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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracovala samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

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ABSTRACT

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The subject of this undergraduate thesis is to compare the main characters, Moll Flanders and Roderick Random, from the novels of Daniel Defoe and Tobias Smollett from the point of view of gender and roles they perform in the society of the eighteenth-century England. Simultaneously, their stories are compared to the reality of common people of those days.

The thesis is divided into two parts, theoretical and practical. The theoretical part deals with the rise of the eighteenth-century novel and also with potential constraints which may have prevented it from developing. The practical part is subdivided into two main sections and is focused on the comparison of personal characteristic features of both protagonists. The first section deals with the lives of the authors in comparison to lives of their main characters. The second section is further divided into four chapters which compare the protagonists from different points of view – childhood, love and marriage, crime and punishment and minor characters. Continuously, the findings are compared to the reality of the eighteenth century.

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INTRODUCTION

Literature becomes a part of a human's life soon after a person starts to understand the meaning of words. It begins with children's rhymes and continues with fairy tales and short stories all the way to poetry and larger literary pieces – novels. Until recently, literature for me was only the means of relaxation, the way I freed my mind from the ordinariness of my life. When I first read Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* two years ago, I suddenly realized that there was something more in the novels than just a story which I was interested in, the reality of the eighteenth century in England. From the beginning of the reading, I also noticed that the fates of both main characters evinced some similar features but they were portrayed differently. The similarities and distinctions in both novels caught my attention and hence in my thesis I would like to discuss gender role of both characters in the society of the eighteenth-century England, in the way they were depicted by male authors, and to research the way the characters fulfilled, or not, their roles.

The eighteenth century was a period of time when many great novelists, such as Henry Fielding, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Richardson and many others, created their world famous novels and thus inestimably contributed to the literary heritage of Great Britain. Together with Defoe and Smollett, they prompted a lot of people to reading. In the first part of my work I would like to research the motives readers of the eighteenth century had for changing their reading habits, the reason why people began to read more than before and whether there were any limitations which could have dissuaded them from reading novels or buying them.

The second part of the thesis will discuss the lives of the authors and their connection with the novels. I would like to discover whether the authors' lives and their personal experience might be somehow projected into the storyline of their works. In addition to this task, I would like to research to what extent the novels might be considered autobiographical.

The last and the largest part will compare the protagonists from different points of view and look for similarities and differences in their lives. First of all, I would like to focus on their childhood and answer an important question: How growing-up without parents and lack of parental love affected Moll and Roderick, their childhood and further life? Secondly, personal relationships of both protagonists will be researched, their love relationships and also their relationships with minor characters. And thirdly, the criminal context of the novels will be explored with a special regard to punishment and consequences of protagonists' actions.

In addition to that, I will study several historical books which describe the daily life of common inhabitants of the eighteenth-century England, and compare it with the reality depicted in the novels. It will be very interesting to find out whether the novels actually include some reality of the daily life of the eighteenth century.

FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NOVEL

The eighteenth-century novel may be characterized as a part of the “prehistory” of novelistic development, it represents the early and truly formative phase of the novel as a genre of prose fiction as we understand it today – “a long prose narrative about largely fictional if usually realistic characters and plausible events” (Richetti, 1998, p. 1). In fact, the term “novel” was one of many names occurring in the early and even the middle years of the eighteenth century in the minds of the readers as well as “romance” or “history”, and it was not fully established until the end of the century. It means that the novels did not distinguish the borderline between the ordinary and everyday world of facts and events and the fictional, sensational and fantastic field of a narrative situation. They often presented “fiction as fact and dramatized fact in the ways we would find more appropriate to fiction” (ibid., p. 2).

It seems to be really amazing how the expectations for narrative in the minds of the readers changed during the middle of the century. The popularity of such narratives probably relates to larger intellectual and social changes. A new kind of quite distinctive fictional narrative – the realistic novel - emerged with its “process of rejection, modification, and transformation of previous forms or practices of storytelling that are seen as insufficiently attentive to a narrow view of what constitutes truth and reality” (ibid., p. 2). The new “realistic” fictions featured ordinary men and women in familiar, daily experiences, conflicts and thoughts, and contemporary situations; “the story of a present-day individual in a recognizable social and cultural context” (Hunter, 1998, p. 10). The plot of such novels involved a “typical and representative” hero or heroine of their time and place and their ongoing human issues of their lives, but the emphasis was on the individual, the local choices, and the cultural particulars.

Such narratives tell the story of familiar circumstances within some cultural and social features that are shared among different readers, so they may be seen “universal” and therefore understandable to readers who have not much knowledge of the cultural history they represent. As Hunter (1998) points out in his chapter “The novel and the social/cultural history” in the book *The Eighteenth Century Novel*:

you can usually follow readily enough the plots of novels and sort out the main features of characters even if you know nothing of the history of their time and place, but often conflicts in the plot – and subtle differences between different

characters – derive from interpretations of desired, needs, and values that are culturally based. (p. 10)

Beyond that, there are other specific features connected with history at the time the novels were written, produced, and circulated – how novels came to be written, who read them and when.

Readers of the eighteenth century became more interested in reading about ordinary people who seemed powerless, about material conditions of everyday life, about women, home life, family structures and the different roles of household members, about groups and classes who were ignored (such as children, servants, criminals, the poor, members of the working class), about travelling, adventures and about other people's secret lives, or lives beyond the law (ibid., pp. 17-18). Their primary intention for reading the novels was pleasure; escape from reality of everydayness, hard work and routine, from sorrows of their life. For them, characters of the novels were similar to themselves. Readers could identify with the heroes through their way of life or the difficult situations they faced. And on top of that, young readers, especially those inexperienced in the world, could also find possible answers to their crucial life moments such as courtship, decision making, career, and even way of life. Unlike other literary forms, such as epics or traditional histories which provided experience from the past ages or the Continental romances that described social conventions in contemporary Italy or France, novels brought the young people an outline of the values of “modern” London life and the possibility to gain an idea what it was like to live in a big city (ibid., p. 23).

It may seem that the early readers of novels were purely middle-class and “that the novel was in fact a middle-class enterprise” (ibid., p. 19). Actually, they were the new readers who were not attracted by the “traditional literature” such as poetry. Readership expanded down the social scale and included not only clerks or tradespeople but also substantial number of servants who had learned to read just for pleasure (ibid., p. 19). One may wonder how a young labourer could afford a new volume of a novel such as *Robinson Crusoe* (cost 5 shillings in 1719) if they earned comparably the same amount a week. Of course, most of them could not. But there were other alternatives to obtain a copy. They could either subscribe to a “circulating library” for one pound per year and could borrow one book every week, or they could share them among friends (ibid., p. 25).

Labourers in the country usually worked all day, from the sunrise until the sunset, and even in larger cities they spent more than fourteen hours at work. The only time they could read was at night or on holidays. Besides lack of leisure and the cost of books there were other

obstacles that limited the readers; little privacy (housing was horribly overcrowded, especially in London) with not enough light even in the day, the window tax (imposed in 1696) which ordered to pay taxes according to the number of windows in the house (a flat tax of two shillings per house and a variable tax of four shillings if the house had between ten and twenty windows, etc.), and also reluctance of the employers to allow their employees to have light in their rooms (Watt, 1962, pp. 46-47).

On the other hand, still there were some other factors which affected the structure of the reading public and caused that it remained so small. Firstly, most of the inhabitants of the eighteenth-century England were illiterate, they could not read or write, and even count. According to Ian Watt (1962), “there is much evidence to suggest that in the country many small farmers, their families, and the majority of labourers, were quite illiterate, while even in the towns certain sections of the poor – especially soldiers, sailors and the rabble of the streets – could not read” (p. 37). The educational system where children could learn the “three R’s” (reading, writing and arithmetic) was not fully developed, nonetheless, a network of old endowed grammar schools, charity schools and non-endowed schools could be found around the country. Charity schools provided free education, especially in larger cities, though they emphasized religious education and social discipline. Children of the lower classes attended schools randomly and intermittently and often left schools at the age of six or seven, sometimes earlier, in order to work in the fields or the factories (ibid., p. 38).

Secondly, even among the poor themselves, the opinion that the education is not needed when working in the fields or factories was commonly held; parents did not want their child to “become too fine a gentleman for the family that produced him” (ibid., p. 39).

