

学校代号 10530

学 号 201510090999

分 类 号 I106.4

密 级 公开

湘潭大学

# 硕士学位论文

## 《阿米莉亚》中的黑色城市景观

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二零一八年六月六日

# The Dark Urban Landscapes in *Amelia*

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**Date** \_\_\_\_\_June 6th, 2018\_\_\_\_\_

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## 摘 要

亨利·菲尔丁（1707-1754）是 18 世纪英国著名的小说家、戏剧家，被称为“英国小说之父”。菲尔丁一生著述颇丰，《阿米莉亚》（*Amelia*, 1751）是他四部长篇小说中最受争议的一部。小说通过描绘一对天真的夫妇婚后因避债从乡村来到伦敦的种种经历，展现了一幅社会秩序混乱、人性虚伪冷漠、金钱利益至上的都市图景。国内外对《阿米莉亚》的研究大多注重在小说中的人物形象分析以及小说的叙述风格和艺术特色。

本论文采用跨学科研究的方法，试图从新文化地理学的角度来解读这部小说。新文化地理学主要从文化的角度来解读空间，尤其是研究城市的文化景观以及景观的文化意义。它认为空间不是纯粹的地理景观，而是被赋予了深刻社会文化意义的文本。本文通过分析小说中所展现的 18 世纪大都市伦敦的监狱、住所、公园等景观的文化意义，探讨菲尔丁在《阿米莉亚》中对城市化问题的批判和反思。

第一章分析监狱文化景观。在小说中，作为秩序权威象征的监狱不但未能维护城市的有序公正，反而成为了罪恶滋生之地。只要给钱，犯人可以过上体面的生活。同时，监狱也是司法徇私舞弊之地。尽管在监狱里有人罪有应得，但实际上大部分人是因为司法不合理而蒙冤入狱。更为荒诞的是，有些罪犯甚至利用司法弊端而逃脱法律制裁。第二章分析住所文化景观。作为城市外来者的居住之地，住所本应该是为他们遮风避雨的港湾，但事实上却处处都是陷阱。阿米莉亚的房东太太是勋爵的皮条客，她创造各种机会方便勋爵去接近漂亮女房客，以达到夺取阿米莉亚、贝内特太太贞洁的目的。同时，城市家庭沦为以金钱利益为基础的交易关系。家成为了商业交易的场所。詹姆斯太太是因为看中了詹姆斯上校可观的财产而与之结婚，特伦特夫妇二人为了过上体面的生活，沦为了勋爵的皮条客，在自己家中举办各种聚会，为上流人士偷情提供场所。第三章分析公园文化景观，18 世纪英国开始的城市化进程使得伦敦成为人们追求公共生活的重要场所。作为公共场所，公园本是人们在闲暇时刻的好去处，然而却成为阶级歧视、私欲横流的见证。上层阶级可以在这公共场所肆意妄为，无辜的人竟会受到伤害和侮辱。穷人布思夫妇的小孩在公园受到警吏的无端训斥；阿米莉亚遭到城市浪荡子明目张胆的调戏；公园举办的假面舞会上，在面具的“保护”之下，人们干着见不得人的勾当和交易。男人以金钱和权力为诱饵引诱女人，而女人则利用美貌满足虚荣心、获得物质利益。整个假面舞会被欺骗、虚伪、陷害所包围。

小说中所表征的监狱、住所和公园等城市景观，它们本身并不是黑色的、邪恶的，

而是在城市化进程中它们却成为藏污纳垢的场所，被赋予黑色的文化意义。小说通过刻画早期城市化兴起时城市生活中所隐藏的种种问题，表达了菲尔丁对城市人道德下滑、人情冷漠、司法腐败等社会问题的焦虑，同时小说主人公回归乡村的幸福结局也表达了菲尔丁对唤起人们回归传统道德的期盼。

**关键词：**亨利·菲尔丁；《阿米莉亚》；新文化地理学；城市景观

## Abstract

Henry Fielding (1707-1754), a famous English novelist and dramatist in the eighteenth century, is highly praised as “Father of English novels”. He creates lots of writings throughout his life and *Amelia* is the most controversial one among his four full-length novels. By depicting the story of an innocent couple who leave the countryside for London to shuffle off debts after marriage, the novel presents a gloomy urban landscape which is filled with social disorders, indifference and hypocrisy of human nature, and money worship. Researches at home and abroad on *Amelia* mainly focus on the image analysis of the characters, the narrative style and artistic features of the novel.

This thesis, with an interdisciplinary study, tries to analyze the novel in the light of new cultural geography which mainly interprets space from the perspective of culture and especially studying the cultural landscape of the city as well as the cultural implications of landscape. According to the theory, space is not purely a geographical landscape, but a text that is endowed with profound social and cultural significance. Through an analysis of the cultural connotations of such landscapes as prison, living-place, park in eighteen-century London, this thesis aims to explore Fielding’s criticism over the distortion of human nature, a society of property engrossed and judicial corruption resulted from urbanization.

The first chapter deals with the prison landscape. The prison should be regarded as a symbol of authority and solemnity, but in the novel, instead of maintaining the social order justice, it has become a breeding ground for crime in which money talks. Criminals can lead a decent life if they have money. Meanwhile, prison is also a place where administration of justice plays favoritism and commits irregularities. Though some prisoners are culpable of punishment in jail, many are jailed for judicial injustice. More absurdly, some even take advantage of the law to escape from the punishment. The second chapter analyzes the living-place landscape. The renting-place, which should have been a shelter for city outsiders who live in, actually, is surrounded by traps. Amelia’s landlady is a pimp of the noble lord; she creates opportunities for him to approach beautiful female tenants and then to rape them. Urban family ties, connected by pecuniary interest, connote the nature of transaction, and home is the very place where business transaction happens. Mrs. James marries with Colonel

James for his considerable property. In order to lead a decent life, the Trents degenerate into the noble lord's pimps. They hold parties at home in all sorts of names so as to provide the upper class with a place for carrying on clandestine love affairs. Chapter Three mainly discusses the park landscape. London in the eighteenth century became an important place for people to pursue public life during the process of urbanization. The park, as an epitome of public place, should have been a good spot for people to spend their leisure time but becomes a witness of prejudice and lust. The upper class can act capriciously in the public place, which brings harm and insult to the innocent. The child of poor Booth is reprimanded by an officer at the park for no reason. Amelia is blatantly molested by a group of libertines. On the other hand, the park is also a venue for people to pursue their own desires. In masquerades, under the "protection" of mask, people can do shady things and dealings with no fear or shame. Men use their money and power as bait to lure women while women abuse their beauty to satisfy vanity and gain material interests. The whole masquerade is surrounded by deceit, hypocrisy and frame.

In the novel, urban landscapes as prison, living-place and park are not dark and evil themselves but have been sheltering evil people and countenancing evil practices in the process of urbanization, and thus they are endowed with dark cultural implications. By revealing evils and problems hidden in urban life at the early stage of urbanization, the novel shows Fielding's anxiety and introspection on social problems like moral decline, indifference of human nature and corruption of judicial system. At the same time, by setting a happy ending that the protagonists go back to the countryside, the novel also reflects Fielding's appeal for a return to traditional morality.

**Key words:** Henry Fielding; *Amelia*; new cultural geography; urban landscapes

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## Introduction

Henry Fielding (1707-1754) is a brilliant novelist and dramatist in eighteenth century British literature. He was born in a bankrupt noble family in Somerset and studied in Eton College and Leiden University. In 1730s, Fielding took up drama creation and published more than 20 dramas including *The Old Man Taught Wisdom: or The Virgin Unmask'd*, *The Miser* and *The Mock Doctor*. In 1737, Fielding switched to law and became a lawyer in 1740. But he proceeded with literary creation and wrote literary criticism, essays and novels at the same time, Fielding wrote four novels, *Joseph Andrews* (1742), *Life of Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great* (1743), *Tom Jones* (1749), and *Amelia* (1751). In *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding tried a new literary form that is known as “comic epic in prose”, which not only has epic’s features with plot and characters, but also is a prose which has comic contents without rhythm. It matured in *Tom Jones*, which is often referred to as epitome of modern realistic novel. Thus, Fielding is known as the founder of modern realistic novel. He vividly described various funny characters and farcical events in the social life in Britain and brought the realistic fiction writing to a new height. *Amelia* is his last novel to which readers are said to have great expectations but feel disappointed about after it was published.

As Fielding’s last novel, *Amelia* is his “most favorite child” (Fielding, *a Plan of the Universal Register-Office* 65), but paradoxically is Fielding’s least popular novel though it embodies his more mature writing techniques and approaches. There are 12 chapters in *Amelia*. The male protagonist, Booth, after getting married with the heroine Amelia, escaped to London in order to shun debts. The couple was leading a poor and unsettled life there. Booth desired to go back to the army to get out of the difficult situation. However, people who promised to help him were just taking advantage of his plight and coveting his pretty wife Amelia. In *Amelia*, Fielding vividly depicts the difficult life of a couple who lived at the bottom of London urban society. *Amelia* was written in 1751. At that time, the early urbanization gradually came into being in Britain. With cities, represented by London, growing larger, more and more social problems arose in its wake. In this novel, Fielding gives up his picaresque novel form, and focuses more on the city itself. Han Jiaming even said,

“*Amelia* is the first novel with the theme of urban life” (271, my translation). As for urbanization, the improved life quality and enriched cultural life make many people yearn for it with great zeal, but Fielding turns to the other side of the city and tries to reveal the underlying urban imperturbably.

## 0.1 Literature Review of *Amelia*

As one of the founders of the modern British fiction, Fielding has aroused wide attention from critics at home and abroad. Nonetheless, *Amelia* is still an obscure area in the study of Fielding. Some critics focused on the concrete personage images of *Amelia*. William Makepeace Thackeray wrote a book *Fielding's Works*, in which he spoke with fondness about the perfect image of Amelia. In his opinion, Amelia was perfectly depicted as the prettiest character among Fielding's works. What's more, F. Homes Dudden in the monograph *Henry Fielding: His Life, Works, and Times* also made an analysis of characters in *Amelia*, dividing the men and women in *Amelia* into four categories and describing their characteristics in detail. Then he introduced the purpose and the material of the novel in a separate section. In addition, he also dealt with the morality and religion embodied in the novel. In K. G. Simpson's *Henry Fielding: Justice Observed*, he discussed the lies and secrets in *Amelia* from the perspective of human nature. He pointed out that there were a lot of secrets in *Amelia*; for example, Amelia hid what the suitor had done to her, and Booth confessed his adultery with Miss Matthews till the end of the novel and so on. Those lies and secrets embodied the complexity and richness of human nature. In 2000, Lance Bertelsen published a book *Henry Fielding at Work: Magistrate, Businessman, Writer*. Based on former researches, he also focused on the different mentality of these three characters Miss Matthews, Booth and Amelia.

