems to be aware that what he does is against reasonable thinking:

> Jarvis. 'Sdeath! Sir, the question now is how to relieve yourself. Yourself--Hav'nt I reason to be out of my senses, when I see things going at sixes and sevens?'
>
> Honeywood. 'Whatever reason you may have for being out of your senses, I hope you'll allow that I'm not quite unreasonable for continuing in mine.' (5: 21. Goldsmith's emphasis)

In his 1760 ESSAY on THEATRE, Goldsmith criticizes the two plays staged at that time for their absurdity and lack of rational amusement. The Good Natur'd Man was staged in 1764. Why would Goldsmith then create a character like Honeywood who seems to be very irrational and unreasonable? If we take what Honeywood does at face value, then he would be another copy of the sentimental characters that Goldsmith attacks. In his essay, Goldsmith considers watching these plays as a waste of time (3: 56). Thus, The Good Natur'd Man not only laughs at sentimentalism but, more importantly, it traces the deep reasons for its existence. Goldsmith finds Honeywood's being an orphan and the lack of any familial raising and protection are the reasons for his sentimentality. It is completely justifiable and legitimate for us to blame Honeywood for his weaknesses, yet we should go beyond him as an individual and be aware that his problem originally has to do with the absence of an ordinary family life.

The Good Natur'd Man and She Stoops to Conquer take care of amusement and instruction. They even "dig" deeper into social problems to show why characters, like Honeywood and Kate, play certain social roles. Each play marks a certain stage in Goldsmith's approach to social problems. Taken separately, each play can stand on its own as a unique literary work. However, if we take the two plays together with The Citizen of the World and The Vicar of Wakefield, Goldsmith's great artistic and literary powers will appear

more genuine and subtle. In addition, these works complete each other through the recurrence of the family theme. The Good Natur'd Man mainly discusses how partial families could be a source of serious problems for their members, while She Stoops to Conquer discusses the conflict between partial families, represented by Tony, and ordinary families, represented by Kate.

1

Discussing The Good Natur'd Man, let us first see the similarities between the Man in Black in The Citizen of the World and Young Honeywood.[8] This comparison is important because in The Citizen Goldsmith presents the Man in Black as a sentimental character to satirize sentimentality. Goldsmith does not tell us in detail why the Man in Black is excessively good and generous. By using Honeywood in The Good Natur'd Man, who is similarly good and generous, Goldsmith takes the further step to explain that family background is the reason for Honeywood's excessiveness. Therefore, the superficial and brief account of the Man in Black in Letters 26 and 27 in The Citizen is followed by a fully developed discussion in The Good Natur'd Man. To attack sentimentality is an end in The Citizen, while attacking Honeywood in The Good Natur'd Man is a means to explain how and why excessive goodness and sociability take place.

The Man in Black is a close friend of Altangi. Early in their acquaintance, Altangi describes what he thinks is the true nature of the Man in Black:

> I have known him profess himself a man hater, while his cheek was glowing with compassion; and while his looks were softened into pity, I have heard him use the language of the most unbounded ill nature. (2: 109)

To support his knowledge of the Man in Black, Altangi mentions a few situations where the Man in Black gives away all he has to poor people, leaving nothing for himself (2: 110-112). Then, in the next letter (27), Altangi quotes the "[The history of the Man in Black]." There is a sharp contrast between what Altangi thinks the Man in Black is, an extremely generous person, and what the Man in Black says about himself: "to give away nothing, and thus much in our power to give" (2: 120). Defending himself against the accusations of being "good natured," the Man in Black, explains that his father was a dedicated believer in universal benevolence. As for himself, the Man in Black claims that he started his life exactly as a very good-natured man, then he changed his mind and became a "generosity-hater" (2: 119). Apparently, Goldsmith decided to fully explore this character when he composed The Good Natur'd Man, "in 1766 or early in 1767" (5: 4).

To understand the play, we should focus on the family background of the characters, and see how it affects their

social lives. The characters, depending on their relationships, could be grouped under two families: Honeywood, Sir William, and the servants; and Mr. and Mrs. Croaker, Leontine, Miss Richland, and Olivia. The only complete family in the ordinary sense are the Croakers and their son, Leontine. Miss Richland refers to Mr. Croaker as "my guardian" (5: 32). Apparently, she has been living with the Croakers for a long time. Potentially, she is a wealthy girl: "a good part of her fortune consist of a claim upon government [government securities]" (5: 31). There are two Olivias in the play. One is the real daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Croaker, who "has been with her aunt, at Lyons, since she was a child..." (5: 30). The other Olivia is Leontine's love, then wife, whom he brings from France, for a while, deceiving his parents, that she is his sister.

Honeywood treats his servants as members of his family, and they live accordingly. Honeywood is single, yet his servants always talk about themselves being part of his family. He very strongly believes in friendship , and is happily willing to deal with his friends as members of his family. Since Honeywood has no family, he yields to friendship as an appropriate substitute.

Through the use of shattered family groups in The Good Natur'd Man, Goldsmith brilliantly combines the comic and the serious. Read or staged, the play presents a comedy of errors and deceptions. Underneath its highly comic events, we can see the various social problems of partial and

unstable families. The two family groups in the play lack many basic requirements of the ordinary family we saw in The Vicar of Wakefield. Even the Croakers' family is greatly wanting in the stability and harmony we saw in the Vicar's family. It is true that the play is difficult to follow in terms of the plot. But we still can enjoy its funny scenes and characters. Most importantly, if, as many critics have wrongly suggested, the play seems to be badly constructed with an "overtly complicated plot, " this should heighten our appreciation of Goldsmith's artistic abilities, and should not in any way be considered a weakness on his part. Similar to what we see in The Vicar, the overall structure of The Good Natur'd Man reflects exactly its own thematic design. We have to expect that a play discussing social problems like friendship, courtship, and marriage among partial and unstable families will look, structurally and in terms of narration, similar and appropriately represent its own themes. Two kinds of readers or spectators might enjoy the play, those who like it only for its comedy and fun, and those who are interested in its deeper meanings, its social satire. A playwright like Goldsmith would not let a comedy of his go without a serious, though indirect, didactic message. He is aware that he writes mostly for spectators who attend to enjoy a play and directly get satisfaction for the money they pay. At the same time, there is another group who wants to enjoy the play and analyze it in a much deeper way. Since its first appearance on the stage, The

Good Natur'd Man has been criticized for its complexity and ambiguity. Little or no attention has been paid to why it is so.

