Fielding's Use of Names in *Joseph Andrews*[1]

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FIELDING'S COMPLEX NAMING PRACTICES are a vital part of his art and, in the case of *Joseph Andrews* at least, they provide clues to the underlying significance of the novel. In addition to those names in *Joseph Andrews* which are both vehicles of parody and clues to meaning, there are also type names and the names of romance. The names in the first group, by far the most important, belong to a cluster of characters who are central to the novel and give it unity and meaning.

It is frequently said that *Joseph Andrews* is a divided book, that, beginning with a parody of Richardson's *Pamela*, its author departed from his original purpose and went on to write an "epic of the road" which had little connection with the opening section. But it may rather be seen as a novel with a double purpose: to excoriate Richardson's *Pamela* for the moral poverty which Fielding felt it displayed, and to present Fielding's view of the nature of true virtue. To achieve this purpose, Fielding created a hero who was both the vehicle of his parody of Richardson and the bearer of his own concept of virtue. Indeed, he created not just one, but twin heroes, who bear out in the action the dual significance of the novel. The names of these two, Joseph Andrews and Abraham Adams, also have a double significance: the first, or Christian, names form a key to Fielding's Christian message, while the last names have their origins in Richardson; that is, they establish the parody.

Joseph's surname, of course, is Andrews because he is the brother of Pamela Andrews, Richardson's heroine. In the opening situational parody, Joseph's "virtue" is threatened by the advances of his mistress, Lady Booby, as Pamela's is, in Richardson's novel, by those of Squire B., her master.

[1] I am indebted to Professor Louis T. Milic of Columbia University for directing my attention to the literary use of names and for his help and guidance in my subsequent work.

Fielding has simply picked up Richardson's name here, for his ironic pattern of male virtue, and by expanding B. into Booby, he indicates his opinion of Pamela's would-be seducer. Richardson's use of the initial letter for his gentleman's name is a device undoubtedly designed to strengthen the sense that this novel is a true story in which the name of a real man is thus concealed. But it left him vulnerable to Fielding's wit: B., says Fielding, stands for Booby, and that is just what the squire is. When Fielding reversed the sexes, made the Booby a lady and the servant a young man, he had a comic situation of a high order.

At the same time, the scene in which Lady Booby tries to seduce Joseph leads us to the significance of his first name. At the opening of the episode, Fielding presents him as "*Joey*, whom, for good reason, we shall hereafter call JOSEPH."[2] Then the parallel between our Joseph and the Biblical patriarch in the story of Potiphar's wife is made explicit when Joseph writes a letter to his sister, telling her how he resisted the temptation offered by Lady Booby: "I don't doubt, dear Sister, but you will have Grace to preserve your Virtue against all Trials; and I beg you earnestly to pray, I may be enabled to preserve mine: for truly, it is very severely attacked by more than one: but, I hope I shall copy your Example, and that of *Joseph*, my Name's-sake; and maintain my Virtue against all Temptations" (p. 47). Clearly, his being named after the Biblical Joseph tends to enhance the value of Joseph Andrews' vow of chastity, rather than to increase its absurdity. Consequently, through the use of this name, we see that Fielding's attack is on the absurdity *per se* – as he saw it – of Richardson's story, rather than on the concept of chastity. And at the same time, we have the indication in his name that Joseph is to be a true hero.

A further parallel is drawn between him and his Biblical namesake when he first sets out on the road, after being dismissed from Lady Booby's service. The incident in which he "falls among thieves" reflects, as has often been pointed out, the New Testament parable of the Good Samaritan. But it also contains points which link it with the story of Joseph.

The Biblical Joseph set out to find his brothers where they were feeding their flocks. He was wearing his coat of many colors, of

[2] Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, ed. Martin C. Battestin (Middletown, Conn., 1967), p. 29. All references are to this edition.

which his brothers stripped him, throwing him into a pit, from which he was taken up by a band of Midianites. The loss of this son was the great sorrow of his father's old age, and Joseph was only restored to him after residing in Egypt. Just before Joseph Andrews is set upon by the thieves, he is recognized as a servant of the Boobys' by his livery, that is, the colors of his coat. He is stripped of this coat by the thieves and left in a ditch from which he is taken up by the people in a stage-coach. The passengers in the coach, like the Midianites, are both passing travelers and not members of the Chosen People (in Biblical terms, not Hebrews; in Christian terms, worldly sinners). Furthermore, Mr. Wilson, who is Joseph's real father and who, like Jacob, had wrestled with the Angel of the Lord before settling with his family in the Promised Land, knows one great sorrow in that land: the loss of his son. And at the end of the book, Joseph is restored to him, after his stay in the metropolis of London.