And thirdly, as the most significant factor of restricting the public from reading is considered the economic one. According to “two of the most reliable estimates of the average incomes of the main social groups, those of Gregory King in 1696 and of Defoe in 1709, ... more than half of the population was short of the bare necessities of life. King specifies that some 2,825,000 people out of total population of 5,550,000, constituted an ‘unprofitable majority’ who were ‘decreasing the wealth of the kingdom’” (ibid., p. 40). This majority involved cottagers, paupers, labourers and out-servants and their average family income ranged from £6 to £20 per year. Another group of low paid inhabitants covered nearly two million people (freeholders, farmers, shopkeepers and tradesmen, artisans and handicrafts) who earned between £38 and £60 per annum. None of these incomes would allow the buying of books but some of the richer farmers, shopkeepers or tradesmen would spare a small amount of money in order to afford some entertainment. The changes within this intermediate

class of inhabitants probably caused significant increase in the eighteenth-century reading habits (*ibid.*, p. 40).

During the eighteenth century, Britain underwent some social, cultural and economic development. Material life of many inhabitants improved thanks to extensive changes in social habits and relationships among classes. The Industrial Revolution brought new agricultural methods and improvements in industry, new methods of policing and punishing brought common people relatively more freedom and safety, and new ideological movements were under way at that time – feminism, antislavery and pacifism (Hunter, 1998, pp. 28-29).

BIOGRAPHY AND REALITY IN NOVELS OF SMOLLETT AND DEFOE

For every author, his or her life experience must necessarily be projected into their narration together with their own imagination. Hence the following two chapters deal with a question how much the novels are influenced by their former experiences.

The life of Tobias Smollett in connection with novel *Roderick Random*

Tobias George Smollett's precise date of birth is not known but according to Smeaton (1897) it could be set on March 16th, 1721, though this date is highly unverifiable. He was born into a family which included lawyers, merchants or soldiers, on the estate of Dalquhurn, Dumbarton County in Scotland. Tobias was the youngest of three children. His elder brother James was a soldier and died at sea, his sister Jane survived both brothers (Bouc , 1976, p. 5). Smollett's father, Archibald, died soon after Tobias was born. This sad moment in Smollett's life affected him emotionally for the rest of his life and also influenced creating his heroes' fathers who "either vanish early from the scene or, worse still, are conspicuous for their total intellectual and emotional vacuity" (ibid., p. 5).

Smollett was sent to Dumbarton Grammar School at the age of six or seven (1727-28) where he studied Greek, English, music and calligraphy nonetheless most of his subjects were in Latin (Lewis, 2009, p. 8). According to Bouc  (1976), young Smollett excelled at school and thus it may be assumed that in his novel *Roderick Random* he depicted his character with the same qualities:

... I became a good proficient in the Latin tongue; and, as soon as I could write tolerably, pestered my grandfather with letters to such a degree that he sent for my master, and chid him severely for bestowing such pains on my education, telling him that, if ever I should be brought to the gallows for forgery, which he had taught me to commit, my blood would lie on his head, (Smollett, 2003, p. 13)

or:

... I made a surprising progress in the classics, writing, and arithmetic; so that, before I was twelve years old, I was allowed by everybody to be the best scholar in the school. (ibid., p. 14)

After school Smollett had to decide which career to choose. There were many options – the Army, the Navy, the Church, law, medicine or trade. His frail body constitution and

weak health did not allow him to work for the Army or the Navy. He also did not fancy the lawyers, “since his dealings with lawyers were to prove unhappy, leaving him with a deep loathing for their kind” (Lewis, 2009, p. 15). The situation in the society was not well disposed to trading and the Church was also not a good choice for him. In November 1735, having worked in a dispensary in Glasgow, Smollett, probably due to his acquaintance with some medical students, decided to become an apprentice as a surgeon to John Gordon. Although the apprenticeship usually lasted for five years, Smollett spent in Glasgow only four years and then headed for London, probably in 1739, leaving his education unfinished (Bouc , 1976, pp. 7-8).

In March, 1740, Smollett received his surgeon’s mate’s warrant and together with other 600 men embarked on the *Chichester*, a large ship which was sailing to Jamaica. This stage of his life imprinted his experience of life at sea permanently into his mind and had essential influence on his further life and work. The life on the board was extremely tough, subordinated to cruel officers, insufficient food and constant possibility of death or maiming. Smollett described food provision in his *Roderick Random*:

Mr. Morgan himself enriched this mess (boiled peas) with a lump of salt butter scooped from an old gallipot, and a handful of onions shorn, with some pounded pepper. I was not very much tempted with the appearance of this dish, of which, nevertheless, my messmates ate heartily, advising me to follow their example, as it was banyan day and we could have no meat till next noon, But I had already laid in sufficient for the occasion, and therefore desired to be excused: expressing a curiosity to know the meaning of banyan day. They told me, that, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, the ship's company had no allowance of meat, and that these meagre days were called banyan days, the reason of which they did not know; but I have since learned they take their denomination from a sect of devotees in some parts of the East Indies, who never taste flesh. (Smollett, 2003, p. 92)

Sailors were on an undesirable diet of “putrid beef, rusty pork, and bread swimming with maggots, salt meat, biscuits, dried fish, beer, onions, and dried peas” (Lewis, 2009, p. 32). The life condition as depicted in the novel was even worse:

... my friend Thompson carried me down to the cockpit, which is the place allotted for the habitation of the surgeon's mates; and when he had shown me their berth (as he called it), I was filled with astonishment and horror, We descended by divers ladders to a space as dark as a dungeon, which, I

understood, was immersed several feet under water, being immediately above the hold. I had no sooner approached this dismal gulph, than my nose was saluted with an intolerable stench of putrified cheese and rancid butter, that issued from an apartment at the foot of the ladder, resembling a chandler's shop. (Smollett, 2003, p. 89)

And on top of that, one could have a clear idea about the hygiene and health care of the sick on the board in the eighteenth century from Roderick Random's narration:

... when I followed him with the medicines into the sick berth, or hospital, and observed the situation of the patients, I was much less surprised that people should die on board, than that a sick person should recover. Here I saw about fifty miserable distempered wretches, suspended in rows, so huddled one upon another, that not more than fourteen inches space was allotted for each with his bed and bedding; and deprived of the light of the day, as well as of fresh air; breathing nothing but a noisome atmosphere of the morbid steams exhaling from their own excrements and diseased bodies, devoured with vermin hatched in the filth that surrounded them, and destitute of every convenience necessary for people in that helpless condition. (ibid., pp. 92-93)

Except for these difficulties, there were other life-threatening elements such as insufficient supply of fresh drinking water or a danger of scurvy (an illness caused by a deficiency in vitamin C from fresh fruit and vegetables, a person who suffers from scurvy looks pale, has bloodied spots on the body; later open wounds appear, teeth start to fall, and eventually they die) (scurvy, 2014).

Smollett returned back to England in September 1741 but there are no records of what he was doing until May 1744. Probably in 1743, during his second journey to Jamaica, he married his wife Anne Lassells however she did not follow him to London until 1747. In the same year, his only daughter Elizabeth was born (Bouc , 1976, p. 12).

In January 1748 Smollett finished his first novel *The Adventures of Roderick Random* after only eight months of writing (ibid., p. 14). The first edition of the book was published anonymously in two small duodecimo volumes and a copy was sold for six shillings. His name was added on the front page when published for the second time. The novel became enormously successful immediately after its publishing (Smeaton, 1897, p. 62). Two years later it had its fourth edition with nearly 6,500 copies. In comparison to the established author such as Henry Fielding and his 10,000 copies of *Tom Jones* sold in one year, hardly known Smollett achieved a huge accomplishment (Bouc , 1976, p. 16).

It may seem that Smollett intended to write his novel as an autobiography, nonetheless he probably only wanted to help the reader identify with the hero and participate in imagination in his adventures which was demanded by the readers themselves at that time. Also using the “I” in the novel indicates that the main character may represent at once Roderick, Smollett and the reader (ibid., p. 42). Smollett himself in his preface of the novel declared this ambiguity that he has “attempted to represent modest merit struggling with every difficulty to which a friendless orphan is exposed, from his own want of experience, as well as from the selfishness, envy, malice, and base indifference of mankind” (Smollett, 2003, p. 8). Moreover, after several disturbing notes from his “fans”, Smollett wrote to his friend Alexander Carlyle about his indignation of being identified with Roderick, even though he admitted the existence of certain similarities with the character (Bouc , 1976, p. 47):

The only Similitude between the Circumstances of my own Fortune and those I have attributed to Roderick Random consists in my being born of a reputable Family in Scotland, in my being bred a Surgeon, and having served as a Surgeon’s mate on board a man of war during the Expedition to Carthagene. The low Situations in which I have exhibited Roderick I never experienced in my own Person. (Knapp, 1970, p. 112)

For any novelist, it is obvious that their literary work has its origin in personal experience of the author. But it is not a reason for interpreting their works as autobiographical. All the people are considered to live according to their past life experience.