The first four acts of the play take place alternatively in Honeywood's house and Croaker's house. The fifth, and last, act happens in an inn. The discussions in the first and third acts center on Honeywood's unusual and problematic good nature, and the attempt of his uncle, his servant Jarvis, and Miss Richland to reform him. The second and fourth acts discuss the courtship of Leontine, Miss Richland, and Olivia, with the many deceptions and errors that mainly involve Mr. Croaker's hilarious reactions. Act IV adds, to the list, Lofty who pretends to be an intimate acquaintance of great and powerful people. Act V combines the two groups in the inn, and brings the play to a peaceful ending, clearing up many pervious deceptions and errors. Finally, Honeywood is back to normal and he professes his love for Miss Richland. Leontine and Olivia end up as husband and wife. Lofty promises self reform. Sir William, Miss Richland, and the Croakers do not undergo any considerable changes. Despite the simplicity of its individual events, the play is hard to follow, and we are always left with complex and partial information. Such a setting is perfect for comic influence, where the audience laughs at the ignorance of the characters and impatiently waits for the deceptions and errors to be straightened out.

More importantly, Goldsmith explores the character of Young Honeywood as a good natured man by giving it various social dimensions. In the play, we know why Young Honeywood is a good-natured man, and how such a major inconsistency can be treated. Young Honeywood is in dire need of the love and attention of others. From what the readers or spectators know, Honeywood has lived as an orphan. Nothing whatsoever is mentioned about his nuclear family. The only information we know about his familial past and present is that his uncle, Sir William Honeywood, has taken care of him since he was a child. But unfortunately, Sir William Honeywood took care of him only through letters he used to send from Italy. A short part of the first scene (a dialogue between Jarvis, Honeywood's servant, and Sir William) might help in understanding Honeywood's personality:

> Jarvis. 'I can't help being blunt, and being very angry too, when I hear you talk of disinheriting so good, so worth a young gentleman as your nephew, my master. All the world loves him.'
>
> Sir Will. 'Say rather, that he loves all the world; that is his fault.'
>
> Jarvis. 'I'm sure that there is no part of it more dear to him that you are, tho' he has not seen you since he was a child.'

Sir Will. 'What signifies his affection to me, or how can I be proud of a place in a heart where every sharper and coxcomb find an easy entrance?'

Jarvis. 'I grant you that he's rather too good natur'd; that he's too much every man's man; that he laughs this minute with one, and cries the next with another; but whose instructions may he thank for all this?'

Sir Will. 'Not mine, sure? My letters to him during my employment in Italy, taught him only that philosophy which might prevent, not defend his errors.'

Jarvis. 'Faith, begging your honour's pardon, I'm sorry they taught him any philosophy at all; it has only serv'd to spoil him... .'

Sir Will. 'Don't let us ascribe his faults to his philosophy, I intreat you. No Jarvis, his good nature arises rather from his fears of offending the importunate, than his desire of making the deserving happy. (5: 19)

We have to assume that the only source of spiritual and materialistic support for Honeywood has been his uncle, Sir William, who gave him an allowance from his own estate. Yet, Honeywood has not seen his uncle "since he was a child." His only source of familial guidance has been the letters he used to receive from his uncle. Jarvis thinks

that the world loves Honeywood. Sir William believes the exact opposite. The problem with Honeywood is seemingly simple: "he's rather too good natur'd." But, everybody around him seems to consider it to be a serious one. He is overtly generous and trusts everybody. The servants worry about their master's future, mostly for selfish reasons, since their easy jobs will disappear if he becomes bankrupt.

At the same time, The Good Natur'd Man raises a bigger and more important question: why do Honeywood and some other characters have such personal problems? Intentionally, Goldsmith leaves us with little or no detailed information of the characters' personal or familial backgrounds. The first reason of course is that a play is not a place for extensive information on the characters or events. Unlike a novel, a play should be shorter and more concise in its presentation. Second, to focus on his main point, Goldsmith fully uses the limited narrative space to discuss only the family background and relationships of the characters. Except for the unnecessarily long bailiff scene, the play discusses family problems, specifically friendship, courtship, and marriage.

Honeywood is an orphan. Sir William, who never lived in England since Honeywood was a child, is the only blood relative in Honeywood's life. It would be a big mistake to assume that Honeywood is only and purely a good-natured man. His carelessness in paying back his debts, and his ability to fool the justice system through bribing the bailiffs

suggests he has the potential to be an outlaw. This is not going too far in evaluating his character, especially when we see him towards the end very aware of his problem and willing to reform himself. He is not a naive person whose only care is to serve others. Rather he is trying to solve a serious problem he is aware of, and which started in his childhood. What prevented Honeywood from deviating into criminality was the continuous financial support of his uncle, and the letters Sir William used to send him from Italy.

From the limited information we have on Honeywood, we assume that he was not raised as an ordinary child. Besides other, yet unknown, social influences, Sir William's letters were his only source of education. Sir William says: " My letters to him during my employment in Italy, taught him only that philosophy which might prevent, not defend his errors" (5: 19). Sir William never mentions any other source of family education for Honeywood. Honeywood himself, or any other character, never mentions anything about his own family.