After *Amelia* was published, Richardson gave acid comments on it at once when he read the first chapter and those critics who preferred Richardson also gave biased comments. Some critics gave the overall evaluation of *Amelia* in order to restore its reputation since the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Criticism directing against *Amelia* has been gradually increasing. George Sherburn gave an explanation for the unfavorable reception of *Amelia* in his essay “Fielding's *Amelia*:

An Interpretation” (1936). The first reason he claimed was that Fielding quoted many passages of Latin and Greek without translation which readers were not familiar with. Another reason was that Fielding didn’t follow his comic prose epic tradition in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Johns* but wrote with a new style of the epic in prose. Besides, in the article “Fielding’s Novel of Atonement: Confessional Form in *Amelia*” (1996), by analyzing the confession of Miss Matthews, Mrs Bennet, Amelia and Booth, George E. Haggerty indicated that Fielding used the confessional form to expand the comic structure in *Amelia* for he wanted to express his own confession. On the one hand, Fielding expressed penitence for the hard life that he and his first wife Charlotte experienced. On the other hand, he wanted to compromise himself to the memory of his father.

What’s more, some critics focused on the image of the male protagonist Booth in *Amelia*. In “The Character of the Hero: A Key to Fielding’s *Amelia*” (1976) by Robert L. Oakman, he analyzed a number of roles that Booth presents—“husband and father, spokesman for the author, representative of a bad philosophy of life and victim of a corrupt society” to explain the achievements of *Amelia*. But at the same time, he pointed out that the success of *Amelia* did not lie in the complicated Booth but the virtuous Amelia. “The Problem of *Amelia*: Hume, Barrow, and the Conversion of Captain Booth” (1974) written by Martin C. Battestin also took notice of the protagonist Booth. In *Amelia*, Booth was almost an atheist at the beginning, but changed his faith when he read Barrow’s book in the jail. Battestin focused on Booth’s religious conversion in the end in this article. By analyzing the influence of Hume and Barrow’s thoughts, the paper posed two questions about in *Amelia*: what made Fielding use more somber-toned style rather than comic narrative form in *Tom Johns*, And what provoked Fielding to choose a protagonist with waving religious faith which would “dramatize the clash of opposing philosophies in the society” (642).

In addition, some critics noticed the passions in *Amelia*. Tuvia Bloch wrote an article “Amelia and Booth’s Doctrine of the Passions” (1973). According to Bloch, in *Amelia*, Fielding not only overly stated the doctrine of the passions by his spokesmen, but also implicitly described it in the story itself to prove his agreements with the Booth’s doctrine of the passions. And in D. S. Thomas’ “Fortune and the Passions in Fielding’s *Amelia*” (1965), he also addressed Fielding’s ambivalent attitude towards fortune, and analyzed the reason why

Fielding associated fortune with passion throughout *Amelia*.

Some critics analyzed *Amelia* from the subject of marriage. In A. R. Towers' essay "Amelia and the State of Matrimony" (1954), he introduced some of Fielding's works under the theme of marriage. He considered several elements of Amelia's marriage and pointed out that Booth and Amelia formed a picture of idealized conjugal behavior.

Steven J. Gores noticed the portrait miniature's symbolic function in *Amelia*, and examined it with connected forms of miniaturization, including the circle of expression, theatrical tableaux, epigraph, and 'typed' characters, which are expressed in his essay "The Miniature as Reduction and Talisman in Fielding's *Amelia*".

Compared with the large number of studies in the West on Fielding's *Amelia*, the related research in China is quite numbered. The Chinese version of *Amelia* didn't appear until 2004. In 1954, Xiao Qian did a quite intensive analysis on *Amelia* from the perspective of class stand in his monograph—*Fielding: The Founder of the English Realistic Novel*. Based on some descriptions of the suffering of the lower class, Xiao Qian analyzed Fielding's contribution to exposing the evil of bourgeoisie and praised his realistic literary creation at the same time. In Fan Cunzhong's *Essays on English Literature* in 1981, there was an article that specifically analyzed *Amelia*. He introduced the writing background and the basic contents of *Amelia* firstly. Then, he discussed the merits and demerits of the novel and the social problems reflected. What's more, he also analyzed the art form—prose epic of *Amelia*. Huang Mei in *Debating the Self: Novel in 18<sup>th</sup> –Century England* (2003), discussed the "fracture" of writing in *Amelia* with a separate section, including the image alteration of the narrator, autobiographical writings in the novel and the portrayal of female characters. Professor Han Jiaming discussed *Amelia* in his *A Study of Fielding* and indicated that *Amelia* shouldn't be ignored. He probed into the influence of *Amelia* and analyzed the images of patricians and plebeians, the complexity of Mrs. Bennet (Mrs. Atkinson) and the moral tutor Dr Harrison. There are also a few researches published in scholarly journals. Xu Hongjing wrote a journal on "Honesty and Sincerity in *Amelia*" which discussed Fielding's idea of honesty and the intention of sincerity of religion. Qu Dongmei has an article on "*Amelia* and epic tradition", which analyzed the close relationship between *Amelia* and epic tradition. Lu Qiuping pried into Fielding's multi-roles in *Amelia*, including realist, idealist, romanticist and sentimentalist

in the article “Fielding’s Multi-roles as Realist and Idealist in *Amelia*”.

## 0.2 The Significance and Feasibility of the Research

Fielding’s novel *Amelia* is selected as the research source for the following reasons. First of all, *Amelia*, as one of the masterpieces of Henry Fielding, caused a huge controversy after it was published. Throughout the domestic and foreign researches, many critics have paid much attention to Fielding. However, they mainly focus on his masterpiece *Tom Jones* while much fewer pay attention to *Amelia*. Hence, there is still a lot of room for us to explore this novel.

In the second place, *Amelia* is a novel with deep social meanings, which are closely related with some of Fielding’s working experiences. Fielding once served for some years as a magistrate in Westminster and Middlesex. Owing to those experiences, he perfectly knew all aspects with the convenience of his daily work about of the city, especially the “dark corner” of the society. In *Amelia*, Fielding consciously placed the story in urban settings. Some critics comments that there is no other better work that can draw a picture of life in London in 1750s (Han Jiaming 272, my translation). Nevertheless, it’s not just a novel about the description of city life. After all, “the city is not only a setting for action or stories; the depiction of the urban landscape also expresses beliefs about society and life” (Crang 49). In the prefaces of *Amelia*, Fielding suggested that *Amelia* was “to expose some of the most glaring evils, as well public as private, which at present infest the country” (Fielding 10). By studying this novel, we could gain a deeper understanding of Fielding’s traditional moral concepts as well as the latently social ideology and norms in eighteenth century Britain.

Finally, although some scholars have showed interest in *Amelia*, they mainly deal with the analysis of character images of the fiction, or the close relationship between *Amelia* and epic tradition and Fielding’s multi-roles of realist, idealist, romanticist and sentimentalist in *Amelia*, etc. Few critics pay attention to the geography landscapes in the novel, which leaves a blank for this thesis to fill in. The thesis tries to interpret *Amelia* from the perspective of the new cultural geography. According to George A. Drake, “place is foundational for Fielding’s theory of historical change; he is not concerned with the absolute value or meaning of individual actions, but of actions performed in a particular field of circumstances” (727). By

discussing the relation of physical landscape with social order, moral behavior and life style in *Amelia*, the paper tries to expose the cultural meanings of the dark urban landscapes in the novel and hopes to offer a new perspective to interpret Fielding's novel.

### **0.3 Theoretical Basis and Organization of the Contents**

As an interdisciplinary theory which combines geography with sociology, cultural geography studies culture from a geographical point of view. It focus on how culture plays a role in real life and regards culture as concrete phenomenon that can be positioned in real life situations. In cultural geography, culture is interpreted as a different matter of space, place and landscape; and specific spaces and geographical locations are always closely related to culture. These cultural elements involve not only superficial symbolism, but also the way people live. Culture can be reproduced through a series of forms and activities in a specific space. In Carl O. Sauer's *The Morphology of Landscape* (1947), he introduced the concepts of "natural landscape" and "cultural landscape" for the first time. According to Sauer, "the cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result" (63). After the Second World War, under the influence of cultural studies, cultural geography started to focus on the spatial relationship of different cultures in cities. "Cultural turn" and "spatial turn" thus became the important symbols of cultural geography which enable geography and culture studies not only to have a different way of thinking but also to produce a new conception of "map". The production of *Maps of Meaning* by Peter Jackson indicates the birth of new cultural geography. New cultural geography regards culture as a medium of space process, emphasizing that culture permeates every process of life and determines the spatial practice of our life (Zhou Shangyi 163, my translation). In new cultural geography, landscape is regarded as text as well as meaning system of expressing ideology, values and beliefs. Cultural landscape is no longer considered as "external object", but "way of seeing". The study of landscape tends to explore how the landscape is giving symbolic meaning by different social groups and how these meanings express and construct power relations and social identity.

As new cultural geographer Daniels and Cosgrove point out, landscape is "a pictorial

way of representing or symbolizing human surroundings, then landscapes may be studied across a variety of media and surfaces: in paint on canvas, writing on paper, images on film as well as in earth, stone, water and vegetation on the ground” (1). Poetry, novel, and actually all literary genres describe space phenomena and make explanations and illustrations. Landscapes in the text can represent more meanings. The city in literature is the imaginative reappearance of the “real city”, recording people’s urban ideas and urban experiences. Therefore, geographers regard literature as a way to study the meanings of geography landscape. As the first country of industrial revolution and urbanization in the world, with its rapid economic development, Britain’s capital London was fast increasing in population. People’s lifestyle and social values were dramatically changed. Consequently, various kinds of evil also arose with the improvement and enrichment of everyday life. To a great degree, the whole city in *Amelia* is also a container that hides the sinful living spaces and ways that are of rich cultural meanings.

In *Amelia*, iniquity and wickedness were not uncommon and appeared in many places including the prison, living-place and park. In prison, Gaolers misused power to exact bribes, and allowed criminals to hurt each other. Meanwhile, evil deeds could not be punished due to the unjust law; even the private dwelling-place also became a gloomy space where there was no love between couples, and the financial bond replaced their emotional relationship. Besides, renting-house was a snare that may brought city-outcomers down. Likewise, Fielding insinuated the ugly side of London by describing the insecurity in the park: the poor was harmed and intimidated, and people also released their selfish desires in the masked balls there. Therefore, the thesis tries to explore Fielding’s worries about the problems of urbanization by revealing the cultural meaning of these dark landscapes.

The first chapter analyzes the cultural meaning of dark prison landscape. In the novel, the prison was a factory of “producing” crime. The warden tries to take bribes from criminals by taking advantage of his power. As long as the prisoners pay him, he can provide them with a variety of services, including messenger errands, cohabitation for male and female criminals and so on. After paying a certain amount of bribes, prisoners can eat well, drink well and even gather together to gamble in prison. Meanwhile, the prison, to some extent, also reflects the irrationality of the judicial system at that time. The prison where criminals should be punished

and reformed fails to perform its duties impartially due to the existence of judicial malpractice. In the novel, the father and daughter, who just stole a piece of bread, are convicted of felony and could not be bailed out, while the thief who stole others' belongings and the pawnbroker who received the stolen goods could not be punished. What was more absurd was that the officer could not execute a search warrant and almost could not punish the lawyer who forged the will of Amelia's mother because of the unreasonable law.