The life of Daniel Defoe and the reality in *Moll Flanders*

Daniel Foe was probably born in the latter part 1659 or early in 1660, more than sixty years prior to Smollett, into a family of Alice and James Foe, a butcher of St Giles Cripplegate, in London (Wright, 1894, p. 5). There are not many sources of his early boyhood but like many boys he was sometimes naughty and was given to copy the Bible. Among the pleasures of his childhood was to watch basket makers near his father’s shop making their goods and he often helped them with a great dexterity (ibid, p. 8).

When he was fourteen he was placed to Newington Green Academy by his father in order to become a minister. Besides theological knowledge, he was taught Latin, Greek, Spanish, French and Italian, and other typical subjects, such as mathematics, geography or history. Young Daniel became very keen on reading and “devoured every scrap of print he could set eyes on” (ibid, p. 10) which may have led to his later great story telling.

Not very long after he left the college, though he had not finished it, he commenced his own business in hosiery which he ran for several years until he went bankrupt in 1692, with a deficit of £17,000, caused by his extraordinary preoccupation with politics and reading than trading (ibid., p. 37).

And it is money which plays a very important role in most of Defoe's novels. It is the means of achieving his characters' goals and internal desire, or in other words "money is making of Defoe's self-seeking fortune-hunters, the secret and measure of their success" (Lynch, 2008, p. 99). Without money the protagonists would not move forward in their lives, would not escape from their past and most of all would not live on their own. It is also a case of Moll Flanders who wishes to become a gentlewoman because she wants "to be able to work for herself, and get enough to keep her without that terrible bugbear going to service" (Defoe, 2003, p. 7). However, later in her life she realizes that the only way to survive and obtain money for her self-reliance is to marry a wealthy man or to become a thief or a prostitute, because as Lynch (2008) cites from Defoe's novel *Roxana*, "the Market is against our Sex just now" (p. 89).

In 1697, Daniel Foe changed his surname to De Foe. The reason of adding the foreign prefix is not certain. Some may say that it was done just of the pure vanity but Thomas Wright (1894) assumes that it was not the only reason. The actual meaning of his surname – an enemy – was probably against his patriotic views and therefore he disliked to be called like that. Ironically, he became a true enemy in 1702 after publishing *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* and even worse after his *Brief Explanation* of this pamphlet, was arrested and accused of a seditious libel and, after the trial at the Old Bailey in 1703, imprisoned in Newgate (Dobrée, 1990, p. 47). While everyone was afraid of the course of the trial – bar, bench and jury, Defoe himself "in a moment of weakness, listening to the advice of his counsel, quitted his defence, and threw himself upon the mercy of the Queen" (Wright, 1894, p. 76). He later regretted being foolish and not making a firm defence, nonetheless he was "to pay two hundred marks, stand three times in the pillory, be imprisoned during the Queen's pleasure, and find sureties for his good behavior for seven years" (ibid., p. 77). Similarly, Defoe exposed his heroine Moll to the same experience. She was caught when stealing two pieces of brocaded silk and taken to the justice. Unlike Defoe, Moll tried to plead that she

... had neither broken anything to get in, nor carried anything out, the justice was inclined to have released me; but the first saucy jade that stopped me, affirming that I was going out with the goods, but that she stopped me and

pulled me back as I was upon the threshold, the justice upon that point committed me, and I was carried to Newgate. (Defoe, 2003, p. 130)

Unfortunately, she was found guilty and sent to

... that horrid place! my very blood chills at the mention of its name; the place where so many of my comrades had been locked up, and from whence they went to the fatal tree; the place where my mother suffered so deeply, where I was brought into the world, and from whence I expected no redemption but by an infamous death. (ibid., p. 130)

One may only speculate how Defoe felt when he got to Newgate but it might have been the same impression as Moll's when she said that it was

... impossible to describe the terror of my mind, when I was first brought in, and when I looked around upon all the horrors of that dismal place. I looked at myself as lost, and that I had nothing to think of but of going out of the world, and that with the utmost infamy: the hellish noise, the roaring, swearing, and clamour, the stench and nastiness, and all the dreadful crowd of afflicting things that I saw there, joined together to make the place seem an emblem of hell itself, and a kind of an entrance into it. (ibid., p. 130)

On the other hand, Defoe was not treated as a common prisoner, such as thieves, highwaymen or pirates; he could write freely and on top of that he could convey his manuscripts to his printer (Wright, 1894, p. 79). This bitter experience gave him nonetheless a great opportunity to obtain a deeper knowledge about the life of the convicts of Newgate and the circumstances of their capture which he could later draw on when creating his famous characters.

Moll Flanders was afraid of being caught many times before she actually was and was insecure when handling the stolen goods but, while she was stealing them she also thought of some practical issues of her actions, she developed some kind of escape strategy involving an excellent knowledge of the place, including topographical details of the city. Her first attempt though did not pass without some worries, as she recalls it in the following passage from an apothecary's shop in Leadenhall Street:

When I went away I had no heart to run, or scarce to mend my pace. I crossed the street indeed, and went down the first turning I came to, and I think it was a street that went through into *Fenchurch Street*. From thence I crossed and turned through so many ways and turnings, that I could never tell which way it was, not where I went; for I felt not the ground I stepped on, and the farther I was out of danger, the faster I went, till, tired and out of breath, I was forced to

sit down on a little bench at a door, and then I began to recover, and found I was got into *Thames Street*, near *Billingsgate*. (Defoe, 2003, p. 93) (emphasis added)

Through locating events in a precise, recognizable public space, which reinforces the illusion of authenticity, and evoking the protagonist's state of mind, Defoe created "the effect of the real" as he composed "the mazelike, breathless construction of the sentence" which "captures the adrenaline rush of her first, panicky getaway from the scene of a crime" (Gladfelder, 2008, p. 76).

Defoe was connected with the city for the whole of his life. Not only was he born there and spent his early childhood years there, he also returned to his admirable city every time he came back from his trading journeys to Europe. He was only five years old when the Great Plague (1665 – 97,000 people died) and a year later the Great Fire (1666 – 13,200 houses destroyed, about 75% of the city) severely damaged the city. Defoe's early perception of the city was of "instability, impermanence, insecurity" (Wall, 2008, p. 163). For Defoe, the writer, though, London could surpass any human settlement in history. Defoe's London around 1700 was a magnificent place of more than half a million inhabitants living there, a place with plentiful shops and street markets packed with goods, a place where one could find any artisan one could need, and a place with street lights (15,000 lamps) which was not very usual in those days around Europe. On the other hand, it was also a place with streets covered with dust in dry weather and mud with puddles and small streams in wet, a dangerous place full of criminals and swindlers, and filthy parts of the city with foreigners, newcomers and expanding industry (Olsen, 1995, pp. 58-59).

There is no doubt that Defoe took some of his destinations depicted in his novels from real life. Moll Flanders's first account that she could remember from her childhood was when she "wandered among a crew of those people they call gypsies, or Egyptians" (Defoe, 2003, p. 5) and how she was found in Colchester, Essex. Then thirty years later she visits the town again and recalls her memories about the place where she had so many pleasant days and had many good friends. According to Wright (1894), Defoe purchased two farms in Colchester for £120 per year for his daughter in 1722 (p. 298).

After reading Defoe's novel *Moll Flanders*, one could acquire the feeling that the heroine is in fact a man dressed in women's clothes. Max Novak (2008) comments on this speculation with a certain mistrust (p. 58). He mentions Leslie Stephen and other Victorian critics who assumed that Defoe created his female character in such way and also "asked himself, 'What would I do if I were in such a situation?'" (ibid.). For them, says Novak,

“Moll was impossibly unfeminine, utterly lacking in the sensibility to be expected of women” (ibid.). In contrary, Novak presents an idea that Defoe believed that women were as capable as men in most things, however they were deprived of an education which “might have made them more capable of dealing with the situations” (ibid.) such as inability to control over property when married or what to do after their husbands die or go bankrupt. Moll succeeded in surmounting all the difficulties so it may be possible that Defoe only tried to show how an independent woman could have survived in a society controlled by men and with limited options to operate with. Defoe himself was not confident of how successfully he dealt with “the task of re-dressing a woman story so as to make it presentable for public consumption” (Pollak, 2008, p. 146). In the author’s preface he dwells on the challenges of his job:

The pen employed in finishing her story, and making it what you now see it to be, has had no little difficulty to put it into a dress fit to be seen, and to make it speak language fit to be read. When a woman debauched from her youth, nay, even being the offspring of debauchery and vice, comes to give an account of all her vicious practices, and even to descend to the particular occasions and circumstances by which she ran through in threescore years, an author must be hard put to it wrap it up so clean as not to give room, especially for vicious readers, to turn it to his disadvantage. (Defoe, 2003, p. 2)

As Wright (1894) pointed out in his biography of Defoe, “no other author of that time regarded woman in so chivalrous and respectful a manner as Defoe, ... to Defoe a woman was not a doll, a fool, or a mere adjunct of man. She was a human being with a soul; and with man’s training would be man’s equal” (p. 51).