To compensate for the great loss, Honeywood decides to befriend the world. He decides, being himself in need of love, to love everybody regardless. In answering Jarvis's statement that "All the world loves him [Honeywood]," Sir William insists: "Say rather, that he loves all the world; that is his fault" (5: 19). As a character, Honeywood is part of the overall design of the play. As they do when

interpreting The Vicar, many readers of The Good Natur'd Man focus on Honeywood and see other characters through him. Similar to Dr. Primrose, Honeywood is part of a family group, and the play does not only discuss his excessive good nature. Goldsmith employs a traditional and original form as a point of departure for discussing deeper and important problems. Ricardo Quintana nicely describes the standard part of the play:

> Two lovers, often two pairs of lovers, find themselves at the outset confronted by various obstacles to marriage. Immediately ensuing events only serve to prolong their plight. In the end, however and inevitably, fortune consents to smile for them, the obstacles vanish, and the closing scene finds them about to be happily united, prepared to live blissfully forever. (141)[9]

Goldsmith uses this traditional form to attack sentimentalism in a humorous and attractive way. As a sentimental character, Honeywood creates all kinds of problems and difficulties for himself and the people around him. Sir William, Miss Richland, and many creditors are the immediate victims of Honeywood's excessive generosity and misjudgments. Sir William satirizes his nephew and executes a plan exposing the weaknesses of his nephew to Honeywood himself and to the others. Miss Richland, a helper of Sir William in reforming Honeywood, fools him by pretending not to know that those he introduces as servents or friends are

officers. She ridicules Honeywood and the bailiffs, revealing how socially harmful they are. Sir William and Miss Richland play similar roles with Mr. Croaker and Lofty. The comic and satiric effects of the play result mainly from the contrast between the good characters (Sir William and Miss Richland), and those who have serious social problems (like Mr. and Mrs. Croaker, and Lofty).

But why do the social problems in The Good Natur'd Man take place to begin with? Goldsmith used the same strategy before in The Vicar. On one level the novel discusses the problem of how a family, which suddenly runs into poverty, tries to manage to secure husbands for its two daughters. On a deeper level, The Vicar discusses why the family behaves in such a way. Dr. Primrose and other members of his family are an example of an ordinary family which keeps its unity despite the dangerous problems its members encounter. Thus, it is not a coincidence to have most of the characters in The Good Natur'd Man coming from partial families. This time, Goldsmith departs from the standard family shape (that of Dr. Primrose, Mrs. Primrose, and their children) to a different family structure where the characters come from incomplete families. Except for the Croakers, we are left with family members who are cut off from the ordinary family structure. Honeywood has lived as an orphan. Miss Richland too has for a long time lived with the Croakers as her guardians. The two Olivias are separated from their original families. Honeywood's

servants consider themselves to be members of the so-called Honeywood family. We do not even know if Sir William has any other family members beside Honeywood. And finally, the Croakers have had enough problems raising Leontine in a way that allows him to deceive them regarding Olivia's real identity. Besides, Mr. and Mrs. Croaker, supposedly a husband and a wife, live as exact opposites. Jarvis describes them as follows:

> '[They are] the very reverse of each other; she all laugh and no joke; he always complaining, and never sorrowful; a fretful poor soul that has a new distress for every hour in the four and twenty. (5: 40)

Such a highly defused family picture in the play gives Goldsmith a perfect chance to use comedy or satire whenever appropriate. In contrast, comic and satiric intent in The Vicar is generally mild and indirect. In the first half of the novel, the general tone, in keeping with the stable family life, is quiet. After Olivia's elopement, and throughout the second half, the comic and satiric attacks on Dr. Primrose's family and Thornhill intensify remarkably. But comedy and satire throughout The Vicar, especially during the first half, never reach the level of directness we see in The Good Natur'd Man.

Most characters in the play reflect their shaky family backgrounds. This fact would have been of little or importance, had not it been a common social background for

most of the characters. Poking fun and sometimes satirizing many of the characters reveal the problems resulting from the lack of healthy family relationships. But ultimately, amusement receives the lion's share. Honeywood's promise to reform himself comes at the very end as part of conventionally closing the play and resolving the dispute with his uncle (5: 81). The only major story which develops gradually and finally comes to a happy ending is the marriage of Leontine and Olivia. To a lesser degree, the relationship between Honeywood and Richland is promising and might end in their marriage, despite Honeywood's insistence on replacing love between them with friendship:

> 'I had the insolence to think of loving you. Yes, Madam, while I was pleading the passion of another, my heart was tortur'd with its own. But it is over, it was unworthy our friendship, and let it be forgotten. (5: 76)

Honeywood does not undergo any essential development throughout the action. What we know about him mainly comes from other characters, especially Sir William, Miss Richland, and Jarvis. Leontine and Olivia directly act to insure the positive development of their relationship. Their story is the only developing one in the play. Here, one should remember that Leontine is the only character who belongs to a typical family.

Despite their shaky relationship and differences as a husband and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Croaker agree on the

importance of Leontine's marriage. But the marriage would have been much easier to achieve had the Croakers led a stable and harmonious family life. For comic and satiric purposes, Leontine's efforts to marry Olivia are replete with deceptions and errors. Leontine independently makes the decision to establish the relationship with Olivia. Yet he is smart enough not to go directly against his father. He rescued Olivia from the bad "mercenary guardian" but cannot marry her without the consent of his family. He is not only scared to offend his father, but he seems to accept the fact that his father's consent to the marriage is crucial.

Unlike Leontine, Honeywood, with the absence of a family to raise him correctly, acts as an independent individual. For years he has dealt with society by himself. As a result, he has followed the wrong path "'in attempting to please all, by fearing to offend any'" (5: 81). As an orphan he has always been looking for protection. He has employed the financial support of his uncle to defer danger; "'My meanness in approving folly, lest fools should disapprove'" (5: 81). Honeywood is only partially responsible for his own sentimentalism. He only perceives his errors with the presence of Sir William, the family figure, after his return from Italy. Now he has the protection he was lacking since he was a child. As Marlies Danzinger rightly puts it "And he [Honeywood] is emotionally so insecure that his chief concern is whether people like

him, not whether they deserve his friendship" (23).[10] Through Honeywood, Goldsmith not only satirizes sentimentality, but he goes deeper to uncover the real motives behind it.