The second chapter concentrates on the cultural meaning of dark living-place landscape. For the city outsiders as the Booths and the Bennets who lived at the bottom of the society their dwelling place were spaced with lust which lured them into decadence. The tragedy of Mrs. Bennet began in her long-rented family hotel. Under the guise of friendship, the landlady Mrs. Ellison offered many conveniences and favors for the tenants in order to create opportunities for the noble lord to approach and assault them. When Booth and Amelia lodged in Mrs. Ellison's hotel, Amelia also became their prey. In the meantime, Colonel James, a friend of the Booth's also attempted to rape Amelia by offering financial aid. On the other hand, for many upper class families, "home" was more like a market where they developed trade with each other. The marriage of the James was based on interests. James provided material comfort for Mrs. James and in exchange, Mrs. James must pander for his sexual desires; Trent used his wife's beauty to live a decent life. At last, the Trents who were tempt by material gains both became the noble lord's pimps.

The third chapter focuses on the cultural meaning of the dark park landscape. London in the eighteenth century was a place for pursuing glamorous public life, and at that time the demand and activity of public interaction increased. The park in the novel was more than just a place for people to relax. On the one hand, the public place was deemed as an area which brought harm and insult for the downtrodden: the Booths' child was punished by the officer merely because he trod on the grass in the park; Amelia was brazenly molested by a group of city libertines; James confessed that he hurt Booth because he had falsely believed Miss Matthews' libel in the park without shame, and when he knew that Booth was familiar with the noble lord, he told Booth that Booth could use his wife to take advantage from the noble lord. On the other hand, the masquerade held in the park became a site of satisfying people's filthy lust. In the eighteenth century, masquerade was one of the most important forms of



social entertainment for the urban people. Under the disguise of the mask and costume, people did a lot of shameful things to satisfy their evil desire. James and the noble lord who invited Amelia to the masquerade were to lure and rape her; Mrs. James revealed her secret fondness of Booth straightforwardly; Miss Matthews threatened Booth to come to her home after masquerade with making public their affair in prison; Mrs. Bennet traded sex twice with the noble lord for interests in the masquerade, to name a few.

The industrial revolution in the eighteenth-century Britain made the city much more populous and prosperous. People's mind also changed with the increase of the living standards, which had a profound impact on traditional interpersonal relationship and social values. In Fielding's view, city was a hotbed of meanness, debauchery and greed; it was also a trap that induced humanity to degenerate and corrupt. The urban landscapes of prison, living-place, and park are all like a prism reflecting British society of the eighteenth century. By presenting evil and gloomy urban landscapes, Fielding disclosed the problems of early urbanization and expressed his critique towards moral depravity in contemporary London.

## Chapter One Prison as Invalid Supervisory System

The first half of the eighteenth century was regarded as a golden age of London. At that time, the reconstruction of the Great Fire in 1665 had been finished. Commerce and culture were in unprecedented prosperity. London was referred to as “cultural London” (Chen Xiaolan 15, my translation). But at the same time, it was also considered as a dangerous place. Crime was more rampant than at any time in history. Henry Fielding once described Westminster as a place where there was not a single street not full of beggars in the daytime and bandits at night (Xiao Qian 6, my translation). The prison ironically occupied an important place in the layout of the whole city. It was the oldest building as well as the most frightening and confusing spatial pattern. In the historical map of London, people could see prisons all over the city at that time. Peter Ackroyd said that the prison in London out-numbered that of any other city and London was praised for the land of imprisonment. Newgate prison in a sense was “the very symbol of London” and “it became a legendary place” (254). However, in *Amelia*, the prison, the symbol of majesty though it was, was associated with dark hell which was loaded with evil.

New cultural geography believes that the landscapes denote cultural meanings. We are allowed to “disclose the meanings that human groups attach to areas and places and to relate those meanings to other aspects and conditions of human existence” (Cosgrove and Jackson 96). In *Amelia*, the prison endowed with the meaning of breeding crime, was the most important site and the core symbol of the novel. This was mainly reflected in the image of the degenerated prison governor who abused his authority to satisfy personal gratification. The whole space was inundated with adultery, fraud and violence caused by the poor governance. Meanwhile, prison was also a product of unfair judiciary. Due to the unjust legislation, kind but poor people were wronged and sent into prison while immoral but rich persons wouldn't be punished.

### 1.1 Ground for Breeding Vice

As a thorough and comprehensive disciplinary institution, prison possesses both professional skills and knowledge; superintendents have plenary authority over the criminals.

They discipline them and change them into civilized people who abide by the rules through denying criminals' liberty and comprehensively regulating their body, daily behavior, mental condition and language. So prison is the most visible form of social order and political authority. But in *Amelia*, it became a "factory" of manufacturing criminals and a stronghold of evils. The prisoners were huddled in the sun-blind prison. However, the darkness also "protected" and bred iniquity and evils. In the prison, the watchman abused his power and received bribes; the prisoners formed clique and cheated each other.

"From a geographical perspective, landscapes, as complex realities, exist in historical time, and thus tend to exhibit special identifying features" (Cosgrove and Daniels 1). In the eighteenth century, London's population surged due to large scale of immigration. Drastic demographic shift tended to cause tensions within a society. "All other things being equal, more people means more crime" (Briggs et al 14). Against such a backdrop, the inmates of the prisons lived in abominable conditions because the prisons were frequently overcrowded and chaotic at that time. As Ackroyd said in his book *London The Biography* (2000), "approximately three hundred prisoners were confined within the space of half an acre, in a building divided into three sides—the Master's side for prisoners who could pay for food and drink, the Common side for impecunious debtors and felons, and the Press Yard for 'prisoners of note'" (251). In this case, the innocent debtors were often mistreated and bullied by the felons in prison. In *Amelia*, every new inmate was demanded to give some money to the former prisoners for a drink. The first time when Poor Booth was sent to jail, he was charged the "garnish" by several people at once. When he said he "had not a shilling in his pocket" (16), his coat was deprived and disappeared in a minute. Then, a deceptive Methodist went through all Booth's pockets and stole all his possession, including a penknife and an iron snuff-box. Not until Booth promised to give a crown to anyone who sent snuff-box back, did the Methodist return it. What's more, Booth once wrote to Amelia twice in the prison, but the messenger tore up the letter for the money in it to buy wine so that Amelia, who lived in the countryside and waited long worriedly for news of Booth, later had to take their young children to the city to see what happened. Besides, fellow prisoners set poor debtors up in such wretched conditions, which thus bred vice in prison. For example, Gambler Robinson who "saved" Booth from Blear-eyed Moll was intended to tempt Booth to play cards. When

Booth felt guilty for misunderstanding Robinson as the person who stole his snuff-box, Robinson took advantage of Booth's compunction and skinned of all his money by cheating in a game at cards. From these descriptions, we can see that the prison in *Amelia* was actually a disorderly world where criminals did not stop sinning, and the poor, suffered more hardship and indignity.

Meanwhile, the conflicts among the criminals happened occasionally in the thronging and unruly prison. For example, when Blear-eyed Moll was going to grasp Booth for he refused to buy her a drink, gambler Robinson who "had been very earnestly eying Booth for some time" came up and flung her off at some distance (23), and warned her to stay away from Booth. Robinson successfully captured his "prey" in this violent way. Then, a strapping wench asked Booth to take a walk with her and told Booth that Robinson was actually a gambler who cheated at card games, and "a scene of altercation now ensued between Robinson and lady, which ended in a bout at fisticuffs" (28). Almost simultaneously, Blear-eyed Moll, with her companions, almost beat a vicious man to death in another corner. However, all these violence did not meet any intervention from the authorities. The ongoing violence in the prison proved that the prison was actually a chaotic place where criminals were allowed to hurt each other and the prison's function of punishing and reforming the criminals was out of action at that time.

Except for the criminals' absurd behaviors in prison, the keeper of detention would also adopt different ways or strategies to get money from criminals and seek for interests, which was also a representation of the ghastly prison. In *Amelia*, the bailiff Mr. Bondum ostensibly asserted that he hoped Booth's misfortunes would end soon. But in darkness, he secretly ordered his porter to "call upon two or three other bailiffs, and as many attorneys, to try to load his prisoner with as many actions as possible" (322). When Amelia visited Booth in jail, she begged the bailiff not to tell James where her husband was if Colonel James came to inquire about Booth, for he would challenge Booth to a duel. The bailiff granted her without the least hesitation. However, after she left, the bailiff immediately ordered all his followers to tell Colonel James that Booth was above stairs if James indeed came here. Because the bailiff believed that Colonel James was one of Booth's creditors and he hoped for a second bail-bond from Booth. As Fielding noted in the novel, when the bailiff handled his writ, he "hath no

other design but to cut out the body into as many bail-bonds as possible” (322). In the bailiff’s mind, his only concern was how to increase his own income. As to the liberty and safety of his prisoner, he never cared.

According to Jerry White, the London prison system was a profit-making institution in the eighteenth century. “Those in charge of the gaols were not paid officials. On the contrary, they paid as much as 5000 for the privilege of ‘farming’ the prison on a franchise” (450). For those gaolers, one of their lucrative sources of revenue was “from the fees that all prisoners had to pay on entry and delivery” (450). Though the governor had no claim for money, they saw it as something they should have. In this way, the governor could get a considerable sum of money every day. In this novel, a man who served the country faithfully was caught in prison by mistake, but he had to continue to stay there because he could not afford the extortion of the governor. In addition, when Booth was arrested into the bridewell for the second time, the first thing he did was to pay for the carriage-hire that was twice the price of the legal fare, and for a room if he wanted to be alone. And when Booth departed, he was also asked to pay a fee which was euphemistically named as “civility-money”, otherwise he couldn’t be bailed. Fielding expressed his accusation of this bad “custom” through his spokesman Doctor Harrison in the novel, “it is pity that, instead of a custom of feeing them out of the pockets of the poor and wretched, when they do not behave themselves ill, there was not both a law and a practice to punish them severely when they do” (360). In Fielding’s view, justice, under the money trade, was trampled by its spokesman—the governor.

Meanwhile, the governors would take a different attitude and behavior depending on whether a prisoner has money or not, and skillfully assigned the bills according to the ability of “his guests” to boost their revenue, which was also a crime bred in prison. In *Amelia*, the landscape of prison was a manifestation of haphazard management. When Booth was arrested for the first time, he saw that three street-robbers in fetters could drink wine and smoke cigarettes comfortably in prison. And then he saw that a man, who was sentenced to be caned for petty larceny, was released easily at the expense of six pence after he was stripped. Moreover, the bailiff Mr. Bondum planned to send a bankrupt man to Newgate though he never received any writ. The reason was that the bankrupt man stayed there for one week but only cost for few drinks, and that his wife and seven children could not afford the bail at all.

However, when the man told Mr. Bondum that his wife had raised the bail money, and they intended to give Mr. Bondum's money back and have dinner with him. Mr. Bondum immediately changed his mind and even promised the man that he would have a merry night. By contrast, in Mr. Bondum's opinion, a gamester who was arrested for assault and battery was "fit company for the greatest lord in the land" (324). He was treated as a gentleman because he spent a lot of money in the jail. From these examples, we can see that prison guard's behavior was governed by the lust for money. In his eyes, there was no difference between right and wrong but just difference between the rich and the poor. As a result, vice constantly bred in the prison under the depraved gaoler's management.

