

INDIVIDUAL FEATURES OF ARTISTIC STYLE OF W.M. THACKERAY

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the biography of W. M. Thackeray and the primary artistic methods he employed in his well-known works, such as "Vanity Fair" and "The Luck of Berry London". You can also find information about the content and their characters in the works he wrote.

Key words: artistic style, individual features, characters, content

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William Makepeace Thackeray was born on July 18, 1811 in Calcutta, India. He was Richmond and Anne Thackeray's only child. Richmond Thackeray was an East India Company official with a considerable income; therefore, the Thackerays' lives were exceedingly luxurious. They lived in a spacious house with several servants and ate well. William's father died when he was four years old, and the kid was sent to school in England. He never went back to India. William's mother married Henry Carmichael-Smyth in 1817, and the couple moved to England. Thackeray began attending Charterhouse, a prestigious boys' school, when he was eleven years old. Unfortunately, it was not an excellent school at the time. The students received a substandard education, and there were frequent conflicts among the lads. Thackeray attended Cambridge University in 1829, but did not graduate. Thackeray went to France in 1832. He worked as a newspaper editor and attempted to become an artist. He was now twenty-one years old and had inherited the remainder of his father's estate. But he blew it all on Paris's theaters, art galleries, and restaurants. Thackeray met and fell in love with Isabella Shawe in 1835, when most of his money had gone. She was a petite, bashful young lady with light-red hair. She was also impoverished. Despite their parents' disapproval, William and Isabella married a year later. Thackeray and his wife returned to London in 1837 and had three children - Anne, Jane and Harriet[4-4p].

The nineteenth century was the age of the magazine, which was created to suit the expanding middle-class demand for family reading. Thackeray rose to prominence in the late 1830s as a regular contributor of pieces to Fraser's Magazine, The New Monthly Magazine, and, subsequently, Punch. Mr. Michael Angelo Titmarsh, Fitz-Boodle, The Fat Contributor, and Ikey Solomons were among the pen names he used. Miscellanies was a collection of the greatest of his early writings. These include The Yellowplush Correspondence, the memoirs and diary of a young cockney footman written in his own vocabulary and style;

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Major Gahagan, a fantasy of soldiering in India; "Catherine", a burlesque of the popular "Newgate novels" of romanticized crime and low life, and itself a good realistic crime story; *The History of Samuel Titmarsh and the Great Hoggarty Diamond*, which was an earlier version of the young married life described in *Philip*; and *The Luck of Barry Lyndon*, which is a historical novel and his first full-length work. [7]

Few authors have received as much lavish praise for their style and as much casual, harsh criticism. Remarkably, the same people frequently take credit and give criticism. Alexander Welsh refers to Thackeray as one of the "great prose artists of our literature" in the first phrase of his introduction to a 1968 collection of essays, then as "careless and amateurish" in the second. Although the author's manuscripts are thought to refute the idea of his carefree compositional approach, John Sutherland's *Thackeray at Work* affirmatively quotes the nineteenth-century view that *The Virginians* is "the worst novel anyone ever wrote." While applauding Thackeray for his sharply defined realism, John Carey criticizes him for engaging in bland and shallow idealizing". [3-111p]

To A. A. Jack "Thackeray was simply luckier than other lazy men:

His manner of writing was desultory, and he was always ready to give rein to whatever mood was uppermost. He rarely formed any conception of a book before he had finished it, and never took the trouble to think about the canons of his art. He stumbled on right methods, just as he floundered into mistakes." [2-1,2pp.]

And Doctor John Brown described him as a sentimentalist: "When considering Mr. Thackeray's body of work as a whole, it would be more accurate to characterize him as a sentimentalist rather than a cynic. Even when the demands of his narrative force him to depict bad characters, he does his best to give them good intentions. We cannot recall any completely unredeemed character in his books." [6-9p]

Thackeray is a well-known author of numerous books. "Vanity Fair" and "The Luck of Berry London" are the most well-known among them. According to Elizabeth Walker "The title of Thackeray's book, *Vanity Fair*, was inspired by a poem. It depicts a society in which individuals just care about themselves and what makes them pleased." [4-4p]

The writer did not choose this title for "Vanity fair" for nothing. He likened the upper-class population of the 19th century to puppets, and their life activity resembled a puppet theater. Almost everyone in this play only tried to look perfect, wear nice clothes and always earn money. But they did not do any work on dealing with the problems in the society and enriching themselves spiritually.