Other problems in the play receive similar attention from Goldsmith. Miss Richland plays a constructive role. Like Honeywood she is an orphan, but unlike him she has found refuge in the Croakers' house. In other words, she has belonged to a family. She greatly respects Mr. and Mrs. Croaker and clearly thinks of ways to escape their intention to let her marry Leontine. By working within social conventions, Miss Richland succeeds in undoing the marriage plan without offending the Croakers. She follows a similarly wise policy in getting rid of Lofty, while at the same time preserving her friendship with Honeywood, who tries to convince her of Lofty's merits.

Unlike the complete and stable family structure we see in The Vicar, The Good Natur'd Man presents many examples of partial families. Yet, except for Honeywood, other characters do not suffer from serious social problems. The main difference between Honeywood, and Miss Richland and Olivia is the absence or the presence of a family. Living in the Croakers' house, Miss Richland and Olivia have found protection and reduced their social problems to the minimum. Although they have left their original families, they have had good opportunities to fix that great damage. The play seems to suggest that society can take care of its members

through keeping family life as close as possible to the ordinary. Honeywood is a striking example of an individual who happened to live alone and unprotected. His problems grow bigger when he has become an adult. Education alone, in this case Sir William's letters, can do very little, or nothing, to raise an individual. The Good Natur'd Man builds a well-thought-out contrast between those two cases. We might see another obvious contrast between The Good Natur'd Man and The Vicar. Compared to the Primroses, Honeywood and his servants constitute a bad example of a family.

By now, we recognize what kind of a family head Honeywood would be. A reasonable servant, Jarvis, addressing his master, realistically describes the rest of the family:

> 'Your uncle in Italy preparing to disinherit you; your own fortune almost spent; and nothing but pressing creditors, false friends, and a pack of drunken servants that your kindness has made unfit for any other family' (5: 21. Emphasis added)

The next part presents the intoxicated butler, complaining about another servant's bad drinking habits. Compared to Honeywood and his servants, the Croakers are the only ordinary and acceptable family unit in the play. The Croaker family members are worried about more serious and constructive matters. Although selfish and emotional, Mr. Croaker is trying to keep Miss Richland's fortune within the

family through marrying her to his son. He and Mrs. Croaker have managed for a long time to put up with their differences and preserve the existence of their family. From the two family groups, we can single out Sir William and Miss Richland as representatives of a more ethical and constructive family structure. Both wisely try to mediate in solving the problems in the play. They distance themselves from the two other groups, laughing at their follies and finally trying to reform them.

2

If, similar to the problems of its characters, the action in The Good Natur'd Man is complicated and unclear, in She Stoops to Conquer (1774) events are clear, easy to follow, and remarkably funny. The characters have distinctive roles to play. They do not try to hide their true identities. They speak their minds.[11] The play is Goldsmith's best work. As I see it, She Stoops to Conquer clearly presents Goldsmith's idea that the family is the most important social institution. If family life is good and stable, then we expect the family members to be reasonable and successful. To reach this conclusion, Goldsmith uses courtship and marriage between two pairs of characters as a vehicle to show their stable family lives and to shed light on their future family lives after marriage. Goldsmith contrasts Kate as the daughter of a stable and ordinary family with Tony Lumpkin and Constance

Neville who suffer from the consequences of being members of partial families.

She Stoops to Conquer was Goldsmith's second play and his last major work. Ever since its first presentation, it has been a great success.[12] Similar to The Good Natur'd Man, its comic effect and action depend largely on deceptions and errors. The major deceptions in the play are Tony's misrepresentation of the Hardcastles' house as an inn, and Kate's pretension to be a barmaid. Despite the deceptions and errors of the action, a homely and familial atmosphere dominates the play. Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle are natural and confident in running their lives and raising Kate maybe even to a greater degree than the Primroses in The Vicar. Also here the characters, except for Tony Lumpkin and Constance Neville, are more confident and relaxed than Honeywood, Leontine, and Lofty in The Good Natur'd Man. The new and genuine addition in the play is Kate, who is a more fully developed character than Zelis, Olivia, Sophia, and Miss Richland combined.

The level of artistic maturity in She Stoops to Conquer has to do with its presentation after The Citizen of the World, The Vicar of Wakefield, and The Good Natur'd Man. It seems that by the time he wrote She Stoops to Conquer, Goldsmith had learned a lot from writing his previous works. The characters distinctively play their roles as individuals and members of families at the same time. Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle live happily. The only major difference between

them is how to deal with Tony Lumpkin, Mr. Hardcastle's stepson, and Constance Neville. Other than that, they lead a normal life and treat each other as equals and with respect. Yet, as individuals they have their harmless differences in taste. Mr. Hardcastle loves "'every thing that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine'" (5: 107). Mrs. Hardcastle, on the contrary, likes the city. She complains of the family's old-fashioned house "'that looks for all the world like an inn...'" (5: 107). Later, she tells Hastings: "'We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics'" (5:140). In general, both Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle are simple and generous country people, but both have considerable knowledge of town life.

In the opening scene, Mr. Hardcastle complains that Tony is a spoiled boy who is good for nothing. Mrs. Hardcastle defends her son, claiming that his having "'a good fortune'" compensates for other important things, like education. She is fully aware of Tony's complete carelessness but wants her husband to soften his strong attitude against the boy. For the rest of the play, Tony has a free hand to annoy everybody without suffering any serious consequences, except for, of course, Goldsmith's satire and comedy. Shortly after their brief remarks, at the beginning of the play, Tony has become the first hot topic for the Hardcastles to discuss. And in the ensuing

scenes Tony maintains a strong presence, aided by his remarkable vividness. No character escapes Tony's teasing, except for Kate. He leads Marlow and Hastings to think that the Hardcastles' house, where he himself lives, is an inn (5: 124). He deludes his mother and his cousin, Constance Neville, into believing that they are 30 miles away from home (supposedly Constance's aunt Pedigree's place), while in fact they are only "'within forty yards'" of their own home (5: 203-207). However, underneath his highly comic and vivid nature, Tony represents a serious and important social role. Living with his mother and stepfather, Tony leads a disturbed life. Either Mr. Hardcastle had tried to reform him and then lost hope, or he leaves Tony's affairs completely to Mrs. Hardcastle. In any case, Tony and his mother know that he is a spoiled youth in his early twenties. Tony tells his mother: "'all the parish says you have spoil'd me, and so you may take the fruits on't'" (5: 208). Tony is a member of a partial family. Mr. Hardcastle very sensibly does not seem in any way interested in playing a father figure for him. This is obvious from the great difference between how he treats Kate and Tony. Mr. Hardcastle surrounds Kate with all kinds of parental love and care, while he chooses any opportunity to poke fun at Tony and his mother for her wrong way in raising him. As a matter of fact, Kate is a shrewd girl, while Tony is a careless and disordered youth, who spends most of his time

outside the house with, as his mother says, "'A low, paltry set of fellows'" (5: 109).