The prison was not only a "market" for trade under the table, but also like a "brothel" due to the deterioration of gaoler. In the eighteenth century, the keeper of prison also profited "from rent for bed and board" (White 450), to increase their income, the gaoler provided unimaginable convenience for the prisoners. Prisoners even could live like a gentleman so long as they gave enough money. All the best things, whether they were foods or drink, could be bought in the prison with money. What was more surprising was that the warden would provide the best room and even services for man and woman as long as the inmate can afford. In *Amelia*, "Miss Matthews throughout has been preparing the way for the seduction of Booth" (Bertelsen 65). And her plan was implemented smoothly with the help of the well-paid gaoler. Firstly, Miss Matthews pretended to send a guinea to Booth to help him escape from the miserable situation. Messenger service in the prison helped Miss Matthews get Booth's preliminary appreciation for her. When Miss Matthews was taken into custody, the gaoler offered "the best apartment" for her, which made sure that nobody would disturb Miss Matthews and Booth in their time together. In this private space, Miss Matthews released her sexual desire for Booth without reservation. At last, in the locking-up time, the governor came and sold a bed next to Miss Matthews with a high price to Booth. When the governor found that Miss Matthews had no intention of leaving Booth, he immediately indicated that "if I lock up double I expect half a guinea, and I'm sure the captain cannot think that's out of the way; it is the price of a bagnio" (148). The governor's words imply that the prison even provided a venue for many women to prostitute and it turned into a whorehouse with the "help" of the corrupted warden.

Foucault so defines the connection of prison and judicial system: “the prison, that darkest region in the apparatus of justice, is the place where the power to punish, which no longer dares to manifest itself openly, silently organizes a field of objectivity in which punishment will be able to function openly as treatment and the sentence be inscribed among the discourses of knowledge” (*The Birth of Prison* 256). As a symbolic place of defending justice and punishing the criminals, prison is built to ensure civilian’s safety and safeguard social order. However, the inherent contradictions between the judicial principle and the punishment system were evident in the eighteenth century. The prison in *Amelia* is a world of graft and lawlessness rather than a place to punish crimes and correct behaviors. Fielding disclosed those secrets lying in prison, which reflected the inhumanity, injustice, and chaotic social order in London.

## 1.2 Penitentiary with Absurd Judiciary

“The prison would act as a hospital for society, containing the contagion and curing the disease of criminality” (Taylor 146). But in *Amelia*, innocent people were sent to prison easily while evil deeds could not get punished due to the defects in the law and legislation. As Fielding’s biographer described the severity of urban crime in London, “to the well-protected Englishman of today the London of 1750 would seem a nightmare of lawlessness” (Godden 337). Unreasonable legal regulation affected the credibility on sanctions for misbehavior at that time. Another negative connotation of prison was revealed in the process of law applying. In this novel, the prison in the city was also a product of the absurd judicial system.

In Fielding’s view, “no human institution is capable of consummate perfection” (16). Urban landscape is not an independent objective existence but a direct manifestation of power. To criticize the judicial system of British society, Fielding deliberately set the story to the April 1st of the year, and lampooned it through the symbolic meaning of April Fool’s Day (Du Juan 108, my translation). The judges decided a case on the basis of identity and status of the defendant rather than the very truth. In the novel, a poor wretch was charged with battery by a stout man. Ironically, the accused person had his head hurt while the accuser had no wound in his body. However, the accused person was found guilty by the judge only because he was an

Irishman. His Irish accent was a strong evidence of guilty in the eye of the judge. Booth was imprisoned for the first time because he helped the watchman on his way home. The rich man who hit them could easily get released while Booth was judged guilty simply because of his poverty. As Fielding described in the novel, the magistrate wouldn't "sully his sublime notions of that virtue by uniting them with the mean ideas of poverty and distress" (21). In court, Booth was shabby in dress, which became a pretext for bringing in a verdict of guilty. Therefore, the judge ignored the noble deeds that Booth had saved the watchman's life and convicted Booth without any concrete evidence. The watchman's guilty was also proved in the same situation. At last, both of them were sent to the prison indiscreetly.

As Foucault said, "space can no longer be treated as 'the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile'; it is to be understood as intricately operative in the constructions of social power and knowledge" (*Power/Knowledge* 70). In *Amelia*, due to the wasteful elements in legal system, the prison showed geography landscape that poor people were being unjustly treated. For example, a poor father and his kind-hearted daughter were convicted for just stealing a piece of bread and sentenced to imprisonment. By contrast, a well-dressed man, who had committed a most horrid perjury and ruined an innocent man's life, was likely to be bailed out soon through fabricating evidence. Facing the unfair treatment, Booth fumed: "Good Heaven!", "can such villains find bail, and is no person charitable enough to bail that poor father and daughter?"(27). However, Booth was told that "the offence of the daughter, being felony, is held not to beailable in law; Whereas perjury is a misdemeanor only; and therefore persons who are even indicted for it are, nevertheless, capable of being bailed" (27). In the eighteenth century, the punishment for all perjury was only to bring the prisoner to the pillory and exile for seven years. Additionally, the perjury was also a crime which could be denied and bailed according to the law, and people often could come up with a lot of ways to escape from punishments. Through the comparison of people's different experiences in the prison, Fielding wanted to tell readers that poor people in city was much easier to be sent to prison because of the inequity of the law. Just as Charles Knight said, in *Amelia*, "The law preys upon the weak rather than protecting them" (40).

Except for being a place in which the poor people may easily be wronged, the prison was also a spectacle where evildoers were harbored and unduly released because of the loopholes



in law. The British capitalism in the mid-eighteenth century was developing at a surprising speed, and the pace of urbanization and commercialization was incredibly rapid. The various forms of modern urban civilization matured at that time. In this context, the urban crime rate was quite high. From 1729 to 1832, people should be imposed the death penalty for perjury. But in *Amelia*, Trent's father-in-law was charged with perjury. Because there was no witness when he wrote another man's name in the contract, he was acquitted in a dignified manner "according to the excellent rules called the law of evidence" (477). In the novel, to criticize the absurd law, Fielding noted acidly that the "law very excellently calculated for the preservation of the lives of his majesty's roguish subjects, and most notably used for that purpose" once again (477). Fielding's belief in the necessity for legislative reform was also illustrated through this remark.

In addition, prisons in the eighteenth century were over-numbered, but sometimes they were unable to operate properly due to the unreasonable law. According to the larceny laws, "property once delivered to a servant for his master's use is no longer in the master's possession and that a servant who appropriates such goods is therefore not guilty of felony" (Radzinowicz 639). Therefore, many servants who committed offences remained outside the prison due to the legal loophole. As Beattie said, "the London sessions of the peace did not deal with many charges of theft. Petty larceny, the theft of goods under a shilling in value was only rarely prosecuted at the city sessions" (12). In the novel *Amelia*, the Booths' Maid, Betty, stole their last few clothes when the Booths were almost cornered. When she was caught by Booth and taken to the magistrate, the judge told Booth that Betty would be released in accordance with the decree enacted by Parliament, because if the stolen goods' value was less than forty shillings or the goods were under his supervision, that is, the thief would not be punished. Confronting with such unreasonable court decision, Booth, as one of commentators for Fielding in the novel, ironically said that "sure this is a very extraordinary law" (495).

What's more, prisons were largely ineffective because the system of adjudication and punishment was inadequate to deal with increasingly sophisticated criminals. In *Amelia*, the pawnbroker who accepted the maid's stolen goods also declared his innocence. When someone sold stolen goods in his pawnshop, the pawnbroker would slip into the inner room and leave the clerk to do it as usual. By this evil means, he ran the business of receiving stolen

properties but got way from penalty. Therefore, because there was no evidence that showed those goods were thieveries and no witnesses proved that he received the stolen goods, the interrogation was hastily over and the pawnbroker didn't get the punishment that he deserved. To this Fielding pinpointed the irrationality of the law once again through the judge's word in the end, "to speak my opinion plainly, such are the laws, and such the method of proceeding, that one would almost think our laws were rather made for the protection of rogues than for the punishment of them" (495).

Meanwhile, due to the shortcomings of the British law, the creditor had the right to get his debtor in detention regardless of the debtor's great efforts to repay the debt, which was another kind of injustice that Fielding severely rebuked. In the process of reforming British judicial system and urban public security system, Fielding was a man and a writer who could not be ignored. In November 1737, Fielding went to law school in London to study law and was qualified as a lawyer in 1740. In 1748, he served as a magistrate for Westminster. Living on the eve of British judicial reform, he was its most faithful advocator and practitioner. In February 1739, the British judiciary once took up a debate for the arrest of debtors. In this novel, Fielding also expressed his fustigation on the British justice system at the time in the guise of characters. The male protagonist poor Booth was arrested twice for his debt. When Booth was firstly sent to the jail for debt, Fielding warmed that the arrest of a man for debt was incompatible with the old British constitution: "by the old constitution of England he had heard that men could not be arrested for debt" (323). Soon after, the noble lord and his pimp Trent, who attempted to sexually assault Amelia, put Booth in prison for debt again by utilizing the defect of law, which brought the Booths another pain.

Furthermore, the prison's inability to safeguard the civil order also showed the lack of judiciary credibility. In *Amelia*, even the lawyer, who should be the defender of law, broke it overtly and rode roughshod over legal niceties to escape punishment. For instance, Attorney Murphy instructed Miss Matthews who was convicted of "killing" her husband to pay for perjury, and then he would help Miss Matthews get out of the jail. So far as he was concerned, the crier kissed the Bible in court which was just likely to kiss a bit of calf's skin; and Matthews' excellent appearance "will go a great way with the judge and the jury too" (54). From Murphy's dismissive tone, we can perceive that the prison, in his mind, was actually a

place from which criminals could easily get away. The prison in the eighteenth century was lack of proper deterrent. At the end of the novel, the secret of Amelia's legacy was finally uncovered. It was Amelia's sister, Elizabeth, who colluded with lawyer Murphy and perjury Carter, Robinson, forged the will of Amelia's mother and robbed her legacy. When the doctor asked the judge to sign a warrant to search for some clues and evidences in Murphy's house, the justice answered that he could permit to search the house only if there was really something stolen. Faced with such irrational legislation, Fielding demonstrated skepticism about it through his spokesman Doctor. Harrison: "how, sir," "can you grant a warrant to search a man's house for a silver tea-spoon, and not in a case like this, where a man is robbed of his whole estate" (536)? Then Robinson proved that Murphy had stolen land title from Booth. However, the judge still hesitated due to the law. "Title-deeds savored of the Realty, and it was not felony to steal them. If, indeed, they were taken away in a box, then it would be felony to steal the box" (536). Thus, Doctor Harrison was outraged and exclaimed, "Savor of the Realty! Savor of the f—talty", "I never heard such incomprehensible nonsense. This is impudent, as well as childish trifling with the lives and properties of men" (536). At last, the judge agreed to grant the search warrant until Robinson pointed out that Murphy had a silver cup which was Booth's property, and Murphy was escorted to the Newgate prison eventually. Through describing a ridiculous farce staged in the prison due to the rigid legal system, Fielding expressed his critical attitudes towards the issue that the law system was seriously flawed and poorly operated at that time by Doctor Harrison's questioning. As a result, the prison's function of curing the disease of criminality was increasingly ineffective due to the absurd law.

Through Booth's personal experience, Fielding reproduced the absurdity of the British legal system in the middle of the eighteenth century and tried to reveal that public prisons in the city, as the product of the absurd judicial system, in fact, could not provide a sense of security in the perverted new social order.