William Makepeace Thackeray's novel *Vanity Fair* recounts the lives of Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley among their friends and family during and after the Napoleonic Wars. It was first published as a 19-volume monthly serial (the last of which contained Parts 19 and 20) from 1847 to 1848, with the subtitle *Pen and Pencil Sketches of English Society*, which reflects both its satirization of early nineteenth-century British society and the numerous illustrations drawn by Thackeray to accompany the text. It was released in 1848 as a single volume with the subtitle *A Novel Without a Hero*, showing Thackeray's interest in deconstructing his era's literary heroism norms. It is regarded as the "principal founder" of the Victorian home fiction. [1-14p]

Vanity Fair, told in a sequence of interconnected chapters, follows Becky's journey from working as a humble governess to socializing with lords and ladies, meeting the king, and beyond. Simultaneously, the narrative reveals Amelia's

lesser story, which revolves around her doomed romance with George Osborne, with whom she has been betrothed since infancy. When Amelia's father declares bankruptcy, George's father terminates the engagement. The forces of society emerge as the primary enemy for both Becky and Amelia. To attain her aims, Becky must transcend the rigidity of social class and its customs. Amelia's enemy is also societal, since the desire for greater money makes it impossible for a young woman from a poor family to marry a guy from a wealthy family. Amelia's opponent is also societal in character, as a young woman with a bankrupt father finds it impossible to marry a boy from a wealthy family. Becky's arrival at the Sedley residence serves as the impetus for the larger story. When she meets Amelia's brother, Jos, she quickly becomes entangled with her family and connections, which leads to her first marriage for money and reputation. Becky makes all of her actions based on what has the best likelihood of boosting her position; so, when she fails to win Jos, she continues to look for others who might help her achieve her goal. Becky then befriends the Crawleys, including the wealthy Miss Crawley, who claims Becky is equal, and Sir Pitt, who proposes marriage. The readers do not witness Becky and Rawdon Crawley's secret marriage, but this episode has a significant impact on the couple because it results in Rawdon's disinheritance by Miss Crawley. The novel concludes with one final encounter between Becky and Amelia at a charity fair, during which no words are exchanged. Without further explanation, the narrator returns his puppets to the box. The performance is over. Putting the puppets away marks the end of Becky's and Amelia's stories, but the narrator, who has interjected himself throughout the entire story, leaves certain questions unanswered about what happened and why. While each woman finds resolution, neither has the life she expected. [8]

The full title of Thackeray's satirical novel "Barry Lyndon" is also a plot synopsis and goes as follows: "The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon, Esq. of The Kingdom of Ireland Containing an Account of His Extraordinary Adventures; Misfortunes; His Sufferings in The Service of His Late Prussian Majesty; His Visits to Many Courts of Europe; His Marriage and Splendid Establishments in England. Barry Lyndon's "memoirs" are not autobiographical recordings of a historically or politically significant figure in the classic meaning of the term; rather, they should be viewed ironically. Because the protagonist, Redmond Barry, was born around 1730 in Ireland and is a nobody pretending to be a very important person. He tells the reader the lovely narrative of the Barry family, an old, aristocratic Irish dynasty that has lost its glory and money owing to a series of misfortunes that have occurred over multiple centuries. Barry is now a typical picaresque hero, continuously getting into difficulty and all kinds of crazy situations, and even more bizarrely, managing to get out of trouble again. While doing so, he learns a lot about the world and puts up a funny mirror to society. In this case, the author criticizes the decadence of European aristocracy during the Rococo period, as well as the needless violence of war. The story's satirical tone is already apparent in its terminology, such as when Barry casually mentions "just massacres" or steals the identity of "Lieutenant Fakenham" as a deserter (Fakenham is a real English town in Norfolk, but the ambiguity of the name is difficult to overlook). One of Thackeray's pen names, G.S. Fitzboodle, foreshadows the shenanigans his fictional characters get up to. Among Barry Lyndon's exploits is his service in the Seven Years' War. He fights for England at first, then deserts, is captured, and forced to fight "in the service of his late

Prussian Majesty." By chance, he meets his uncle, who assists him in fleeing the country. They start out as card players and con artists, moving from one European court to the next. Among the conspiracies and slanders is a Hamlet-like episode from his marriage to the rich and beautiful Countess Lyndon. Redmond Barry, now known as Barry Lyndon, portrays the evil uncle Claudius, whom Gertrude (Countess Lyndon) marries after Barry has assisted in the death of her first husband.

Her first marriage's son does not find this amusing at all. He has an oedipal relationship with his mother and eventually exacts revenge on Barry. The story concludes with Barry Lyndon's death in a rundown prison: divorced, destitute, the beloved son dead, a drunkard. Despite the depressing ending, this satirical masterpiece is a joy to read. In 1975, director Stanley Kubrick created a fantastic, visually striking film rendition that recreates the composition of 18th century landscape and portrait paintings and whose special production methods have made film history. [5-1p]

Delving into the biography and artistic techniques of W. M. Thackeray has provided a comprehensive understanding of his notable works like *Vanity Fair* and *The Luck of Barry London*. The exploration of his literary prowess and the intricate characters within these works enhances our appreciation for the enduring legacy of this esteemed author. In summary, the exploration of W. M. Thackeray's individual features of artistic style has unveiled a rich tapestry of narrative techniques, keen social commentary, and nuanced character portrayals. From his satirical wit to the intricate weaving of realism, Thackeray's unique artistic imprint not only defined his era but continues to resonate, inviting readers to appreciate the enduring allure of his distinctive literary contributions.

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