Kate is a developed version of the female characters in Goldsmith's works prior to She Stoops to Conquer. She is as beautiful as Zelis. She combines the vivacity of Olivia and the seriousness of Sophia. She adds to all this the shrewdness of Miss Richland. Finally, in her conversations with other characters, especially her father and Marlow, Kate is remarkably confident, wise, and discrete. Exchanging their impressions after they, separately, met Marlow for the first time, Mr. Hardcastle and Kate show a father and daughter relationship built on mutual respect and reasonable thinking:

> Hardcastle: 'In one thing we are agreed--to reject him.'
>
> Miss Hardcastle: 'Yes. But upon conditions. For if you should find him more respectful, and I more importunate--I don't know--the fellow is well enough for a man--Certainly we don't meet many such at a horse race in the country.'
>
> Hardcastle: 'If we should find him so--But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.'
>
> Miss Hardcastle: 'And yet there may be many good qualities under that first impression.'
>
> Hardcastle: 'Ay, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about

guessing the rest of his furniture. With her, a smooth face stands for good sense, and a genteel figure for every virtue.'

Miss Hardcastle: 'I hope, Sir, a conversation began with a compliment to my good sense won't end with a sneer at my understanding.'

Hardcastle: 'Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr. Brazen [Marlow] can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both, perhaps.'

Miss Hardcastle: 'And as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?'

Hardcastle: 'Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.'

Miss Hardcastle: 'And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong.' (5: 160-161. Emphasis added)

Both father and daughter respect each other. Yet, there is a certain degree of inoffensive paternal authority in Mr. Hardcastle's speech. Kate respects her father but at the same time keeps her independence as an individual. This is the kind of balance and harmony that escapes Goldsmith's satire. Judged by what we saw in previous works, the relationship between Kate and her father will never go wrong and will end up a healthy and fruitful one. She politely conveys her massage without sacrificing her dignity. Her father says "'I'm in the right;'" in response Kate says

"'I'm not much in the wrong.'" Yet, at one point when she feels that her father is discrediting her ability to think reasonably, Kate reproves him. Such a sophisticated dialogue stands in sharp contrast to the exchanges between the same Mr. Hardcastle and his stepson Tony, or even between Mrs. Hardcastle and Tony, her natural son.

Kate and Tony live under the same roof and within the same family, yet the difference between them is too great to let pass without an explanation. Kate is a member of an ordinary family, while Tony is the offspring of a previous marriage of Mrs. Hardcastle, and according to her: Tony "'takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly'" (5: 188). It is significant to notice that Kate and Tony never meet throughout the play. Tony never even mentions anything about his stepsister, and Kate very briefly mentions him during a conversation with Constance at the end of the first scene. The estrangement between Kate and Tony, when we know that each of them communicates with every other character, reinforces the great difference between them. The main cause for this is their largely different familial backgrounds. In a way, Tony belongs more to the society in The Good Natur'd Man, while Kate is closer to the society in The Vicar. As an individual, Tony is almost separated from his mother, stepfather, and stepsister. On the contrary, Kate combines her independence and constructive partnership within the family as a social group.

Early in the play, the action focuses on the courtship of three pairs of lovers: Kate and Marlow, Constance and Hastings, and Constance and Tony (greatly urged by Mrs. Hardcastle to keep Constance's fortune in the family). Apart from the highly comic deceptions and errors which surround Marlow's and Hastings lodging at Hardcastles house, the original plan was for Kate and Marlow to prepare for their marriage. Mr. Hardcastle received a letter from Marlow's father, Sir Charles, informing him that his son, and later himself, are going to visit with the Hardcastles to discuss the marriage between their children (5: 111). Tony's deception of Marlow and Hastings, leading them to take the Hardcastles' house for an inn, is a multi-purposed move on the part of Goldsmith. First, it greatly intensifies the comic atmosphere in the play; second, it gives both Kate and Marlow a good opportunity to know each other aside from their families' influence; and third, it discloses Tony's individualism and separation from his family.

The play does not give a major role to Constance as it does to Tony. Yet, it is obvious that Constance belongs to Tony's camp. Constance is an orphan (5: 141). She is Tony's cousin (5: 148). The Hardcastles are her guardians. Mrs. Hardcastle treats Constance similar to the way Mr. Hardcastle treats Tony. Mrs. Hardcastle wants Constance to marry Tony; the moment she knows of Constance's plan to marry Hastings, Mrs. Hardcastle has decided to expel her

from the house to "Aunt Pedigree's" (5: 191). Unlike Kate, Constance is deprived of her right to choose a husband. It is only, towards the very end of the play, when Tony announces his refusal to marry her, that Constance is free to marry Hastings. Constance is aware of her social role when she tells Mrs. Hardcastle: "'I have obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression" (5: 214).