MOLL FLANDERS VERSUS RODERICK RANDOM

Both of the characters lived their own lives and were depicted by their creators – Daniel Defoe and Tobias Smollett – as unique heroes. Though they had no chance to encounter themselves, it may seem that their life stories would be the same in some ways, or at least similar in certain aspects. On the other hand, due to their different gender, there are of course many distinctions which brought them into different situations and adventures. The similarities and differences are analyzed from the point of view of their childhood, personal relationships, or unpleasant situations, and on top of that, there is an element of minor characters and the roles they play in their stories.

Childhood

Childhood is a phase of life which everyone nowadays considers secure, loving and carefree. When a child is born, he or she is usually loved, cared and supported by their parents for many years before they are old enough to start an independent and self-reliant life. Unfortunately, it is not the case of Moll Flanders and Roderick Random.

Roderick was born in Scotland, in a house of his grandfather, “a gentleman of considerable fortune and influence, who had on many occasions signalled himself in behalf of his country; and was remarkable for his abilities in the law, which he exercised with great success in the station of a judge, particularly against beggars, for whom he had a singular aversion” (Smollett, 2003, p. 11); though not with his support and care, but secretly in a garret with the help of grandfather’s old maidservant. Roderick was doomed to misfortune from his very beginning. His mother died soon after she was forced to leave and on top of that his father left the house and disappeared, so Roderick was sent to a nurse under the sporadic supervision of his grandfather.

Similarly, Moll was also brought into the world under appalling circumstances after her mother was convicted of a petty theft and later transported to the plantations, while Moll was “left a poor desolate girl without friends, without clothes, without help or helper in the world,” and “brought into a course of life which was not only scandalous in itself, but which in its ordinary course tended to the swift destruction both of soul and body” (Defoe, 2003, p. 5). Although having lived with an old nurse who taught her and some other children to read and to work, she knew that some day she would have to leave and take care of herself. The nurse was probably the first, and for a long time the only person who had unselfish and hearty

relationship with Moll. She encouraged her to work hard and kindly prepared her for her later role of “a gentlewoman”, according to Moll’s wishes.

Lack of parental love and care, and growing up among strangers, either pleasant or not, were the basic attributes Roderick and Moll had in common. Whilst small Moll found at least one person who took care of her until she was almost fifteen-year-old mature adolescent, Roderick was sent to a local village school when he was only six and left stranded with no funds or support. On the other hand, Roderick, as many other boys of those times, was allowed to attend a proper school where he was taught reading, writing and arithmetic, and languages, and he excelled in everything despite his master’s effort to thwart his improvement.

Women in the eighteenth century were mostly educated at home or in small schools composed of one teacher, usually a woman, and as many students as she was able to instruct. When the teacher died, moved away or found a better job, the school disappeared (Olsen, 1995, p. 223). Moll recalled the same situation when her nurse died, she said:

I was then in a sad condition indeed, for as there is no great bustle in putting an end to a poor body's family when once they are carried to the grave, so the poor good woman being buried, the parish children she kept were immediately removed by the church-wardens; the school was at an end, and the children of it had no more to do but just stay at home till they were sent somewhere else. (Defoe, 2003, p. 9)

Most experts of the eighteenth century came to a conclusion that women’s education was adequate when teaching them “enough to be really useful, but not enough to give them ambition” (Olsen, 1995, p. 226). In conformity with their conviction women were taught reading and writing, and mostly household chores, such as sewing, knitting, cooking; sometimes drawing, etiquette, dancing, religion, or supervising servants, thus the education remained adorning and perfunctory.

Roderick’s schooling was nevertheless influenced by the lack of money for board, clothes and books and other necessities he required and thus marked by comments from other boys on his appearance which was “very ragged and contemptible” (Smollett, 2003, p. 13). Together with constant torture and maltreatment from his master, these difficulties and disgraces helped him muster the courage and face his oppressors, or as Roderick reminisced about it:

The contempt which my appearance naturally produced in all who saw me, the continual wants to which I was exposed, and my own haughty disposition,

impatient of affronts, involved me in a thousand troublesome adventures, by which I was at length inured in adversity, and emboldened to undertakings far above my years. I was often inhumanly scourged for crimes I did not commit, because, having the character of a vagabond in the village, every piece of mischief, whose author lay unknown, was charged upon me. ... In short, whether I was guilty or unfortunate, the correction and sympathy of this arbitrary pedagogue were the same. Far from being subdued by this informal usage, my indignation triumphed over that slavish awe which had hitherto enforced my obedience; and the more my years and knowledge increased, the more I perceived the injustice and barbarity of his behaviour. (ibid., pp. 13-14)

Injustice though accompanied Roderick since his very beginning; it was the injustice of fate which made him an orphan so early and on top of that the injustice of his grandfather who disagreed with Roderick's father's marriage which led to inauspicious circumstances of Roderick's birth and culminated when his grandfather left his whole fortune to a single heir and behaved as if Roderick did not exist. This psychological sorrow afflicted Roderick deeply and thus may have transformed his resentment into physical violence and revenge. It all started when Roderick had a quarrel with another boy, who

... taking upon him to insult my poverty, I was so incensed at his ungenerous reproach that with one stroke with my machine I cut him to the skull, to the great terror of myself and schoolfellows, who left him bleeding on the ground, and ran to inform the master of what had happened, (ibid., p. 13)

and resulted in his vengeance on the cruel master. He even became a head of a group of about thirty boys and together they carried out many exploits "which became the terror of the whole village; insomuch that, when different interests divided it, one of the parties commonly courted the assistance of Roderick Random (by which name I was known) to cast the balance, and keep the opposite faction in awe" (ibid., p. 14). Thanks to a lucky coincidence of meeting his uncle, Roderick found, at least for a short period of time, a soul mate who provided him with mental and financial support and enabled him to continue his education at the university. Unfortunately, Roderick's pride, vanity, awareness of his abilities and good face and shape, which "acquired the esteem and acquaintance of the most considerable people in town" (ibid., p. 22), did not allow him to anticipate that there were more hard lessons he would have to learn – a best friend's treachery. After spending three years in blissful state of mind without facing any crises while courting ladies with the belles lettres, he suddenly experienced another stroke of fate; his uncle had to desert his ship after a duel with the captain and found it

impossible to continue with supplying Roderick's needs. With only three shillings in his pocket and without a shelter to stay in, Roderick foolishly informed his best friend Gawky about his miserable situation. Not only did he fob him off with alms, he also spread gossips about Roderick. Roderick must have felt humiliated "for he neither expressed any sympathy for my mishap nor desire of alleviating my distress" (ibid., p. 24), however he realized that he would have to stand on his own two feet and not rely on somebody's mercy, because as he said "I found myself deserted to all the horrors of extreme want, and avoided by mankind as a creature of a different species, or rather as a solitary being, noways comprehended within the scheme or protection of Providence" (ibid., p. 26).

After the death of Moll's guardian, she spent another three years with a wealthy and respectable family in a town where she had

... all the advantages for my education that could be imagined; the lady had masters home to the house to teach her daughters to dance, and to speak French, and to write, and other to teach them music; and I was always with them, I learned as fast as they; and though the masters were not appointed to teach me, yet I learned by imitation and inquiry all that they learned by instruction and direction; so that, in short, I learned to dance and speak French as well as any of them, and to sing much better, for I had a better voice than any of them. (Defoe, 2003, p. 10)

She was treated as the other members of the family but she was aware of the fact that she was more beautiful and therefore had a good opinion of herself. This youthful imprudence and vanity led her to a competition with the girls and subsequently to seduction by the elder brother. She did not have an intimate person, either a mother or a close friend, who would advise her with the love matters, who would tell her that she would be in a serious trouble when entangling with a noble man, and who would tell her that she would better behave in a different way. Interestingly, all these events foreshadowed her future "adventures and occupation". Moll learnt her lesson when going through the humiliating moments with Robert, the elder brother, especially when she got paid for their private time. She realized that it was foolish to think that the heir of the whole family estate would ever marry her and, in fact, that she was not as equal with the family as she thought. Roy Porter (1998) pointed out that in the eighteenth century "family continuity was the keynote of magnate success, ... inheritance was paramount in a legal system in which male primogeniture ensured that estates were not broken" (p. 56). By contrast, younger sons got relatively "meager consolation prize of money" but had more freedom, said Porter.

It is obvious that both characters experienced some difficult life moments and underwent a certain evolution which would enable them to move forward and simultaneously not to make the same mistakes or not to be abused by other people.