## Chapter Two Living-place of Releasing Evil Desires

The urban landscape includes all the physical spaces in a city, with architectural space and urban public space as the most typical ones. Architectural space refers to the internal living space like residential space to satisfy human's survival needs (Wei Xiangdong and Song Yanqi 122, my translation). In the process of early urbanization, people from all walks of life came to the city for various reasons, which caused the urban population to expand rapidly. Therefore, renting out houses became a common way of making a living for many city dwellers. In new cultural geography, the living place could be a distinct landscape of cultural expression. Because "as a space of belonging and alienation, intimacy and violence, desire and fear, the home is invested with meanings, emotions, experiences and relationships that lie at the heart of human life"(Blunt and Varley 3). The living house, as a concrete representation of "home", should be a safe shelter for those city out-comers. But the residential place in Fielding's *Amelia* was depicted as a gloomy and dangerous area for the poor. The Booths' landlady's turned out to be the noble lord's pimp, who installed a series of traps and helped the noble lord to rape beautiful tenants. Meanwhile, the dwelling place turned into a space dealing with cold business. In *Amelia*, the marriage of the James was just a commercial deal, though the husband and wife appeared to live peacefully in the dwelling house. Trent even took advantage of his wife's charming appearance to win money and status, so that the Trents both became the noble lord's pimp under the temptation of material benefits.

### 2.1 Renting-place as Trap of Forced Prostitution

At the early stage of the urbanization, the large influx of urban population raised new requirements of the space for the city. Housing problems of the urban poor were stern. Some people transformed their old house into low-cost house and leased it to the poor. In *Amelia*, the Booths and the Bennets were living in such a condition. They hoped to find a sanctuary in the city, but in fact it was a place where people released their evil desires in the urban areas. According to Mike Crang, "literature offers ways of looking at the world that show a range of landscapes of taste, experience and knowledge" (57). The Booths and the Bennets'

renting-places showed the underclass' tough life in London in the eighteenth century. Their renting-house looked blue and gloomy for it was a pitfall of depravity.

In *Amelia*, the renting-house as a trap of forced prostitute was vividly manifested. The dwelling place of the leading characters, the Booths', is a spot where they constantly confronted with and were tempted by endless stream of desires and temptations. In Fielding's opinion, London was a "bad place" where there was almost no real friendship. In this novel, Amelia got into the trap when she was acquainted with their landlady Mrs. Ellison who, behind her ostensible warmth and kindness was a nobleman's pimp. In Mrs. Ellison's house, she tried to lure Amelia who is beautiful but poor to lose her chastity step by step. Firstly, she grew intimate with Amelia by showing her great concern when she saw pale Amelia coming back from the park. During the supper, she praised Amelia's beauty generously with words: "Upon my word, Captain Booth, you are the happiest man in the world! Your lady is so extremely handsome that one cannot look at her without pleasure" (179). This statement was apparently praising the beauty of Amelia, but considered from the perspective of her true identity, the statement in this regard indicated that Mrs. Ellison was judging Amelia's "market value" and implying the value of Amelia's beauty to Booth. Here Mrs. Ellison made her first step to approach Amelia with her complaisance and compliments to get Amelia's fondness. Then, when Amelia praised her kindness because she took care of Mrs. Bennet and sent her to the country to recuperate after Mr. Bennet died. Mrs. Ellison cries: "Alas! Madam, what could I have done if it had not been for the goodness of that best of men, my noble cousin! His lordship no sooner heard of the widow's distress from me than he immediately settled one hundred and fifty pounds a year upon her during her life"(242-243). Here by shaping a kind image of the noble lord, Mrs. Ellison inspired Amelia's affection for him. And as Mrs. Ellison expected, Amelia unequivocally stated that she "began to love her cousin" (243). At last, Mrs. Ellison carried out her last step by giving a ticket for the masquerade at Ranelagh to Amelia. Even after Amelia's husband was arrested once again. She still reminded Amelia not to forget to go to the masquerade. She told Amelia, "...keep your appointment", and "...I am convinced there is one who hath the power and the will to serve you" (327). Obviously, this expressed that Mrs. Ellison lured Amelia to date with the noble lord by offering her bail money, and her bad intention against Amelia was abundantly clear at that moment.

According to Ewa Klima, “dwelling is a process of building one’s own identity, locating oneself in time and space. It could be expected that the process would satisfy one of the basic human needs: the need for security” (82). However, in *Amelia*, the Booths’ renting house turned into a space full of danger because the “door” of their dwelling-place was “opened” by the landlord for the noble lord to fulfill his sexual desires. In the eighteenth century, wealth was also the symbol of privilege so rich people could easily recommend even arrange jobs for a man whether he had talent or not. Utilizing Booth’s eager desire of going back to the army, the noble lord showed up in Mrs. Ellison’s apartment as her rich cousin and expressed his willingness to help Booth. However, in the novel, Fielding pointed out that every time the noble lord came, he would obtain “further hope (for I think there was not yet an absolute promise) success in Mr. Booth’s affairs” (216). Thus, it can be seen that the noble lord just used it as an excuse to come to their house and approached Amelia rather than genuinely wanted to help the Booths. Then, when Amelia was gradually moved by the noble lord’s kindness and couldn’t help lamenting that he remained single, Mrs. Ellison attributed to his fondness for his sister’s children. “I declare, madam, if you was to see his behavior to them, you would think they were his own” (218), hence the noble lord set a father-like image in Amelia’s family with the help of Mrs. Ellison. And then he naturally extended this paternal behavior to Amelia’s children through playing with her children and giving expensive presents to them, which further got Amelia’s good opinion in return. Therefore, Amelia exclaimed that “he is one of the best of men” (235) while Booth blamed that she shouldn’t accept the obligations that the noble lord gave. From Amelia’s reflection, we can see that the noble lord succeeded in gaining Amelia’s trust step by step with the temptation of benefits, and Amelia almost took the bait of his conspiracy. The renting house for the noble lord was a hunted space of luring the poor Booths who were ceaselessly worried about money, debt and safety into a trap of devil desires.

In addition, the renting-place as a trap of forced prostitution was also embodied in the Colonel James’s coveting of Amelia. In the light of geographer Ewa Klima, “home is understood not only as a space for living, but also as a space for social relations” (88-89). But as Bertelsen remarked, “nowhere in eighteenth-century literature do we more tangibly feel the lack of a ‘social safety net,’ the promiscuity and changeability of friendship, the impossibility

of rational reliance on anything”(70). In the novel, James approached Amelia on the pretext of friendship as well. When Booth was arrested for the second time, James came to Amelia and urged her to move to his house at once. He did not give up even if Amelia rejected his invitation. Instead, he pressed ahead with his sinister designs. With a renewal of tenderness, he put fifty pounds in Amelia’s hands to express his affection and concern. But at the same time, he sighed that “all men have not Captain Booth’s fortune”, and stated that “the honor of touching it was worth a hundred times that sum” (331). The “fifty pounds” and the word “worth” indicated that James was luring Amelia by his wealth, and for him, the sexual relation was a commodity that could be bought. During the conversation, Amelia constantly tried to claim that all his obligations were on the account of Booth, but James “endeavored, with the utmost delicacy, to insinuate that her happiness was the main and indeed only point which he had in view” (332). It can be perceived that Colonel James’ real intention was to get Amelia rather than to help her family. For James, Amelia’s chastity was the fountain of all his goodness. Then, when James obediently met with Booth in the jail to further win Amelia’s affection, he began with a condition that he would bail Booth out unless Booth must serve in the military abroad. Therefore, when the bailiff impolitely told them there must be two bailsmen, James uncharacteristically forgave the bailiff’s disrespect and said that if discharging Booth that night was legal, he would follow the advice of the bailiff because it just hit off his plan of separating Booth from Amelia. Finally, to achieve his conspiracy, James gave Booth a commission to the West Indies when Booth came out of the jail. As a professional soldier, Booth was keen to get a full salary job. But in the eighteenth-century Britain, if someone wanted to get an official position, he needed a recommendation from the upper classes. When Booth persuaded Amelia to allow his departure, he told Amelia that James “will not only be a father to my children, but a husband to you” (380). This expressed that dewy-eyed Booth did notice wicked Colonel James’ ill motives behind the acts of kindness. But in order to go back to the army, he still tried to persuade Amelia to accept the requirements so that he could get the commission and improve family economic status. In other words, Booth attempted to utilize Amelia’s beauty to appeal to James in order to get the military appointment.

Moreover, in *Amelia*, to further prove the cultural meaning of the dark renting place, Fielding portrayed a similar version of Amelia's experience through Mrs. Bennet's statement. As Donald Fraser remarked, "London itself is plainly a place of moral insecurity" (191). In the early eighteenth century, London was presented as a picture of 'forest of wild beasts': citizens laid many traps in everyday life, not just for each other, but for the unwary innocent. Fielding once warned women that they often took the wrong path under the lure of men in the *Covent-Garden Journal*, and they were deceived, corrupted, betrayed and hurt in both body and mind (Han Jiaming 136, my translation). In *Amelia*, Mrs. Bennet's family fell into tragedy since they moved into London. With no stable financial income, the Bennets moved to Mrs. Ellison's house—a non-creditable region inhabited by people in debt. However, Mrs. Ellison told Bennet that "he needed not to give himself the trouble of such exact punctuality", and "if it was at any time inconvenient to him, he might pay her when he pleased" (297). In fact, these unusual consideration and care from Mrs. Ellison laid the foundation for the noble lord who also lived in Mrs. Ellison's house at that time and attempted to carry out his evil plan. Then, the noble lord gradually won the favor of Mrs. Bennet by caring their child and helping them pay their debt. After that, he pretended that he would try his best to help Bennet obtain the living expenses, and then he used it as an excuse to separate Mrs. Bennet from her husband and drugged and ravished Mrs. Bennet on that night. What's more, in Mrs. Bennet's confession, she told Amelia, "I told you that we were recommended to Mrs. Ellison by the woman at whose house we had before lodged. This woman, it seems, was one of my lord's pimp, and had before introduced me to his lordship's notice" (303). From Mrs. Bennet's words and her miserable experiences in London, it can be easily seen that the renting house in city often became a hunting space of sexual predation for the poor.

Home, as a symbolic entity, is about the creation of relationships and meaning, and "is rich territory indeed for understanding the social and the special" (Domosh 281). In *Amelia*, a rough living experience of the lower class in London was fully reflected in Amelia and Bennet's renting places. In this way Fielding revealed the fact that the residence in London became a snare for nobility to fulfill their sexual desire and seduce those uprooted individuals who had no other choice. And he intended to tell readers about the real living condition of the



lower-class people in the city: even if there was a place to accommodate them, it was irrelevant with warmth and comfort.

## 2.2 Dwelling-place as Venue of Dark Commercial Transaction

As Alison Blunt pointed out, “the home is a material and affective space, shaped by everyday practices, lived experiences, social relations, memories and emotions” (506). But as Ian Watt said in *The Rise of the Novel*, in the eighteenth century, “marriage became a much more commercial matter in the eighteenth century than had previously been the case” (Watt 142). It was common that people connected matrimony with money and property in British families. In their opinion, “love without interest makes but an unsavory dish” (Fielding 244). Under such a condition, the relationship in many families between husband and wife was cold and business-like, each taking what they needed. Therefore, the dwelling place in *Amelia* became a locale of making deal for the couples.