Arranging the characters mainly into groups, those who belong to ordinary families like Kate and those who belong to partial families like Tony, She Stoops to Conquer obviously sides with ordinary and stable family life against partial families. Goldsmith sends a clear message for his society to protect the family and strength it, and for him that is the only way to keep a healthy and successful society. The play is also a warning against the growing social problems at his time due to the tendency toward radical individualism. Although general and controversial, Marlies Danzinger's evaluation of the play is worth mentioning:

> At worst, then, Goldsmith accepts uncritically some of the hidebound assumptions of his age. At best, however, he expresses a nostalgic longing for order, moderation, and refined simplicity that is never easy to achieve and that may well have been slightly out of date even in his own time.[13] (58)

Even at its best, Danzinger argument repeats, maybe in a nice way, what many of Goldsmith's critics have done in

interpreting his works. Surely in She Stoops to Conquer Goldsmith is looking for something much deeper than "nostalgic longing." A character like Kate Hardcastle has the qualities and characteristics of the future not the past. She is the kind of a woman which Goldsmith wants to appear in the future to decrease the selfish individualism of people like Tony Lumpkin. Goldsmith seems to hope for a future where families such as the Hardcastles take over from the selfish individualists. The fact that She Stoops to Conquer satirizes Tony and praises Kate reflects some hope that the family will eventually dominate as the best social institution. Robert Hopkins raises a legitement issue when he protests against taking Goldsmith as a surface-level writer:

> We have been taught to look for more than surface-level meanings in every other major comic writer of the age, with the exception, it seems, of Goldsmith.[14] (233)

There is a serious social massage in She Stoops to Conquer. Goldsmith calls for a society where the family dominates. In this play, Goldsmith gives many examples of how good a stable family life would be compared to selfish individualism. It presents Goldsmith as a serious and genuine writer who has something important to tell his readers. Reading the play, we should defend Goldsmith against accusations of hastiness or artistic flaws, but most

importantly we should put full confidence in his artistic abilities. The characters play their roles humorously and distinctively. Kate and Tony are remarkable for playing, respectively, the representatives of family and selfish individualism.

NOTES

1- Oliver GoldsmithL: A Georgian Study (London, 1967).

2- Robert D. Hume, The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama: 1660-1800 (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1983). Referring to Goldsmith's ESSAY on the THEATRE, Hume considers him and Sheridan as pioneers who tried to rescue the eighteenth-century from sentimental comedy: "true-hearted Goldsmith (and Sheridan) make an heroic effort to revive true comedy, an effort which is, alas, doomed to fail after giving a brief flicker of light in the midst of universal darkness" (354).

3- Robert B. Heilman's "The Sentimentalism of Goldsmith's Good-Natured Man." Studies for William A. Read (Baton Rouge, 1940) defends the play against being sentimental. Heilman argues that Goldsmith actually ridicules the sentimental characters. In his book Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Brinsely Sheridan (New York, 1978), Marlies K. Danzinger gives a good account of how Goldsmith was trying to reform the theater at his time through not only attacking sentimentalism but also evaluating it: "There is...still greater difference between valuing sentiment in a character and creating a dramatic seen in which the characters' and

spectators' sentiments are milked by the prolongation or exaggeration of pathetic moments" (17). Oliver W. Ferguson also argues that in The Good Natur'd Man, Goldsmith completely rejects sentimentalism. See his "Antisentimentalism in Goldsmith's The Good-Natured Man: The Limits of Parody." The Dress of Words: Essays on the Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature in Honor of Richmond P. Bond. (Lawrence, 1978). See also Bernard Harris's "Goldsmith in the Theatre." The Art of Oliver Goldsmith. ed. Andrew Swarbrick (London, 1984). Harris argues that Goldsmith used sentimentalism in its proper sense: "Goldsmith... subscribed to the principles of sentimentalin the proper sense of the word--drama, and deplored its decline into sentimentality" (152). Ricardo Quintana also believes that "Sentimentalism is under attack in both of his [Goldsmith's] plays" (143). For the critics who accuse Goldsmith of being a sentimental playwright, see Allardyce Nicoll, A History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama: 1750-1800 (London, 1937), 158-159. See also Ernest Bernbaum, The Drama of Sensibility: A Sketch of the History of English Sentimental Comedy and Domestic Tragedy: 1696-1780 (Gloucester, Mass., 1958), 245.

4- See Nicoll, 159.

5- These two essays on theater show that Goldsmith's dissatisfaction with sentimental comedy has to do with

two major weaknesses: first, they present characters and events that are far away from reality, and second, they lack instruction.

6- W. F. Gallaway, Jr. "The Sentimentalism of Goldsmith." PMLA 48 (1933): 1167-1181.

7- Jarvis suggests kicking one of the servants out for his bad conduct and "'[to] frighten the rest of the family'" (5: 22). And the Butler protests that he will "'not stay in the family with Jonathan'" (5: 22).

8- In his "Introduction" to The Good Natur'd Man (5: 3), Friedman briefly mentions four earlier occasions, including Letter 27 of The Citizen, where Goldsmith portrayed types of characters similar to Young Honeywood.

9- Oliver Goldsmith: A Georgian Study (London, 1967).

10- Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Brinsley Sheridan (New York, 1978).

11- Although Christopher K. Brooks interprets She Stoops to Conquer as a "pre-feminist text" (38), his remarks on Kate's "ability to 'create a space of talk' between herself and Marlow...juxtaposed to Constance's oppressed situation" (39) are important and valid as far as interpreting the roles of Kate and Constance. But unlike Brooks, I see Kate's successful use of language in her two roles as a daughter and a barmaid, stemming from the good family life she has enjoyed. Tony Lumpkin is free to speak, but he plays a negative

social role. To choose to single out Kate and Constance in interpreting the play, as Brooks does, would result in partial, and some times misleading, conclusions. See Brooks's "Goldsmith's Feminist Drama: She Stoops to Conquer, Silence and Language." Papers on Language and Literature 28 (1991): 38-51.

12- Arthur Friedman gives a comprehensive account of the play's "Production and reception." See 3: 89-97.

13- Oliver Goldsith and Richard Brinsley Sheridan (New York, 1978).

14- The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith (Baltimore, 1969).