Love and marriage

For working people, life in the eighteenth century within the household and the community was tightly organised and regulated from cradle to the grave. As Porter (1998) points out “through moral precepts, authority figures, family demands and work routines, communities effectively applied continual physical, moral and emotional pressure upon their members to conform to certain tried and tested ways of living” (p. 136). There were two activities primarily strictly regulated – work and sex, because production and reproduction should have been kept in balance. Everyone could expect that they would be put to work until they were incapable to continue (ibid., p. 137). Men usually worked hard in the fields or factories and tended to earn more than women. Women, on the other hand, did most or all of the housework and on top of that, they also might help in the field during the harvest time or do factory work as well but they earned much less than men. It could also happen that women’s work brought bigger income into the household by knitting skills and the roles might be reversed (Olsen, 1995, p. 33).

Early in the century most of the marriages were arranged by the families. Kirstin Olsen (1995) marks the situation of a young lady who pronounces that “people in my way are sold like slaves, and I cannot tell what price my master will put on me” (p. 35). Fathers offered a sum of money to the potential husbands which would help them to get started their own household. Simultaneously, men usually brought some fortune into the marriage as well. A different situation was below middle class. Young men and woman left their homes early, often by the age of fifteen or sixteen, in order to work because parents were neither capable nor willing to care for their children after they were old enough to live on their own. Most of the control remained in the hands of the courting couples who met at fairs, in the workplace or at church (ibid., pp. 35-36).

Moll Flanders was aware of “the marriage market” which was common around the country in her day. Moll, having been left with “no friends, no, not one friend or relation in the world” (Defoe, 2003, p. 32) after her second husband’s stampede, soon realized that

marriages were here the consequences of politic schemes for forming interests, and carrying on business, and that Love had no share, or but very little, in the

matter. That as my sister-in-law at Colchester had said, beauty, wit, manners, sense, good humour, good behaviour, education, virtue, piety, or any other qualification, whether of body or mind, had no power to recommend; that money only made a woman agreeable; that men chose mistresses indeed by the gust of their affection, and it was requisite to a whore to be handsome, well-shaped, have a good mien and a graceful behaviour; but that for a wife, no deformity would shock the fancy, no ill qualities the judgment; the money was the thing; the portion was neither crooked nor monstrous, but the money was always agreeable, whatever the wife was. (ibid., p. 33)

She herself was the person who spent all her life with men who she might have had affection for but there was only one man whom she “loved to distraction” (ibid., p. 21) – Robert, the older brother of her first husband Robin. Actually, there is not much evidence about the feelings Moll cherished or personal relationships she had. Ian Watt (1962) commented on this and wrote that “we are told very little, for example, about the quality of Moll Flanders’s loves, and even our information about their quantity is suspiciously meagre” (p. 109). Moll confessed that she “has lain with thirteen men” (Defoe, 2003, p. 88) but there were only seven of them revealed to the readers – Robert, Robin, a draper, a half-brother from Virginia, a gentleman in Bath, a banker and James. One could not be sure which one of these Moll preferred the most, nonetheless James could have been her favourite. When he left her in order to look for fortune in Ireland, Moll recalled “near a month, during which I enjoyed his company, which indeed was the most entertaining that ever I met in my life before” (ibid., p. 77). And once they encountered again in the jail one may have an impression that they really shared mutual feelings. Nevertheless, Defoe depicted this strongly emotional moment laconically as he wrote:

... I had shut the door, I threw off my hood, and bursting out into tears, 'My dear,' says I, 'do you not know me?' He turned pale, and stood speechless, like one thunderstruck, and, not able to conquer the surprise, said no more but this, 'Let me sit down'; and sitting down by a table, he laid his elbow upon the table, and leaning his head on his hand, fixed his eyes on the ground as one stupid. I cried so vehemently, on the other hand, that it was a good while ere I could speak any more; but after I had given some vent to my passion by tears, I repeated the same words, 'My dear, do you not know me?' At which he answered, Yes, and said no more a good while. (ibid., p. 141)

Defoe's terse narrative approach could be notably evocative when he concentrated on personal relationships, which happened not so often, but it may also seem that neither Moll nor Defoe considered feelings as important in her life (Watt, 1962, p. 109). However, even James was among those Moll's men who she married mostly because of her dismal state or to avoid poverty and hunger. The moment, she realized that the only way how to maintain her higher standard of living was to find and marry a wealthy man, came when her second husband left her with nothing but debts. Suddenly, Moll was caught in the worst situation she had never experienced before. She was in a situation "in which there was at this time no little nicety, the circumstances I was in made the offer of a good husband the most necessary thing in the world to me" (Defoe, 2003, p. 37). Although she was perfectly aware of possible bigamy, which could have been punished with imprisonment or death in the eighteenth century (OBPO, 2011), when marrying another man, she became a wife to another three husbands. This problem, however, entered her conscience only once. When having lived with a gentleman in Bath she said to herself that "I never once reflected that I was all this while a married woman, a wife to Mr. ---- the linen-draper, who, though he had left me by the necessity of his circumstances, had no power to discharge me from the marriage contract which was between us, or to give me a legal liberty to marry again; so that I had been no less than a whore and an adulteress all this while" (Defoe, 2003, p. 60). There were of course few more moments when Moll regretted and repented but also tried to justify her former actions, e.g. when she wrote:

... prompted by that worst of devils, poverty, returned to the vile practice, and made the advantage of what they call a handsome face to be the relief to my necessities, and beauty be a pimp to vice. ... But there are temptations which it is not in the power of human nature to resist, and few know what would be their case if driven to the same exigencies. As covetousness is the root of all evil, so poverty is, I believe, the worst of all snares. (ibid., p. 91)

Together with Moll's wife-life, one must consider her character as a mother as well. She had twelve children with six men. For clearer view, the following chart is added:

father	number of children	died	growing up
Robin	2	-	grandparents
a draper	1	1	-
half-brother	3	1	1 not clear
			1 with his father in Virginia
a gentleman in Bath	3	2	1 not clear
a banker	2	-	2 not clear
James	1	-	foster family

Although she showed some kind of fondness for two or three of her children, from the point of view of a contemporary reader, she may seem to be a heartless or callous mother. Actually, she was condemned by one of her husbands not only being an unkind wife but also an unnatural mother who was able to leave her children. More specifically, Moll did not mention the eventual fate of her children, except for the four reported dead, and revealed just one name – Humphrey, the son of her half-brother in Virginia. Only when she was close to meet her long-separated son again, she exposed her deepest inner feelings. She longed “to embrace him, and weep over him” and then she “kissed the ground that he had set his foot on” (ibid., pp. 152-153). Ian Watt (1962) explained that this contradiction between expressing and not expressing feelings was not a matter of a psychological understanding but of Defoe’s specific narrative strategy. He suggested that “in reading Defoe we must posit a kind of limited liability for the narrative, accepting whatever is specifically stated, but drawing no inferences from omissions, however significant they may seem” (ibid., p. 110). Which means, in fact, that one should not construe more than what was declared straight away by Defoe or Moll Flanders.

Moll Flanders, as a female character in Defoe’s conception, was a woman who perfectly understood the masculine world of her era, the world where money and ability to survive was everything she could rely on. She lived on her own and did not form permanent relationships, even with her own children. One may only speculate whether she behaved this way in order to become successful or because she was afraid of becoming vulnerable and being abused which happened few times before she mastered her own strategy to avoid it.

Roderick Random, on the other hand, was an example of a character who lived on his own in his own way. He did not look forward and lived his life from one day to another, often without a single prospect of obtaining sufficient funds for at least satisfying his basic needs. It was also apparent in his approach towards women. Several women appeared in the novel but they hardly played any part in Roderick’s life. On the other hand, Boucé (1976) suggested that they “introduce a sentimental element, sometimes artificial and clumsy, but none the less important, into the novel” (p. 116).

Through his vanity he often exaggerated his appearance and was uncritical to his ability to seduce a woman. Once he believed that he excited one of the housemaid’s interest and visited her naked in her room at night but found her with another man. Some time later he began to look upon him as of a gentleman, he “learned to dance, frequented plays during the holidays; became the oracle of an ale-house” and “at length contracted an acquaintance with a young lady” (Smollett, 2003, p. 72). He won her heart after “much attendance and

solicitation” (ibid.) and she promised him marriage. However, when he came to her flat one morning, he also found her with another man, and thus he made a promise to himself that “when I made such a discovery as effectually turned me from my design, and I abandoned all thoughts of marriage for the future” (ibid.). Later he found out that this woman - Miss Williams – infected his with an infectious illness.