According to Mike Crang, “men and women are cast not only into spatial relationships, but those relationships help support what the experience of place of is, and what it means for a man and a woman—they are both assigned gendered desires through geography”(48). In *Amelia*, the James assigned their individual desires through the dwelling place. In the eighteenth century, people in Britain created a set of social institutions for their sexual pleasure, such as brothels, bagnios even the institution of marriage itself. For James who “was a perfect libertine with regard to women” (168), his marriage was projected to satisfy his sexual pleasure while for Miss Bath their union just meant that she could own James’ considerable property for granted. As Fielding expounded in the novel, Miss Bath “gained everything by the bargain but a husband”. The word “bargain” told the fact that the marriage of the James was merely a negotiated deal like business. According to David C. Thorns, “houses also provide the space where the most intimate social relationships are developed, it is the site where people craft their sense of identity as mothers, fathers, parents, lovers, friends and companions” (104). However, as Fielding declared at the outset that the James’ “match was of the prudent kind” (163). In the novel, we cannot feel the slightest affection in the James’ home. For example, when Mrs. James’s old brother colonel Bath told her that James

might die in a duel, Mrs. James wrathfully blamed him for not stopping them but bringing the dearest one in her life into danger. Yet in the next breath, she asked a footman to the mantua-maker to recall the requirements she made in the morning and changed to make a new suit of brocade. Ironically, she even “repeated her message with great exactness, lest there should be any mistake” (224). In that emergent situation, Mrs. James, who got the news of her husband’s death, only concerned about her clothes and even retold her requirements exactly to the footman for fear of making mistakes. As Fielding said in *The Covent-Garden Journal*, “in high life, marriage is a mere Trade, a Bargain and Sale, where both Parties endeavor to cheat one another” (41). From the James’ mutual interaction, it can be interpreted that their home was built as a free trade market by the couple from the very beginning.

The dwelling-place, as a venue of dark commercial transaction, was further exemplified by the second dealing between the James. In *Amelia*, Fielding depicted “a very polite scene” in the James’ dwelling place (463). After the masquerade, James urged Mrs. James to get back to the countryside because she hindered his pleasure-seeking life in city. But the requirement was immediately confronted with strong resistance from the peacockish Mrs. James, because it would deprive her access to the pleasure of the city. Ironically, the conflicts of interest were solved easily by a promise that Mrs. James obediently played the role of a pimp for James. She would send warm invitations to Amelia continuously in accordance with Mr. James’ evil desire. In exchange, Mrs. James would gain emoluments in the process of helping James to get Amelia: James promised that he would never ask Mrs. James to leave the city unless she was willing to; In the next place, James must give her two hundred guineas in a couple of days. When Mrs. James indicated that she would go to Tunbridge and Bath and try her best to carry Amelia with her if she left London, James was quick to remark: “on that condition, I promise you shall go wherever you please”, and “as soon as I receive the five thousand pounds which I am going to take up on one of my estates, you shall have two hundred more” (467). As Annette T. Rubinstein commented: “the inhuman commercial relations to which capitalism reduced men and women were revolting enough” (297). In the James’ home, the familial relationship was totally replaced by the financial bonds. In other words, the dwelling place was just an assembly point to appeal to their self-interest for the couple.

Under Fielding's pen, Mrs. James was described as a self-serving businesswoman in the dwelling place. In Mrs. James' mind, the only thing she truly cared was her own interest. For instance, she quite enjoyed her life as a fine lady in the city, and she held "form and show as essential ingredients of human happiness" and "all friendship to consist in ceremony, courtesies, messages, and visits" (175). For Mrs. James, keeping in touch with Amelia was to maintain her reputation but not to care for her. The daily activities like playing cards and attending parties seem more important to her. Therefore, when James forced her back to the country, she immediately presented herself as an image of considerable and submissive wife. She told James that "for that I knew before you desired me to invite her to your house. And nevertheless, did not I, like an obedient wife, comply with your desires? Did I make any objection to the party you proposed for the masquerade, though I knew very well your motive?" (466). But actually, Mrs. James also loved Booth mutely. Based on this, it can be perceived that apart from staying in the city, Mrs. James also calculated her extra interests—approaching Booth during the process of pimping for her husband. Therefore, when Amelia refused her invitation, she felt that her interests were at stake, and abused Amelia with very harsh words in front of James. As Joel Bonnemaïson suggested, "The landscape as personal environment makes up the external framework in one's daily life. It is part of one's personality" (51). In this sense, the selfish businesswoman image of Mrs. James bear out that the dwelling place was a location of business transaction on the other side.

In addition, dwelling-place as a venue of doing business is also reflected in the Trents' home. In *Amelia*, Trent got married with his stepfather's beautiful and moneyed daughter. But soon, their father lost his reputation and business for forgery and died. Trent found that their property was only "two hundred pounds in money" and "a small estate of fourscore pounds a-year" (477) left. Therefore, he became less interested in his wife. At that time, Trent discovered that the noble lord was attracted by his wife. So he "began to consider whether his wife was not really a more valuable possession than he had lately thought her" (479). The phrase "valuable possession" showed the fact that Trent was infected by the temptation to regard a woman as a commodity that could be traded for material gains. Therefore, by using his wife as enticement and setting a trap for the noble lord, Trent gained "a good round sum" and "a good place on the first opportunity" as remuneration of his wife satisfying the noble

lord's sexual desires. In other words, Trent sold his wife for "a House at the polite End of the Town which furnished elegantly and an Equipage" (479). As for Mrs. Trent, her "love" was "principally founded upon interest" (480) as well. Therefore, she spontaneously pimped for the noble lord like her husband under the basis of material interest. She began to hold parties in various names for upper class to carry on clandestine love affairs in their house. With the assistance of the noble lord, their house was visited by "most Men of the first Rank, and by all such Women of Fashion as are not very nice in their company" (480). At last, their dwelling place even became an expedient location for extramarital or transgressive relationships. In the novel, Fielding straightforwardly told the readers that "if you was to call a bawdy-house, you would not misname it" (458). It can be perceived that in the Trents' home, the sense of money worship infiltrated into each of their cells. They equated love with interests and cared about the exchange value of each other, which led to the disharmony between husband and wife. As a result, this urban house changed into a market house of interest exchange rather than a place of warmth and affection.

In the traditional and common sense, the dwelling place is supposed to be a place providing a sense of security and happiness where people have a stable and harmonious relationship. However, many upper-class couples in the novel are represented as the most familiar strangers in their house. Their marriage survived in name only, in which the couple just need to maintain superficial harmony but actually care nothing about what the other has done. Through revealing the cultural meaning of the dark dwelling place, Fielding condemned the life style and the moral concept of commodity society and criticized the distorted traditional ethics and false family relations under the commercial value.

## Chapter Three Park of Surfacing Griminess

The eighteenth century in Britain was an active period in pursuit of pleasure and public life. Such public places in urban landscapes as squares, pedestrian streets, and parks are the most important outdoor spaces of material, energy and information exchange to satisfy the demand of people's biology and sociality. The parks became the most common public spaces in people's daily life. At that time there was a "promenade", an avenue specially built for walks with small gravel, trees and flowers planted on the roadsides for viewing and shading. Meanwhile, masquerade held at such public pleasure gardens as Ranelagh Gardens was also a "public event" which attracted many people, residents or visitors.

New cultural geographers view "landscapes as a treasure trove of information. A landscape is always a cultural space, superimposed over a natural space" (Bonnemaison 53). The park in *Amelia* was not just a place for leisure and entertainment. On the one hand, it became a place filled with hidden traps and evils: the Booth's child was "punished" there by an officer merely for his treading on the lawn; Amelia and Doctor Harrison were humiliated by a group of libertines; James enticed Booth to sell his wife, to name a few. On the other hand, the park became a space to fulfill people's sinful lusts by holding masquerades. James and the noble lord invited Amelia to masquerade with an evil intention to seduce her; Mrs. James changed her costume in the masquerade and expressed her hidden feelings for Booth; Miss Matthews threatened Booth to come to her home after the masquerade ended; and Mrs. Bennet traded her beauty twice for her husband's promotion. In a word, the park in *Amelia* was represented as a place of surfacing people's griminess.

### 3.1 Place to Perpetrate Evil Deeds

"Historically, parks have been idealized as salubrious space as well as places of social interaction and tutelage, inscription of cultural identity and memory, tourist destinations" (Byrne and Wolch 743). It can be said that urban public space is the basic element of the city. It is a stage of history where different lifestyles and cultural traditions coexist and communicate. In eighteenth century Britain, going for a walk in a park became a popular and

common daily activity for the urban residents. Park became a good place to meet ladies and gentlemen's recreational needs. However, as Jason Byrne and Jennifer Wolch indicated, "parks are not ideologically neutral spaces, nor are they physically homogeneous; rather, they exist for specific ecological, social, political, and economic reasons—reasons that shape how people perceive and use parks"(745). In the process of urbanization, the representations of the parks changed with the city's development. After the death of Charles II in 1685, the public parks generally fell into a steady decline of the society. As Cynthia Wall pointed out, St. James's Park was not the sole province of sovereign court any longer. By the time of the Queen Anne's era, it had become "a notorious site for prostitutes and Mohocks" (Wall 166). People usually promenaded in the park for some illicit reasons and that the park in the city, during that period, was mainly used as a "fixed space for social and sexual intrigue" (Wall 167).

Notwithstanding parks were supposed to be public, open to everyone, hierarchies were severely maintained and promoted in the associational environment. On the pedestrian promenade, men and women from the upper class were wild about presenting themselves and showing off their wealth and position by elegant gestures. The park was a public space where the upper-class could "test" whether their manners and behavior were indeed polite enough to claim to be a member of high society. The lower-class people with rude words and deeds may be looked down upon or even be "punished". In the novel *Amelia*, a very extraordinary incident happened when the Booths took a walk with their child in the St. James's Park one night. Amelia suddenly cried out because her child was missing. Hearing Amelia's cry for help, Booth hastened around to look for him but he only found that his child was pinched by a piquet in the near distance. Booth immediately rushed forward to protect his child. Witnessing her husband fighting with a man with a bayonet and firelock, poor Amelia was "much disordered with her fright" (177). When their guardian sergeant Atkinson told the officer about the inhumane actions of the soldier, the young officer even praised the soldier as he deemed that unruly actions of the lower class should be corrected. It can be seen that the chances for the Booth to have effective social exchanges are quite limited. The representative urban public life, due to its residue of "uncontaminated" hierarchy, was just a superficial kind of public life to some extent. As Jerry White commented, "the public pleasure of London,

then, were sites of turbulence, as rank jostled rank and deference wrestled mischief, all with many unintended consequences” (296). When Amelia warned her child never to put them in danger again after they came back home, the child stretched out his discolored arms and said plaintively: “what harm did I do? I did not know that people might not walk in the green fields in London” (178). Through the cry of this innocent boy, Fielding expressed his criticism over the inhumanity of the park culture. In Fielding’s point of view, against the backdrop of urbanization, the park, with seemingly open and receptive imagery, was a place where underprivileged groups seemed to temporarily get rid of their poverty. But in fact, there were numerous conflicts between the lower-class and the upper-class under the disguise of a harmonious and poetic appearance.