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Family is a central theme in Goldsmith's The Citizen of the World, The Vicar of Wakefield, The Traveller, The Deserted Village, The Good Natur'd Man, and She Stoops to Conquer. In each of these works family has precedence over individualism. Order, stability, harmony, cooperation, and similar collective activities are associated with the family. Characters such as Dr. and Mrs. Primrose, the two speakers in The Traveller and The Deserted Village, Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle, and Kate Hardcastle live in ordinary families and always compromise their personal interests for those of the family. At the same time, they preserve their personal traits and do their shares of the familial responsibilities. These characters also do not go to extremes in handling their lives. They try to be moderate by keeping a balance between reason and emotions. This does not mean that they are always right, but that when they face problems they try to discuss and solve them in consultation with other family members. A stable family life enables these characters to take care of their problems and ask help from other family members if they need any. Typical

examples in Goldsmith's works, discussed in the present study, are the continuous consultations and mutual help among the Primroses and the Hardcastles. Whenever there is a problem, we see the members of these families combine in discussions, trying to find a way out. During the discussions mutual respect and carefulness dominate. Dr. and Mrs. Primrose listen carefully to each other and to their children. Similarly, Mr. Hardcastle and Kate are a good example of a father-daughter relationship. At the end of The Vicar of Wakefield and She Stoops to Conquer these characters are rewarded and expect to continue leading happy and stable lives.

The characters who represent individualism, such as Squire Thornhill and Tony Lumpkin, show characteristics opposite to those who live in stable families. These characters are individualistic in extreme and harmful ways. They are very selfish and care only about their personal interests. To satisfy his sexual desires for Olivia, Squire Thornhill puts the Primrose family into all kinds of trouble. Although he belongs partially to the Hardcastle family, Tony Lumpkin annoys his mother, his stepfather, Kate, Marlow, and Hastings. He does not show respect or care for anybody, including his own mother.

Each of Goldsmith's major works discusses one side or another of the conflict between family and individualism. As a beginning, The Citizen of the World briefly or superficially touches on the sides of the conflict between

family and individualism, all of which will be discussed and developed in the subsequent works. The family story of Altangi reappears in a much more developed and deeper shape in The Vicar of Wakefield and She Stoops to Conquer. The discussion on luxury in Letter 11 of The Citizen reappears in The Traveller and The Deserted Village, where the misuse of luxury is associated with individualism. The two speakers attack the negative influence of the unwise use of luxury on the family and society in general. In Letters 26 and 27, Altangi narrates the history of the Man in Black and his father. The main characteristics of the father and son are excessive generosity and goodness to others. This is the central idea in The Good Natur'd Man, where Young Honeywood is excessively generous and good. Therefore, The Citizen is the beginning major work which bears the seeds of the forthcoming major fictional works. We never know whether or not Goldsmith had any premeditated overall plan in his mind to develop the ideas which appear in The Citizen when he wrote it. However, we have the advantage of reading these works after he wrote them all.

As a beginning, The Citizen presents an initial stage of the conflict between family and individualism in the shape of a tension in Altangi's personality. The family theme in The Citizen has to do with the story of Altangi's family. The only information we know about Altangi's "wife, daughter, and the rest of the family," all except Hingpo, comes in Letter 6. Very briefly, in 9 lines, Fum Hoam

informs Altangi that the emperor of China, angered with Altangi's leaving China, has seized his family. The detailed information about Altangi as a father appears in the 18 letters exchanged by Altangi and his son, Hingpo.[1] Both father and son reveal a remarkable degree of mutual respect and understanding. Here we can see Altangi and Hingpo as an early, though not fully developed, version of the family life we meet in The Vicar and She Stoops to Conquer.

The other important dimension of Altangi's personality appears as early as Letter 3, when Altangi perceives himself as "a newly created being introduced into a new world." This role of Altangi contradicts his role as a father who cares about his son and family, and who does not try to empty himself of his Chinese heritage. As a good father, Altangi is a good family man. But as an objective observer, he is a separated individual. In Letter 6, Fum Hoam reprimands Altangi for his individualistic tendencies. Hoam blames his friend for his continuous "enthusiasm for knowledge" (2: 37). More importantly, Hoam focuses on Altangi's individualistic approach, which has resulted in complete separation from society:

> How long will you continue to rove from climate to climate, Circled by thousands, and yet without a friend, feeling all the inconveniencies of a croud, and all the anxiety of being alone. (2: 37. Emphases added)

Throughout The Citizen the letters between Altangi and Hingpo mix with the many others which describe Altangi's observations of the English and Chinese societies. In other words, each of the two groups of letters (the family letters and the objective observer's letters) is not written chronologically. As a result, the reader finds Altangi's personality confusing. On the one hand, he is the family man who acknowledges his family and the social ties. On the other hand, Altangi is the objective observer who insists on being a newly born and separated individual. Obviously, Altangi himself is not aware of the two separate roles he appears to the reader to be playing.

Altangi's role as a father who cares about his family is developed later in characters like Dr. Primrose, Mr. Hardcastle, and the two speakers in The Traveller and The Deserted Village. Altangi's completely different role as an individual appears much more distinct and developed in characters like Squire Thornhill and Tony Lumpkin.

As in the other major works, the family theme dominates The Traveller and The Deserted Village. The two poems complete each other in discussing the relationship between luxury on one side, and the family and individualism on the other. If used wisely, luxury or extra wealth is good for the family and society, and becomes much closer to planned frugality. But, if used badly by few individuals, luxury is bad and strengthens individualism. The speakers in the two poems belong to poor families. They are dissatisfied with

the misuse of luxury. In The Traveller the discussion tends to be general. The speaker travels, or imagines to travel, in four European countries. Except for Switzerland, he expresses his dissatisfaction with life in all of them, including Italy, France, and Holland. The Italians depopulate their towns, looking for wealth beyond the borders. The French are too proud of their accomplishments and want everybody to praise them. The Hollanders are either poor trying to be rich, or rich trying to be wealthier. Finally, the English people are too independent and individualistic. The speaker satirizes these European societies and put them in contrast with the Swiss people. He likes very much the family life in Switzerland. At the same time, the speaker blames the Swiss for their excessive frugality. Finally, the speaker decides to return to England despite the selfish individualism of the English people.