Thus, Joseph Andrews' first name takes us back to the Biblical patriarch, who is then linked with the New Testament figure of the Good Samaritan, while his last name, Andrews, is taken directly from Richardson.

We find a similar genealogy in the name of Joseph's fellow-hero, Abraham Adams. The name Adams also comes from Richardson. Richardson's Mr. Adams, when we first meet him in Part Two of *Pamela*, is a "young gentleman of great sobriety and piety, and sound principles," who acts as a "sort of family chaplain." He conducts the family prayers, which Pamela attends, to the humble joy of her servants, although Mr. B. and his guests remain at table. The young man, who is too modest and unassuming to join his social superiors at the dinner table, receives the princely sum of five guineas a quarter. This makes an annual stipend of 20 guineas. Fielding's Adams receives the absurdly un-round figure of 23 pounds. He, too, is confined to Sir Thomas Booby's servants' quarters, but, in his case, it is because the Boobys will not have him at their table. Thus, Fielding has again placed his character in a position similar to Richardson's and then given the situation a twist which makes the original laughable.

But more important than this situational parody is the parody contained in the character itself. Pamela goes on at some length about the perfections of her young clergyman. Indeed, she finds

him so deserving that she obtains a living for him – with 220 pounds instead of 20 guineas – and in discussing the matter of livings in general, she says, "For I am far from thinking that a prudent regard to worldly interest misbecomes the character of a good clergyman; and I wish all such were set above the world, for their own sakes, as well as for the sakes of their hearers; since independency gives a man respect, besides the power of doing good, which will enhance that respect, and of consequence, give greater efficacy to his doctrines."[3] Richardson's neat, prudent young man, just down from the university, who subscribes to this view of Pamela's is the diametrical opposite of Fielding's parson. Abraham Adams is penniless, shabby, unworldly, middle-aged and conspicuously lacking in the world's respect. But his learning is profound and he has a true spiritual leader's real power of doing good. In giving his character the same name as Richardson's at the same time as he makes the parson so radically different from Mr. Adams, Fielding asserts that there is a higher set of values which transcends practical considerations embodied in this generous and unworldly idealist.

Richardson's Mr. Adams is a minor character and would hardly seem of sufficient importance to have drawn Fielding's fire in this manner, if it were not that Fielding's main line of opposition to Richardson lies in his indignant repudiation of the views of the clergy and of Christian life that Richardson's novel seemed to him to advocate. Herein lies the significance of the name of Abraham. Fielding's parson is, of course, a patriarchal figure. Adams is truly a spiritual father to Joseph and Fanny, and to all his "people." As his triumphant reception by the villagers when he finally reaches home shows, he is a good shepherd and a steady guide to them in their lives. Hence his patriarchal name. But, in addition, as Joseph is linked to the New Testament through the story of the Good Samaritan, the name Abraham also links Parson Adams with the New Testament. He embodies, as will be seen, a portion of Christian doctrine on which Fielding's central moral answer to Richardson is based. This is shown in a dispute with a fellow clergyman, Parson Barnabas, the significance of whose name will be shown later. During their argument, Adams inveighs against the "detestable doctrine of faith against good works." He is, in fact, opposed to "en-

[3] Samuel Richardson, *Pamela* (London, 1959), II, p. 149.

thusiasm," Methodism, the doctrine of Grace as the means to salvation. This reflects an intense religious dispute of the day and one in which Fielding was constantly involved. He inveighed often against the belief that salvation could be attained through faith alone, without good works, and more particularly, against the abuse of this doctrine by clergymen who used it as an excuse for neglecting their duties.