According to Qin Hongling, urban public space is regarded as the best place for city cognition and experience, which meets the all-round demands of people. The main feature of the humanized urban public space is that it can give citizens not only a sense of ease and security but also the full freedom of communication (16, my translation). That is to say, park ought to be an open place for people to carry on public communication which can inspire and guide interpersonal communication as “dialogue is one of the ultimate expressions of life in the city” (Mumford 116). However, in the changeable world of the park, “the personages presents were unknowable and complicit in a world of falsified appearances” (Greig 59). In *Amelia*, Fielding explicitly stated, “the Birdcage-walk in the park was the scene appointed by James for unburdening his mind” (226). Here Fielding utilized the opportunity to make the reader aware of such a fact that the park in the city was actually a gloomy space where people reveal things that cannot be talked with fair and square. It was generally a public space, but it could be a private space for some people. When sauntering with Booth in the St. James’s Park, James learned that the noble lord promised to help Booth to return to the army. He promptly inveigled Booth into taking advantage of Amelia’s beauty to make sure that the lord would keep his promise. He confined a “secret” to Booth that if the noble lord “once fixes his eye upon a woman, he will stick at nothing to get her”. Therefore, what Booth only needed to do was “carry your goods to the market” (228). And then Booth would no doubt get help from the noble lord. Booth was startled to hear that, “what! To prostitute my wife! Can I think there is such a wretch breathing!” (229) Here Fielding expressed his denouncement of such false

value that regarded one's own wife as goods in a family. Generally speaking, social communication is the transmission of social information, and the essence of social communication is the exchange of social consciousness. Though park is a place where people could communicate freely, the communication in the park in *Amelia* was distorted. While walking in the park, resisting temptations and avoiding pitfalls have also become a difficult task. Meanwhile, these invalid and implicit communications may stealthily weaken the vigor and vitality of the city.

Vauxhall was an attractive public place in eighteenth century London that was widely known for its walks and avenues. At that time, the tourists themselves could be regarded as part of pleasure garden's visual culture. Except for meeting the recreational needs of city residents, the pleasure garden also functioned as a means of "seeing and being seen". In the eighteenth century, Vauxhall "were attempts to supply the more lascivious pleasures of the court to the commonalty at a reasonable price per head" (Mumford 379). Meanwhile, Londoners could enjoy semi-rural walks there. Vauxhall was expanded to include a series of avenues whose straight edges and sharp angles merged into less regulated spaces which were known as 'wildernesses'. The irregular paths, to some extent, encouraged the occurrence of social improprieties that took place in the Gardens' hidden spaces. Vauxhall became a major locale for the emergence of many transgressive acts at that time. In the novel *Amelia*, when the Booths and Doctor Harrison came to the Vauxhall, Amelia was flirted and insulted there at once. Noticing Amelia's beauty, some aristocratic libertines immediately stood still, staring at Amelia ungraciously face to face. And then, they went forward, saying something vulgar. One of them even sat directly opposite Amelia, staring at her with a lascivious look. They had no scruples about anyone around Amelia to molest her. Doctor Harrison tried to protect Amelia but was laughed at by those libertines. It can be perceived that Vauxhall was an unsupervised urban space in which unbridled desires were encouraged and developed in London of the eighteenth century. And the public place that intends to enhance the morality of city life actually turned into a place filled with selfish desires. In the novel, Fielding even ironically entitled this chapter "a scene of modern wit and humor" (402) to express his criticism and condemnation of the park in the city.



Urban public space, an integral part of the whole city, was an important condition for the development of cities. As one of the urban public places, parks, which provide people from different social classes with the common beautiful scene, should be places where urban residents held public activities and gave the buildings meaningful explanations in their community life. However, “parks are rarely innocuous elements of the landscape, especially in cities” (Byrne and Wolch 743). In *Amelia*, Fielding exposed the potential danger and dark side behind the seemingly harmonious and tranquil park, and showed his reflection on the moral decline during the early urbanization.

### 3.2 Location to Release Unbridled Lust

In the eighteenth century, one of the most notable urban constructions of London was the expansion of public place, including all kinds of recreational places, which provided people in the city with more spaces of amusement and leisure. Ranelagh Gardens, one of the most popular public places for people to pursue pleasure, was a unique gathering place in which men and women were allowed to endlessly hold masquerades and indulge their passion. According to Wahrman, “the masquerade as a large-scale, commercial, non-exclusive public entertainment emerged in London from the 1720s onward, and quickly attained a cultural prominence not easily rivaled by other features of eighteenth-century life” (158). The novelists in the eighteenth century such as Defoe, Richardson and Fielding were very concerned about masquerade debauchery. From their point of view, “the masquerade was a conventional setting for seduction and adultery” (Castle 86). In *Amelia*, when it comes to masquerade, it was a trap set by the upper class men to satisfy their sexual desires. It can be said that the presence of lust at all times was a prominent feature of masquerade. People, who came to the masquerade, tried to release their true desires with all kinds of exquisite decorations, like wearing masks and turning into shepherdess or blue-domino people to flirt with each other.

In the eighteenth century, middle class women were always exhorted to “withdraw from public notice”(Spencer 18) and so expected not to show signs of sexual desire even in marriage, let alone show it outside. However, women could talk to strange men without fear

of damaging their reputation at the masquerade. In other words, masquerades provided a secret space for women to release from such convention at that time. According to Terry Castle, “under the effacements of costume women of the middle and upper classes had access to a unique realm of sexual freedom, and a kind of psychological latitude normally reserved for men”(44). In the novel *Amelia*, when Mrs. James came to the masquerade with the Booths, her silent adoration for Booth was revealed at once. In order to hook up Booth, Mrs. James deliberately changed her previous costume and disguised in a blue domino which “erased the identity, gender, and age of the wearer” (Webster 518). Therefore, when James asked Booth where their wives were, Mrs. James, who was staying by Booth’s side, said directly to the colonel, “I make no question but she is got into much better company than her husband’s” (420). Famed British Regency courtesan Harriette Wilson once expressed her love of masquerades in her memoir, “it is delightful to me to be able to wander about in a crowd, making my observations, and conversing with whomsoever I please, without being liable to be stared at or remarked upon, and to speak to whom I please, and run away from them the moment I have discovered their stupidity” (Wilson 55). In this novel, Mrs. James released her feeling and desires in the same way. When Booth was still indifferent to Mrs. James’ hints, she couldn’t help complaining about Booth’s stupidity. Meanwhile, Miss Matthews also showed up, having a quarrel with Mrs. James over Booth, Mrs. James immediately said to Booth, “since you are so indifferent, I resign my pretensions with all my heart. If you had not been the dullest fellow upon earth, I am convinced you must have discovered me” (425) and then she went off. These details suggested that Mrs. James’ pent-up sexual desires could be much more easily set free at the masquerades. The masquerade held in the park turned into a “way of acting out repressed desires” (Castle 73) for her.

Moreover, women with the disguise of costume were also freer to “prey” the man she coveted at the masquerades which was a world of enveloping sexual chaos. According to Castle, “any woman at a masquerade might be viewed as a “prostitute in disguise”—at once hypersexualized, hypocritical, and an exploiter of innocent men” (33). In *Amelia*, the masquerade offered a space for Miss Matthews to re-establish contact with Booth. Although Miss Matthews was finally forced to break up with Booth and became James’ mistress, she still had deep feelings for Booth. When Miss Matthews, who dressed as shepherdess, met

Booth again at the masquerade, she certainly seized her chance well to seduce Booth over again. However, Booth told Miss Matthews that she was just a masquerade acquaintance for him. Consequently, she immediately took off her mask, revealing her true identity, and violently condemning Booth's "consummate impudence" and ingratitude. Then "in the most solemn manner" (426), she coerced Booth into promising to go to her house or she would expose their affair at the masquerade. Just as Castle said, "the masked assembly was seen as the site par excellence for sexual transgression: woman—again thanks to disguise—shared the sensual "freedom" of men" (904). As a result, the masquerade in the park presented a "scenes of riot, disorder, and intemperance" (431).

Women's bodies, which had a great appeal to men, also occupied an extremely important position at the masquerade in the eighteenth century. At that time, women might sell their beauty at the masquerade to gain physical satisfaction and took root in the city. Castle also indicated that "with the 'entry' into the masquerade scene itself—for the characters a literal entry into a novel space of estrangement and moral instability" ("Narrative" 907). In the novel *Amelia*, just as Mrs. Bennet told Amelia about her first visit to the masquerade, "the pleasantness of the place, the variety of the dresses, and the novelty of the things, gave me much delight, and raised my fancy to the highest pitch" (302). The unpredictability and novelty of the masquerade made her "intoxicated with foolish desires" (302). Therefore, when she saw through the lord's bad intentions for her at the masquerade, she fancied she "might give some very distant encouragement to such a passion in such a man with the utmost safety" that she might indulge her vanity and interest at once, "without being guilty of the least injury" (303). That is to say, Mrs. Bennet decided to release her sexual attraction in order to obtain more material benefits for herself. After all, the noble lord not only had already helped to pay their Oxford debts but also tried to "help" her husband to regain the position of clergyman before she participated in the masked ball and realized that the lord had ulterior motives for his kindness to her. At last, in this game of profit, the noble lord drugged and raped Mrs. Bennet, for which Mrs. Bennet reaped 150 pounds of living allowance each year after her husband was dead. Moreover, when Mrs. Bennet (who had already married Atkinson) pretended to be Amelia at the masquerade, she found that her lover who took her away was the noble lord; she admitted "presently a thought suggested itself to her of making an

advantage of this accident” (419). So “accompanied with a very bewitching softness” (420), she, told the noble lord in the name of Amelia that she was lodged the house of Mrs. Bennet, a lady who was once his friend, and that she wanted to repay the lady by getting her husband Atkinson a commission. She hinted deliberately at the noble lord that “this step must be a preliminary to any good opinion he must every hope for” of her (453). Soon after, she received the commission for her husband Atkinson just as she expected. It can be easily interpreted from these descriptions that Mrs. Bennet satisfied her material desires by utilizing the unwritten rule that “favor can be the currency of sexual negotiation” (Bertlsen 88) at the masquerade. The masquerade in the park was “in many ways an exceedingly impure, even bastardized, phenomenon” (Castle 12).

In addition, men and women from all social ranks were brought together and the classes were mingled promiscuously at the masquerade. This provides a great opportunity for men to use their money and power to attract women around them. According to Terry Castle, “the masquerade itself masquerades. Ostensibly the scene of pleasure, it is actually the scene of snares—a region of manipulation, disequilibrium, and sexual threat. It disguises itself as exquisite delight, yet degrades all who enter its estranging spaces” (119). In *Amelia*, the noble lord never stopped his coveting for Amelia. When the Booths and the James arrived at the masquerade, the much-awaited noble lord who wore masks and costume came forward to take “Amelia” to a devious room. Then, the noble lord expressed his “fervent love” for Amelia (who was actually disguised by Mrs. Bennet) in the style of a great man of the present age” (452). According to Mrs. Bennet, who pretended to be Amelia at the masquerade, “in short, he laid his whole fortune at my feet, and bade me make whatever terms I pleased, either for myself or for others” (452). From Mrs. Bennet’s description, we can see that the noble lord bluntly expressed his “love” with no distractions at the masquerade. For the noble lord, love was nothing but equal to money used to gain sexual satisfaction. As Fielding described in the novel, the noble lord “seemed rather to apply to her avarice and ambition than to her softer passions” (419). Hence, to further evoke “Amelia”’s greed and desires for interests, the noble lord was even too self-conceited “to conceal his true voice”. At last, when “Amelia” hinted he that she would reward him if he gave her friend Atkinson a military appointment, the noble lord smugly thought he had succeed in his evil plan. Therefore, he immediately promised to

do that. From these details, it can be easily perceived that the noble lord's carnal desire towards Amelia was unmistakably revealed at the masquerade. The masquerade in the park depicted "as a site of sexual license, is a place of unmasking rather than disguise" (Castle 33).