The treatment of luxury is much more direct and obvious in The Deserted Village. The speaker, who was a citizen of Auburn, is angry at the depopulation of the village, which has been sold to a wealthy individual. The speaker attacks this dark side of luxury and nervously calls on the authorities to stop it. He attacks the wealthy individual and accuses him of selfishness and harmfulness. The speaker laments the loss of the productive and peaceful family life of Auburn. Thus, the conflict in The Deserted Village is

between the families of the depopulated village and the selfish and wealthy individual.

Of all Goldsmith's works discussed in the present study, The Good Natur'd Man is the only one that deals mainly with the influence of the absence of family life or of the disturbed family life on their members. As the central character of the play, Young Honeywood is an example of a person who is too sociable and generous. He likes the world and befriends everybody. We can see Honeywood as a sharp contrast to Squire Thornhill. Unlike him, Honeywood is excessively good. The play explains that Honeywood is an orphan looking for love and protection. He does not calculate his life on reasonable bases. As an orphan, Honeywood expects protection and inoffensiveness from others to compensate for the absence of family life. Like the Man in Black, Honeywood is excessively good and generous. But unlike him, Honeywood does not "profess himself a man hater." Honeywood wants everybody to know that he is good. In the play, Honeywood is satirized for being an extremely good person in the same way bad individuals like Squire Thornhill are satirized for being extremely selfish and individualistic.

Therefore, the criterion of judgment in Goldsmith's work, discussed in the present study, is the family. The family stands for stability, order, reasonableness, moderation, and conservativeness. We can think of the family as a circle which includes these characteristics.

The character who moves within this circle is the ordinary family member who balances his own interests and those of others'. Within this circle, there is no place for selfishness, individualism, or excesses of any kind. Even excessively generous and sociable people like Honeywood are trouble makers who should be satirized or laughed at. How good or bad a character is, depends on who close or far he is from the family circle. The best example of the ideal family member in Goldsmith's work is Kate Hardcastle in She Stoops to Conquer. She is a shrewd girl who successfully compromises her independence as an individual with her responsibilities as a member of a family. Obviously, the bad examples are characters like Squire Thornhill and Tony Lumpkin who persistently look to fulfill their selfish needs. Taking the other extreme, Honeywood is also unacceptable because he has little common sense and discretion in running his life.

We can think of the family in each work as a microcosm of the overall society. Goldsmith gives examples or types of the members of the society. If we agree with writers like Lawrence Stone that there was a remarkable tendency during the eighteenth century towards individualism, then Goldsmith's major fictional works can be considered as warning signals against such a tendency.[2] Goldsmith not only described what was going on during his time, but he was warning against the unfavorable consequences of greater individualism. Goldsmith goes beyond using comedy or satire

to explaining why he is dissatisfied with the wrong practices of the individualistic characters. He even goes a step further to warn society of what will happen if individualism dominates.

Most of the criticism on Goldsmith thus far has attempted to explain what he does in a given work and how he does it. Ricardo Quintana argues that Goldsmith is a master of comedy.[3] Robert Hopkins focuses on satire as the major accomplishment in Goldsmith.[4] In his preface to Oliver Goldsmith Revisited (1991), Peter Dixon raises many good questions that show how Goldsmith's works "inevitably continue to perplex" (vii):

> Is he [Goldsmith] a sentimentalist or an opponent of sentiment? Is he a hard-hitting satirist in the tradition of Swift and Pope, or an amiable humorist, or a writer so various that he cannot be pinned down and labeled as a specimen of one kind or the other?[5] (vii)

Dixon very shrewdly analyzes Goldsmith's major works, but ultimately he seems to conclude that we should accept the perplexity and miscellaneousness of these works.

The present study has argued that Goldsmith uses comedy and satire to evaluate the social conditions of his time, and that he goes beyond evaluation to passing judgments and predicting consequences. Goldsmith favors the stable family life. He is against selfish individualism. He mildly laughs at the mistakes of family members like Dr. Primrose

and Mr. Hardcastle. But Goldsmith is harsh on individuals like Squire Thornhill and Tony Lumpkin. These comic and satiric evaluations are not ends in themselves for Goldsmith. Rather he uses them as vehicles to evaluate society and explain why the characters conduct their lives in certain ways. Further, Goldsmith wants the reader to use these characters as points of departure to evaluate society. Goldsmith seems to ask that if the family is good and individualism is bad, why then is society heading towards the latter? Goldsmith, then, make the effort to give the reasons why individualism is gaining power. The immediate reasons for growing individualism are a disturbed family life and the misuse of extra wealth. Goldsmith warns society that family, as the most important social institution which keeps the balance between the interests of the individual and the social group, is definitely in danger. Compared to the families, the individuals in Goldsmith are stronger and more powerful. For example in The Vicar Goldsmith uses poetic justice to reward the families and punish the individualistic characters. But in The Traveller and The Deserted Village individualism, represented by misused luxury, remains powerful and dominating. The speakers and their families appear as helpless victims in face of the powerful forces of luxury.

As twentieth-century readers, we should see Goldsmith's warnings as clear and pertinent. The decline of the family has indeed resulted in numerous social problems. The

absence of a stable family life has led society members to be more individualistic. Violence and crime, among many other social problems, have drastically increased, threatening the social order of today's societies. Drug victims are in most cases people who suffer from a disturbed family life. Had Goldsmith returned to live among us, he would not have been surprised.

NOTES

1- Altangi's letters to Hingpo are letters 44, 47, 61, 62, 66, 67, 70, 73, 83, 91, and 100. Hingpo's letters to his father are letters 35, 36, 37, 59, 60, 76, and 94.

2- Family, Sex, and Marriage in England: 1500-1800 (London, 1977).

3- Oliver Goldsmith: A Georgian Study (New York, 1967).

4- The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith (Baltimore, 1969).

5- Oliver Goldsmith Revisited (London, 1991).

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