His love adventures continued with unsuccessful courting to Melinda, Miss Gripewell, Miss Sparkle, “a wrinkled hag turned of seventy”, “ancient Urganda” or “my hoary Dulcinea” (ibid., p. 179) as Roderick called her, until he met Narcissa, and his “heart was captivated at first sight” (ibid., p. 133). And again he succumbed to his usual tendency to vanity and began to visualize daring ideas concerning Narcissa. He called her “this idol of my adoration” and claimed that his soul “was thrilled with an ecstasy of tumultuous joy” (ibid., p. 134), and every time Narcissa was complimentary about him it “flattered my vanity extremely” (ibid.). Revealing his emotions was quite frequent through the novel, in most of the cases, however, appeared suddenly with unexpected force in uncontrolled emotional outbursts and showed his immaturity as well as emotional instability and subsided as quickly as arose before. It did not take too long and Narcissa was nearly forgotten by Roderick when he travelled to Bath in order to court to the unattractive woman, Miss Snapper whose

... head, indeed, bore some resemblance to a hatchet, the edge being represented by her face; but she had a certain delicacy in her complexion, and a great deal of vivacity in her eyes, which were very large and black; and, though the protuberance of her breast, when considered alone, seemed to drag her forwards, it was easy to perceive an equivalent on her back which balanced the other, and kept her body in equilibrio. (ibid., p. 192)

Similarly to Moll Flanders, Roderick, in a grinding life situation, hypocritically turned his attention to the same strategy although he despised Irish fortune-hunters for the same reason several times. He was incited by his friend Banter to marry one of his wealthy relatives and he yielded because as he said “this proposal was too advantageous for me to be refused” (ibid., p. 189). He started to think that “I should have great reason to congratulate myself if it should be my fate to possess twenty thousand pounds encumbered with such a wife” (ibid., p. 192). Obviously, Roderick accepted the idea that money was never hideous and was always agreeable. Fortunately for Roderick, Narcissa reappeared on the scene and so did his passion:

... my reflection was overwhelmed with a torrent of agitation! my heart throbbed with surprising violence! a sudden mist overspread my eyes, my ears were invaded with a dreadful sound! I panted for want of breath, and, in short,

was for some moments entranced! This first tumult subsiding, a crowd of flattering ideas rushed upon my imagination. (ibid., p. 198)

And almost immediately his love changed into jealousy and vindictiveness which again showed his emotional volatility, and on top of that, violent nature:

Neither was this transport of long duration. The dread of her being already disposed of intervened, and overcast my enchanting reverie! My presaging apprehension represented her encircled in the arms of some happy rival, and in consequence for ever lost to me. I was stung with this suggestion, and, believing the person who conducted her to be the husband of this amiable young lady, already devoted him to my fury, and stood up to mark him for my vengeance, when I recollected, to my unspeakable joy, her brother the fox-hunter, in the person of her gallant. (ibid., p. 198)

Roderick's misfortunes in love were in the end forgotten and his story finished peacefully as in fairy tales, they lived happily ever after, Roderick and his wife Narcissa.

Moll Flanders in comparison with Roderick Random was a mature person who knew what was important in her life and she strived for a financially secured existence whatever it took. By contrast, Roderick was a character who was depicted by Smollett as immature, vain and reckless. He did not understand value of money, spent wastefully in every occasion and did not think through what his impetuous actions may have brought to him.

Crime and Punishment

Eighteenth century justice system in England was highly developed. Kirsten Olsen (1995) wrote that "it afforded the accused strong protections, including strict evidentiary rules, jury trials, and the revered principle of habeas corpus, which banned imprisonment without trial" (p. 205). On the other hand, lack of police forces together with possible influencing of judges via bribing, or other forms of corruption, was also part of the justice. And on top of that, there were also professional witnesses who provided whatever testimony was needed (ibid.). Hence it was probably not a coincidence that Moll Flanders while performing the successful part of her crime career encountered also a corrupted custom-house officer and a constable. She knew of "a good quantity of Flanders lace lodged in a private house" and because "Flanders lace being prohibited" she went to a custom-house officer,

and told him I had such a discovery to make to him of such a quantity of lace, if he would assure me that I should have my due share of the reward. This was

so just an offer, that nothing could be fairer; so he agreed, and taking a constable and me with him, we beset the house. (Defoe, 2003, p. 101)

England's police was unpaid, part-time and limited. Each constable served for one year while they maintained their jobs and performed their duties in their spare time. Robert Porter (1998) added that they were "perhaps effective at handling street crime but useless at detection work" (p. 132). Henry Fielding, a magistrate and a novelist, published an advertisement in order to encourage citizens to report a villain. He proposed that

all persons who shall for the future suffer by robbers, burglars, etc., are desired immediately to bring or send the best description they can of such robbers, etc., with the time and place and circumstances of the fact, to Henry Fielding Esq., at his home in Bow Street. (Olsen, 1995, p. 205)

He also set up the Bow Street Runners in 1749, paid with secret-service funds, who obtained a guinea per week, and a reward, for each criminal successfully prosecuted (Porter, 1998, p. 132).

Daniel Defoe lived in the times when it was widely felt that there was a sharp increase in levels of violent crime, especially in London. People were fascinated with it and simultaneously terrified (Gladfelder, 2008, p. 65). Defoe intended to write his *Moll Flanders* as a lesson or a warning. In the Preface of the novel he declared that

this work is chiefly recommended to those who know how to read it, and how to make the good uses of it which the story all along recommends to them, so it is to be hoped that such readers will be more pleased with the moral than the fable, with the application than with the relation, and with the end of the writer than with the life of the person written of. (Defoe, 2003, p. 3)

Defoe also claimed that "vicious readers" would always find some pretexts to turn virtuous text into whatever they want to have of it (Gladfelder, 2008, p. 69). He wrote, that

it is suggested there cannot be the same life, the same brightness and beauty, in relating the penitent part as is in the criminal part. If there is any truth in that suggestion, I must be allowed to say 'tis because there is not the same taste and relish in the reading, and indeed it is too true that the difference lies not in the real worth of the subject so much as in the gust and palate of the reader. (Defoe, 2003, p. 3)

In his criminal texts, Defoe focused his attention "on the experience of characters marked by circumstances and their own desires as deviant, and drawing us as readers into complicity with them" (Gladfelder, 2008, p. 65). His character, Moll Flanders, wavered over blaming his

fate on the insufficiency of fortune and assigning it to an incentive of a devil whispering in her ear (ibid.). She weighed her options because “a time of distress is a time of dreadful temptation, and all the strength to resist is taken away; poverty presses, the soul is made desperate by distress, and what can be done?” (Defoe, 2003, p. 92). Before her first fruitful attempt to steal a bundle from a careless maid-servant, Moll recalled an inner voice talking to her:

this was the bait; and the devil, who I said laid the snare, as readily prompted me as if he had spoke, for I remember, and shall never forget it, 'twas like a voice spoken to me over my shoulder, 'Take the bundle; be quick; do it this moment.' (ibid., p. 93)

After that, “my blood was all in a fire”, she said, “my heart beat as if I was in a sudden fright. In short, I was under such a surprise that I still knew not wither I was going, or what to do” (ibid.). All her distresses hardened her heart and she realized that her own necessities made her regardless of anything. When stealing a necklace from a little girl, she again heard that devil’s voice tempting her to kill “the child in the dark alley, that it might not cry” but “the very thought frightened me so that I was ready to drop down” (ibid., p. 94). This passage from the novel nevertheless showed that Defoe did not intend to depict a woman with no scruples although one must admit that even a thought of committing such a crime might be considered perverted.

Moll was a fifty-year-old widow when falling into crime. She was implicated in stealing things (jewels, silver cups and spoons, lace, expensive clothes or bundles of fabrics, etc.), deceiving people, and in addition to that, she behaved as a whore, however, she proved that there was still something good in her heart when returning stolen objects to their original owner. She also cooperated with other pickpockets, she became “an apprentice” to an experienced thief in order to master their profession. One may understand that Moll distinguished between two types of criminals. She called some of them “comrades” and they were, according to Moll, virtuous and poor people who have been unfortunate. On the other hand, one could observe that Moll did not feel pity for the others who were “vicious reprobates” and thus “richly deserved their faith” (Watt, 1962, p. 113).

Ian Watt (1962) expressed an idea that Defoe “did not plan his novel as a coherent whole, but worked piecemeal, very rapidly, and without any subsequent revision” (p. 99). Moll’s narration of her life seemed to be a sequence of adventures, with no connection, or as Watt (1962) pointed out “Defoe paid little attention to the internal consistency of his story” (p. 99). It was apparent in a scene when Moll arrived to Virginia as a transported convict and

gave her son a golden watch, “nothing of any value to bestow but that”, and also desired “he would now and then kiss it for my sake”, but then ironically added that she did not tell him “that I had stole it from a gentlewoman's side, at a meeting-house in London” (Defoe, 2003, p. 159). Since there was no other scene in *Moll Flanders* involving a golden watch, a gentlewoman and a meeting-house in London, it must have been this one and only episode in the novel:

The next thing of moment was an attempt at a gentlewoman's good watch. It happened in a crowd, at a meeting-house, where I was in very great danger of being taken. I had full hold of her watch, but giving a great jostle, as if somebody had thrust me against her, and in the juncture giving the watch a fair pull, I found *it would not come, so I let it go that moment*, and cried out as if I had been killed, that somebody had trod upon my foot, and that there were certainly pickpockets there, for somebody or other had given a pull at my watch. (ibid., p. 102) (emphasis added)

After a quick look, one may infer that Defoe probably did not remember what he had written a hundred pages earlier when describing an attempt of stealing a golden watch which in fact had failed.