The doctrine to which Adams adheres, that "faith, if it hath not works is dead," comes from the Epistle of St. James (ii. 17), and the great example which James sets up of faith "justified" by works is Abraham: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" (ii. 21–22). In several small incidents Adams' conduct exemplifies the teachings of St. James. His protests against the heartlessness of Peter Pounce the steward toward the destitute recalls James, ii. 15–16: "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" Adams' abhorrence of swearing follows the admonition in v. 12: "Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay." And Fielding's assertion at the very end of the book (when Adams rebukes Pamela and Squire Booby for laughing in church) that "where the least spice of religion intervened, he immediately lost all respect of persons" reflects James ii.1: "My brethren have not the faith of our Lord Jesus, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons." This use of the phrase "respect of persons" to mean respect for worldly position, at the same time accuses Richardson of displaying this attitude in his heroine. These are Adams' conscious tenets, and he also conforms to St. James' exhortations against wordliness and judging one's fellow men by the very nature with which Fielding has endowed him. Adams *is* unworldly and takes men unsuspectingly at their face value. Thus, this Abraham is a living example of the tenets of St. James, just as the Biblical Abraham is St. James' example of his central doctrine.

When Fielding sets Adams in explicit opposition to the "detestable doctrine of faith against good works" (p. 82), he puts this "detestable doctrine" into the mouth of Parson Barnabas, the first

of three clergymen to be set up as a contrast to Adams. Those who preached salvation through faith alone took their authority from St. Paul: "The just shall live by faith" (Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii.11). St. Paul also cites Abraham as an example of his doctrine: "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God" (Rom. iv.2). This might throw some doubt on the naming of Adams, if it were not for the fact that *this* parson is named Barnabas. Barnabas was a follower of Paul who is described as "a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" (Acts xi. 24). He was sent out with Paul to preach to the heathen, and it was this mission that led Paul to lay emphasis on faith. If the heathen *believed*, they were to be admitted to the fold without regard to their adherence to the Law. This seems exactly the opposite of the Latitudinarian tenet, which Fielding held, that a heathen who does a good *deed* is better than a negligent Christian. In Antioch Paul came to reproach Peter for "dissembling" before the Jews and concealing the fact that "he did eat with the Gentiles." And his Epistle declares that "Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation" (Gal. ii.13). Thus, Fielding puts the doctrine of faith into the mouth of a man called Barnabas whose namesake Paul himself rebuked for hypocrisy, and by so doing suggests that he is not so much attacking St. Paul as he is trying to expose the misuse of his doctrine by the hypocritical. This is the same line of attack as he had used in *Shamela*, his earlier parody of Richardson. As a Latitudinarian he was not opposed to particular doctrines but to the abuses they led to. Parson Barnabas is brought in to console Joseph Andrews on his "death bed," and we learn from Acts iv.36 that Barnabas was the name the Apostles gave Joses, and means "the son of consolation." But when this Barnabas recommends grace, prayer and faith to Joseph as a means of preparing his soul, he is hypocritical and perfunctory in his ministrations.

It becomes evident from his discussions with Adams that Barnabas, like Williams, the parson in *Shamela*, merely uses the doctrine of faith alone as a means of avoiding his duty, whereas Adams expresses Fielding's own Latitudinarian view that "a virtuous and good *Turk*, or Heathen, are more acceptable in the sight of their Creator, than a vicious and wicked Christian, tho' his Faith was as perfectly Orthodox as St. *Paul's* himself." (p. 82). Thus, Fielding's principal attack is on laxity among the clergy. Any true faith, as

long as it is combined with the active practice of virtue, is good in his eyes. His eighteenthcentury readers, thoroughly familiar with the Bible, would probably have had no difficulty in grasping the significance of the names he used.

The attack is continued with the next parson who is introduced, and who also has a significant name. This one, too, is negligent of his duty, but, as the very different nature of his name indicates, he represents no doctrine, either used or abused. This is Parson Trulliber, who is given no Christian name and whose last name in no way associates him with the Bible. "Trull" means "trollop," and Parson Trulliber is a harlot of the church, without faith, doctrine, or knowledge, openly in orders to enrich himself. His obvious resemblance to his own pigs indicts him clearly enough as a mere animal wallowing in the mire of his own selfishness, and in addition he is shown to be guilty of the greatest of transgressions against his calling, a lack of charity, both in his treatment of Adams and in his neglect and bullying of his parishioners.

These names in Fielding, then, may be used as a key to the underlying meaning of his novel. They show that he felt that *Pamela* represented a shallow and worldly view of morality which was both responsible for and encouraged by the abuses of a section of the clergy, who, at that particular time, were shielding themselves behind the new teachings of the Methodists. Through the patriarchal names of his two heroes, Fielding asserts his belief that the clergy should shun "luxury and splendour" and return to the simplicity of the primitive church. And by, in addition, linking them to the New Testament, he indicates the Christian doctrine which he felt was an answer to these abuses. Again through the name, he introduces the New Testament figure of Barnabas to represent the abuse of the new doctrine of Methodism. And he clearly indicates his belief that this religious issue was closely bound up with the social and ethical attitudes expressed by his great rival novelist, Richardson, by making Joseph Pamela's brother, bearing, of course, the same surname, and by naming his parson-hero after Richardson's clerical paragon.

The parody and this religious theme form the central core of *Joseph Andrews*, as is reflected in the fact that it is the central characters who are named in this manner. There are, however, other aspects to the novel and the other characters have names of a different sort from those of this group.

The largest group of names among the lesser characters belongs to the theatrical tradition of type-naming to which Fielding, who was first a dramatist, was no stranger. Then there are the "simple" names of "simple" people, and, finally, the "romance" names of the interpolated story of "Leonora, or the Unfortunate Jilt."

The theatrical type-names use sound and sense to present characters of comedy, rather than "realistic" portrayals. Trulliber, as we have seen, carries a meaning thinly disguised in the appearance of a possible name. Fanny Goodwill, the name of Fielding's heroine, combines a very common girl's name, with the type-name Goodwill. And, indeed, Fanny is a very "common" girl, a simple village illiterate, who is full of the good will that makes her a worthy companion for Joseph. Others are even more obviously typed. Peter Pounce, the grasping steward; Beau Didapper, whose name is really two common nouns, "beau" and "didapper," this latter being the name of a small waterbird, used since the sixteenth century to denote a foppish wit; Mrs. Slipslop, the waiting gentlewoman who had "made a small slip in her youth" and who, with all her pretensions to gentility, is sloppy in her speech – these are names in the "humors" tradition which are self-explanatory and serve to characterize or to reinforce the characterization of their bearers.

A series of minor characters have similar type-names which indicate their function in the novel. There are, for instance, among the upper class characters, Lady Tittle and Lady Tattle, the society gossips, Colonel Courtly, the country-gentleman candidate for parliament, and Justice Wise-One, the judge. As we descend the social scale we come across James Scout, lawyer, Mr. Second-hand, valet-de-chambre, Thomas Trotter, yeoman, Tom Suckbribe, a corrupt constable, and Tom Whipwell, the driver of the stage-coach. The recurrence of Thomas and Tom – a favorite name with Fielding – indicates the generic nature of the "ordinary" names. There are two more Toms – their names just Tom without further addition – both footmen, and another footman is John, as is an hostler and yet another man-servant, while the two chambermaids who are named, are both Betty, the traditional name for those holding this job.

These plain names of the people who drive the coaches, work in the inns, wait on the principal characters – in fact keep the ordinary

business of life going – make a contrast with the names in the interpolated story of Leonora which is as drastic as the contrast in the whole tone of the story with that of the novel proper. In "Leonora," the names are those of the novels and romances that Fielding is parodying here. Such stories were often fairly short and their characters each bore a single name which either had a traditional significance or a translatable meaning. This naming practice resulted in bizarre effects. Eliza Haywood has an English country gentleman called Baron Bellamont and Arthur Blackamore an equally improbable English couple called Angelica and Sosander. In his parody, Fielding again used names as his instrument: Leonora, Horatio, Bellarmine, Florella, and Lindamira. Such is the cast of characters which peoples a small English town in a slight tale of intrigue, affectation and true love deceived, by which Fielding shows his scorn for such works, while accusing Richardson of having written a romance.

Fielding's different approaches in naming his characters accord with their particular significance and their function in his work. He did not use names for realistic purposes (as Richardson did for the most part) to enhance the humanity of his characters and give them a three-dimensional air. He used names as signals to the reader, as devices that obviate the necessity for expository and explanatory passages. Fielding is known as the omnipresent author par excellence, forever intruding himself into his work and breaking in on the illusion. Nevertheless, he consistently transposes his ideas into artistic forms, substituting plot and action for sermon and discussion. Often, it is his names which serve to indicate just what are these underlying ideas.