Together with Moll's crimes, the punishment came as a consequence of her preceding actions. While waiting for a trial, she searched her conscience, she “repented heartily of all my life past, but that repentance yielded me no satisfaction, no peace, no, not in the least”, but in the next sentence, one could see her true motive for it, she added:

I seemed not to mourn that I had committed such crimes, and for the fact as it was an offence against God and my neighbour, but I mourned that I was to be punished for it. I was a penitent, as I thought, not that I had sinned, but that I was to suffer, and this took away all the comfort, and even the hope of my repentance in my own thoughts. (ibid., p. 131)

It was suddenly obvious that even her imprisonment did not move her stone heart. In fact, she did not feel sorry for all the people she had betrayed or deprived. She only regretted herself. She probably could not believe the fact that she, the famous Moll Flanders, was captured and placed in jail for such a petty crime as stealing two pieces of brocaded silk. Surprisingly, she still behaved as a gentlewoman, she despised her “colleagues” when she called them “the wretches” and warned others in her situation

how time, necessity, and conversing with the wretches that are there familiarizes the place to them; how at last they become reconciled to that

which at first was the greatest dread upon their spirits in the world, and are as impudently cheerful and merry in their misery as they were when out of it. (ibid.)

After two weeks in Newgate, which she spent “here under the utmost horror of soul; I had death, as it were, in view, and thought of nothing night and day, but of gibbets and halters, evil spirits and devils” (ibid., p. 132), Moll found a lucky solution and begged for “a humble petition for transportation” (ibid., p. 139) to America. She was perfectly aware that transportation was not a punishment for her but actually a release and a beginning of her new penitent life of prosperity and freedom.

If Roderick Random encountered Moll Flanders, he would definitely become one of her victims. He stood on the other side of a barricade. Within only two days he spent in London, he was

grievously imposed upon by a couple of sharpers, who were associates; and that this polite, honest, friendly, humane person, who had treated us so civilly, was no other than a rascally money-dropper, we made it his business to decoy strangers in that manner to one of his own haunts, where an accomplice or two were always waiting to assist in pillaging the prey he had run down. (Smollett, 2003, p. 54)

Even though Roderick “was confounded at the artifice and wickedness of mankind”, he proved his permanent inexperience, incorrigibility, and immaturity in a city where, according to his friend Strap, “the devil had set up his throne” (ibid.), many times since then. Roderick’s life was marked with a series of mishaps, misunderstandings, skirmishes and cheating.

One evening Roderick “was so much elevated, that nothing would serve me but a wench” and went “to a place of nocturnal entertainment” with his friend Jackson and were robbed by one of the “nymphs” (ibid., p. 63). They were warned by the constable that the woman escaped the justice many times “through her interest with the justices, to whom she and all of her employment pay contribution quarterly for protection” and on top of that “she can procure evidence to swear whatsoever she shall please to desire of them” (ibid.) and send them to Newgate and Old Bailey for prosecution. This time Roderick survived the adventure unharmed, however, his astounding naivety and inability to assess other people brought him into much more troubles.

As in the case of Moll Flanders, lack of money forced him to commit a crime. Due to an unlucky advice from one of his acquaintances, he cheated on his tailor. Roderick “was startled at this proposal, which I thought savoured a little of fraud” at first but he was also

“acquitted by the honesty of my intention” (ibid., p. 217). Contrary to Moll, Roderick’s inducement for that was not of avoiding hunger or helping a friend in trouble, surprisingly, he hoped that it “would enable me to do something effectual in behalf of my love and fortune” (ibid.). Boucé (1976) commented on Roderick that he, “instead of relying on himself, constantly seeks to escape from the real world in order to rely on the vagaries of his ever-optimistic imagination” (p. 119). In Marshalsea, the jail Roderick was transported to, confronted with the ambiguity of life he fell into deep melancholy, he was left with no solution, in short, “all my hopes frustrated, grew negligent of life, lost all appetite, and degenerated into such a sloven” (Smollett, 2003, p. 231). Roderick was in such despair that he refused to shave or wash or even change his linen. This detail in the novel was probably not mentioned accidentally because Smollett showed repeatedly that Roderick insisted on his distinguished appearance of a gentleman.

A lucky coincidence, nearly a miracle, took him out of the jail, the arrival of his long-awaited uncle Captain Bowling and his fortune. He paid Roderick’s debts and told him that “was just arrived from the Coast Of Guinea, after having made a pretty successful voyage” and was “ready to sail upon a very advantageous voyage, which he was not at liberty to discover” (ibid.). Roderick soon learned the mystery; the ship was “bound for the coast of Guinea, where we shall exchange part of our cargo for slaves and gold dust, from whence we will transport our negroes to Buenos Ayres in New Spain” (ibid., p. 237). Roderick and his uncle bought 400 slaves and gold dust in Guinea and sold them when they reached their final destination. Roderick was enthusiastic about his successful trade though regretted he did not buy and sell “five times the number” that they could have sold “at our own price” (ibid., p. 238). Although Roderick helped his friends and even unknown people with money or magnanimous deeds in every occasion, the fate of the slaves, also human beings, did not touch him at all because he did not consider them like that. They were only the means of achieving his goals – fortune and accomplishment. This side of Roderick’s character may remind Moll’s. They both expressed no feelings towards the people they “traded with”.

Minor characters

Minor characters are without any doubt very important elements for building an attractive story. They help the heroes in their adventures, they may also complicate the access to their goals, and sometimes they might be the reason the heroes succeed or fail. In general, with minor characters, the novels become more complex through developing and completing

the main storyline where the heroes deal with their fate or inner inconsistency. The major characters do not experience an isolated life, they communicate with other people who are a part of the outer world.

Tobias Smollett created “five hundred different people” (Smollett, 2003, p. 10) for his novel *Roderick Random*. Most of them did not influence Roderick’s life much and some of them not at all. Nevertheless, there were few characters whose appearance affected the overall impression of the novel. One of them was Strap. In the first part of the novel, he played “a subordinate role of comic foil to his comrade and master, Roderick” (Bouc , 1976, p. 107). He was only a risible companion in adventure and a grotesque counterpart which would enable Roderick to look smarter and more courageous. On the journey to London, Roderick and Strap accidentally overheard a threat towards them. Strap became so terrified that he “had crept under the bed, where he lay in the agonies of fear; so that it was with great difficulty I persuaded him our danger was over” (Smollett, 2003, p. 31). Few pages later nonetheless showed his “bravery” to the same scoundrel face to face, as “he presented his clenched fists to his nose, and declared he would either cudgel or box with the prisoner for a guinea, which he immediately produced, and began to strip” (ibid., p. 36). Roderick had to calm him down and explained him the foolishness of his action because “Rifle was now in the hands of justice” which would “give us all satisfaction enough” (ibid.).

There were many other funny situations though much more amusing for readers than for Strap himself. He did not avoid being poured with the content of potty, twice, or he,

in his descent, missing one of the stops, tumbled headlong into this infernal ordinary, and overturned the cook as she carried a porringer of soup to one of the guests. In her fall, she dashed the whole mess against the legs of a drummer belonging to the foot-guards, who happened to be in her way, and scalded him so miserably, that he started up, and danced up and down, uttering a volley of execrations that made my hair stand on end. (ibid., p. 49)

Although Strap helped Roderick with finances or good advice countless times and showed him his endless devotion, Roderick did not appreciate his friendship in the same way. He got to the state of mind that he “began to be tired of his acquaintance” because he “had contracted other friendships which appeared more creditable” and “was even ashamed to see a journeyman barber inquiring after me with the familiarity of a companion” (ibid., p. 72). On top of that, Roderick called him a servant and treated him like that, sending him to and fro or running errands for him. Roderick soon forgot that Strap defended his honour and was also beaten for that. Actually, Roderick did not behave to his best friend nicely in general, it may

seem that he exploited him all the time, he did not think of anyone else but himself. This self-centred behaviour, so typical for Roderick, might lead to a conclusion that Moll Flanders was probably a likable person who at least did not deceive her close friends, contrary to Roderick.

Another minor character which appeared in the novel to Roderick's good luck, was his uncle Captain Bowling, "a strong built man, somewhat bandy legged, with a neck like that of a bull, and a face which had withstood the most obstinate assaults of the weather" (*ibid.*, p. 15). Bowling was used in the novel as a donator, a person who had money in order to provide Roderick with it every time he reappeared on the scene. Not only did he pay for Roderick's studies, he paid him off from the jail and moved him forward to become a wealthy gentleman himself which suddenly brought him closer to his beloved Narcissa. Captain Bowling might be the key character which in the end helped Roderick fulfill his goal to become rich and to marry a beautiful girl.

Apart from this generous side of Bowling's character, one may also discover his darker side – a violent one. He often swore and berated other people. Having spent most of his life on the sea, he did not learn how to treat people. He often called others "brother" or "you lubberly son of a w—e" and used words of marine jargon, such as "we must steer another course" (*ibid.*, p. 18). When Roderick encountered his uncle for the first time, he deflected the attack of two dogs with a cudgel and then "he drew his hanger, wheeled about, and by a lucky stroke severed Jowler's head from his body" (*ibid.*, p. 15). On top of that, Bowling challenged the captain of the ship he served on to a duel and killed him, having explained the act with these words "I would serve the best man so that ever stepped between stem and stern, if so be that he struck me, as Captain Oakum did" (*ibid.*, p. 23).

Both of the novels contained one remarkable element – a character who was in fact a substitute mother for the main character. In Roderick's case, it was Mrs Sagely who, according to Boucé (1976), played "the part of a practical and moral mentor in Roderick's life" (p. 116). This woman, having been rejected by her family for her secret marriage, together with her friend after their husbands' death sold all their valuables and moved to the county of Sussex where she encountered Roderick and took care of him. Although she was considered to be a witch among the villagers, Roderick "contracted a filial respect for her, and begged her advice with regard to my future conduct, as soon as I was in a condition to act for myself" (Smollett, 2003, p. 131). She was the one who recommended and later introduced him "to a single lady of her acquaintance, who lived in the neighbourhood" (*ibid.*) where Roderick met Narcissa for the first time.

To Moll, such “mother”, was her acquaintance, a woman she called the Governess or Mrs B.

who had run through, it seems, in a few years, all the eminent degrees of a gentlewoman, a whore, and a bawd; a midwife and a midwife-keeper, as they are called; a pawnbroker, a childtaker, a receiver of thieves, and of thieves’ purchase, that is to say, of stolen goods; and in a word, herself a thief, a breeder up of thieves and the like, and yet at last a penitent. (Defoe, 2003, p. 4)

Moll met her while being in such awkward position, with no husband by her side she was expecting a baby. There were not many opportunities to learn something about this woman because Daniel Defoe did not bother to provide his readers with many details about lives of the other characters except Moll’s, but Moll remembered that “my governess did her part as a midwife with the greatest art and dexterity imaginable, and far beyond all that ever I had had any experience of before” (ibid., p. 83) and looked after her carefully and tenderly “as if I had been her own child” (ibid., p. 84). Moll had a special relationship with her, in fact, she must have trusted her fully because she was the right person Moll contacted with the stolen goods. The Governess was also very friendly to Moll and thus she “allowed me the full value in silver again; but I found she did not do the same to the rest of her customers” (ibid., p. 97).

The Governess became Moll’s only friend. They shared their dark secrets and although Moll did most of the dangerous part, the Governess, on the other hand, offered Moll moral support and practical guidance. When Moll suffered in Newgate, she did not hesitate and

immediately applied herself to all the proper methods to prevent the effects of it, which we feared, and first she found out the two fiery jades that had surprised me. She tampered with them, offered them money, and, in a word, tried all imaginable ways to prevent a prosecution. (ibid., p. 132)

There might be two possible explanations for her actions. Firstly, she did all she could in order to protect Moll as her close friend from hanging, or secondly, it might have been simply an attempt to prevent herself from prosecution. Moll, as well as other similar figures, knew too much about her activities. A highly resembling situation would have occurred in Moll’s mind if she had recalled Mrs B’s thoughts of another pickpocket who was hanged some time before, “it is true that when she was gone, and had not opened mouth to tell what she knew, my governess was easy as to that point, and perhaps glad she was hanged, for it was in her power to have obtained a pardon at the expense of her friends” (ibid., p. 100).

For Moll, as a self-reliant character, making friends was not the priority. She could obtain enough funds in order to survive, either with a new husband or by stealing. She was

also highly suspicious and hence she did not form close relationships with other people. In general, she might have lived a solitary life. Roderick, by contrast, encountered so many different people who might be considered his friends. However, he regarded himself as the centre of the world.

CONCLUSION

The primary aim of this thesis was to compare two characters, Moll Flanders and Roderick Random, of the eighteenth-century novels from the point of view of their gender role they held in the society. In addition to that, the research on historical context was done, and the reasons why common people in England changed their reading habits and their motives for reading novels were discussed.

Due to extensive social and economic transformations of the society of the eighteenth-century England, people modified their reading habits and engaged in reading for pleasure much more than before. Readers searched for entertainment in novels because they could bring them into the world of fictional characters very similar to themselves, ordinary people who were working in households, on the farms, in a trade etc.. Through the novels, they could find the answers to the essential questions of their lives and at the same time they could escape from the ordinariness of their own lives. Contrary to this positive development, there were still some restraints that discouraged them from reading books – economic limitations and social habits, as well as the imperfection of the educational system.

Autobiographical elements appear in both of the novels. Defoe and Smollett took some of their previous life experiences and incorporated them into their stories. Moll Flanders, for example, underwent the same bitter experience in jail as Defoe. She also evinced amazing sense of orientation across London thanks to Defoe's lifelong affection for the city. No one would ever accuse Defoe of depicting his female character based on himself, nevertheless Smollett had to face this aspersion because his life might seem to be in accordance with the life of Roderick. Smollett however denied it though admitted that some moments were inspired by his life, e.g. Roderick's choice of occupation or his service on the naval ship. The impression that these novels may appear to be autobiographical is also supported by the fact that both authors worked with the reality of the eighteenth century. Thus they might arouse this feeling to the readers who are familiar with novelists' biographies.

Contrary to my first assumption that Moll Flanders behaved as a man dressed in woman's clothes, after studying some sources concerning this matter, I came to a conclusion that Defoe did not intend to create such a character. Moll was born into a world where parents, love and support did not have a place. Defoe prepared for Moll a life full of troubles, lures, and obstacles which she endured thanks to her strong character, self-reliance and rejection of forming permanent friendships. Having lived without a proper care and guidance in her childhood, she created a unique strategy to become a gentlewoman and to survive in the world led by men, with the only means she could have obtained as a woman – marriages and

stealing. In her life, she encountered many people who might have become her friends but her “adventurous” life did not allow her to let anyone close to her.

Roderick, on the other hand, is a character full of contradiction. His childhood was also marked by unhappy circumstances but he never learnt his lesson and made the same mistakes all over again. He also realised that violence is the way to achieve his goals. His continual outburst of feelings, either positive or negative, or abortive evaluations of characters through personal appearance aggravated his life and only his friend Strap could have helped him out of his miserable situations. Although Roderick’s main life goal was to become a gentleman, he did not contribute to the achievement much. Tobias Smollett made his toiling easier by introducing a donator, his uncle Captain Bowling. In the end, Roderick and Moll proved a different level of maturity and self-reliance. Whilst Moll, having been caught up by the consequences of her criminal actions, figured out the way how to free herself from jail, Roderick, in the same situation, fell into a tormented state of mind and waited for a miracle.

To my great delight, while studying the historical sources, I learnt that Defoe and Smollett actually situated their novels into the reality of common life of the eighteenth century. Not only were the historical books a useful source for my thesis, I also had an opportunity to take a closer look into the way of living of the inhabitants of the eighteenth-century England.

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SUMMARY IN CZECH

Předmětem této bakalářské práce je porovnání hlavních hrdinů, Moll Flandersové a Rodericka Randoma, z románů Daniela Defoe a Tobiase Smolletta z hlediska jejich gendru a rolí, které plní ve společnosti v době osmnáctého století v Anglii. Zároveň jsou jejich příběhy porovnávány s realitou běžného člověka daného století.

Práce je rozdělena na dvě části, teoretickou a praktickou. Teoretická část se zabývá rozvojem románu v osmnáctém století a také případnými omezeními, které v tomto rozvoji bránily. Praktická část je dále rozdělena do dvou hlavních celků a soustřeďuje se na porovnání charakteristických znaků obou hlavních hrdinů. První celek se zabývá srovnáním života obou autorů s životem jejich postav. Druhý celek je rozdělen do čtyř podkapitol, které porovnávají oba protagonisty z různých hledisek – dětství, láska a manželství, zločin a trest a vedlejší postavy. Průběžně jsou poznatky z románů konfrontovány s realitou osmnáctého století.