Moreover, the masquerade in the park provided a place in which people could engage in "a personal abdication from the responsibilities of identity" (Castle 73) in the eighteenth century. The upper classes could release their immoderate lust there without any scruples of fame. In *Amelia*, when James finally found "Amelia" who was taken away by the noble lord at the masquerade, he immediately expressed his concern for "Amelia" openly: "so, madam, I have the good fortune to find you again; I have been extremely miserable since I lost you" (420). To his surprise, "Amelia" resolutely insisted that she did not know Mr. James at all. To be close and intimate with "Amelia", James showed his identity without scruple. When he was refused by "Amelia" again, "he then went again a hunting through the rooms" (420). Though searching carefully, he still couldn't find Amelia, "he resolved, therefore, as he could have no sport himself, to spoil that of others" (426). At that moment, he found Booth and told him that he looked all over the masquerade but couldn't find their wives. Then, he deliberately led Booth in a panic to the room where "Amelia" stayed with the noble lord and told Booth, with a malicious intention that his wife Amelia stayed with the noble lord all the night, which led an acrimonious quarrel between Booth and Amelia. In the novel, James even confided that he invited the Booths to the masquerade just to take the opportunity to seduce Amelia there. As Castle noted, "masquerades are described as events where people divest themselves of the 'borrowed feathers' of social appearances and reveal their true natures" (73). It can be told from James' performance at the masquerade that he totally torn off the camouflaged mask of mateyness and revealed his true face in such a place riddled with hypocrisy and traps.

The masquerade held in Ranelagh offered both men and women a chance to get their desire satisfied. For example, men can use wealth to obtain sexual gratification, while women can use their beauty in exchange for material gain. However, the unbridled intimate "contact" between men and women may disrupt public order and degrade social conducts, which can be a challenge to the traditional society. In Fielding's eyes, park in the eighteenth century became a stage of desire performance by holding masquerade. Being a world full of luxury pleasure,

wealth and power, it also gave scoundrels chances to do bad things at this carnival party. Secrets and desires hidden behind the mask were thoroughly revealed and the communications among people became more indirect and deceptive. The masquerade in *Amelia* gave a literary geographic picture of pleasures that would lead to a social degeneration. As Fielding suggested in “*Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men*”, “the whole world becomes a vast Masquerade, where the great Part appear disguised under false Vizors and Habits” (155). We can see that Fielding also expressed his concerns about the lack of sincerity and trust among people resulted from the process of urbanization by exposing the ugly side of the pleasures.

## Conclusion

As a traditional writer, Henry Fielding's works always demonstrated and commended the beautiful and serene country life as in *Tom Jones*. But in *Amelia*, Fielding's last novel, he vividly depicted a picture of the metropolis London in the eighteenth century. The protagonists Booth and Amelia were forced to come into the city in order to elude their debts, but the corrupted and degraded city made their life tougher. The specific elements of a city have meanings beyond the surface function of people. In light of new cultural geography, this thesis probes into the cultural connotations of such dark urban landscapes in the novel as prison, living-place, and park in London.

In *Amelia*, Fielding visualizes a city in which nothing is what it appears. Prison is a breeding ground for vice and outcome of unreasonable judicial system. Living-place is a place of pushing into the sex trade for city outsiders and conducting business transactions among family members. Park is a site for people to carry on misdeeds and a location to send up sexual desires. Fielding expresses his criticism by disclosing these cultural connotations of dark urban landscapes.

Henry Fielding worked as a magistrate for Westminster and Middlesex throughout the time of *Amelia*'s writing and publication. And this job allowed Fielding to be familiar with all aspects of London, especially its dark corner. But the novel ends with the protagonists coming back to the countryside and leading a happy life. Fan Cunzhong criticizes the happy ending, saying it is unbelievable because of the whole oppressive atmosphere in *Amelia*. By contrast, Huang Mei holds a vaguer view. She holds that the contrived coincidences in the final four chapters and the happy ending suggest Fielding's wavering attitude. The "problematic" ending of the novel is actually no accident and never a defect, but Fielding's good wish. That he contrived a happy reunion though the whole scene in the novel was somber not only embodied Fielding's consistent writing principle of "virtue rewarded", getting their inheritance and returning to country life is also a way that Fielding finds to flee the dark city for the respectable couple. The Booths experienced so many difficulties and traps in the city that Fielding was more eager to get them back to the country. In Fielding's opinion, "only in

the country, away from the social center of London, can the family survive happily” (Loftis 227). In a sense, returning to the country is a prescription for city malady by Fielding. By studying the landscapes in the novel, we can know the latent social problems accompanying early urbanization in the eighteenth century in London as well as Fielding’s embodied traditional moral concepts and criticism towards it.



## Notes

- 1 The Covent-Garden Journal was the last magazine launched by Henry Fielding in 1752. Fielding once published an article to argue for *Amelia* with his rivals in the magazine.

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## **Acknowledgments**

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my respected supervisor Professor Wang Jianxiang, who gives me many practical and enlightening suggestions during my research. Every time I asked her question, she answered it patiently. When I felt depressed and anxious, she always gave me the greatest encouragement. Here I want to express my most heartfelt thanks to her.

Meanwhile, my sincere appreciation should go to Professor Hu Qiang, Professor Shu Qizhi, Associate Professor Xiong Yi and many other teachers who have taught and helped me in the three years of study.

Finally, I want to thank my dear parents for their selfless love and solid support. I also want to express my appreciation to my friends, especially Liao Yao, Ding Shu, Tan Xi, Wu Jing, and Mi Yajun. They help me whenever I am in need and give me a lot of advices during my research.

## Informative Abstract in Chinese

《阿米莉亚》(*Amelia*, 1751)是亨利·菲尔丁的最后一部小说,但也是他四部长篇小说中存在争议最多的一本。作为菲尔丁“最喜爱的孩子”,这本带有一定自传性质的小说从写作手法到题材都与前三部小说有所不同。《阿米莉亚》生动描写了一对乡村夫妇婚后因避债逃到伦敦的种种遭遇,展现了一幅城市底层人民困苦挣扎以及城市混乱、腐败堕落、充满欲望唯利色彩的都市图景。作者放弃了流浪汉小说模式,把城市作为故事发生地,以犀利的眼光揭露了现代性来临之前大都市膨胀所带来的种种问题。

本论文从新文化地理学的角度,分析《阿米莉亚》中的城市文化景观的意义。在传统的文化地理学注重对景观形态和乡村景观的研究基础上,新文化地理学更注重对景观文化意义和城市景观的研究。“文化转向”和“空间转向”是新文化地理学重要的标志。“文化”成为其最重要的关键词之一。新文化地理学认为,景观不是单一固定的外在客体,而是“看的方式”。受社会主义马克思主义思潮的影响,一些新文化地理学家将景观作为一种表征,研究在文化和权力编码下景观的象征性意义。丹尼斯·科斯格罗夫(Denis E. Cosgrove)在《景观图解》(*The Iconography of Landscape* 1988)一书中指出“景观是一种文化图像,是一种描绘、组织或代表环境的图形表达方式”(Cosgrove 1)。本论文选取《阿米莉亚》中的监狱、住所、公园三处典型的文化景观,从新文化地理学出发解读18世纪伦敦景观的文化意义,并分析菲尔丁对城市化所带来的问题的批判和反思。

第一章分析监狱景观。监狱本是关押罪犯、实行正义惩罚之地,而小说中监狱却成了罪恶滋生的大本营。狱长利用职权收取各种费用。只要犯人给钱,他可以为他们提供各种服务,包括信差跑腿、男女同房等。交纳一定的贿赂金后,犯人能在监狱里吃好的、喝好的、甚至还能聚众赌博。在监狱里,犯人之间冲突不断,老犯人会向新入狱的罪犯勒索钱财。同时,监狱在一定程度上也反映了当时司法制度的不合理性。监狱的主要职能本是惩罚和改造罪犯,但由于司法弊端的存在,它已然无法公正地履行其职责。小说中仅偷了一个面包的父女依照法律被判重罪且不能保释,而对于某些犯伪证罪、盗窃罪、销赃罪的人却量刑过轻,且不费吹灰之力就被保释出狱或者直接免脱罪责;在执行公务时法官可以为了鸡毛蒜皮的小事动用搜查令,却在判处伪造遗嘱、侵占他人财产一案时拒绝签署搜查许可证。

第二章分析住所景观,家本该是充满爱的地方,然而在小说中却是诱使底层人民堕

落的欲望化空间。贝内特太太家破人亡的悲剧正是从她长期租住的家庭旅馆开始的。房东太太埃里森打着友谊的幌子，为租客们提供各种便宜和恩惠，实则是为了给无良的上层阶级男性创造接近并侵犯她们的机会。当布思和阿米莉亚住进埃里森太太的旅馆时，勋爵将魔爪伸向了阿米莉亚。他通过赠予布思夫妇的小孩昂贵的玩具，以及帮助布思重回军队等来博取阿米莉亚的好感。在贝内特太太的提醒下，阿米莉亚才得以“幸免于难”。在此期间，布思夫妇的好友詹姆斯上校也企图通过施以经济援助来夺取阿米莉亚的贞洁。其次，在小说中，“家”成了利益交换的场所。詹姆斯夫妇的婚姻是建立在“各取所需”的基础上：詹姆斯先生是看中了妻子的美貌，而詹姆斯太太则是看中了丈夫的财产，婚后能过上体面而富足的生活。实际上，夫妻二人之间貌合神离。在詹姆斯上校认为太太妨碍了他享受城市的乐趣，强迫她回到乡下时，詹姆斯太太为了能继续留在城市，答应为詹姆斯上校出谋划策，夺取阿米莉亚的贞洁。同时，她还提出詹姆斯上校需要支付两百个基尼的报酬，并且不得再要求她离开城市等条件。特伦特夫妇的结合也是建立在利益之上。在发现丈夫对自己的态度日渐冷淡后，特伦特太太开始对显贵勋爵的示好欲拒还迎。而特伦特明知勋爵觊觎自己的妻子，却故作不知，反而在妻子与勋爵欲行苟且之事时，突然出现对勋爵进行敲诈勒索。夫妻二人最终在金钱利益的驱使下，都沦为了勋爵的皮条客，他们的家更是成了上流社会社交集会的黑暗场所。

第三章分析公园景观。公园是 18 世纪绅士、淑女们休闲娱乐最主要的公共场所之一，然而，公园的公共性和开放性也使其成为了人们为所欲为、无辜者受到伤害和侮辱的地方。布思夫妇的孩子因为在公园的绿草地上玩耍而被一名手拿火炮刺刀的哨兵狠狠地“惩罚”。布思夫妇与哈里森博士游园时，城市浪荡子觊觎阿米莉亚的美貌，竟公然上前调戏，试图保护阿米莉亚的哈里森博士也遭到这群浪荡子的侮辱和嘲笑。詹姆斯诱骗布思出卖自己的妻子来获取利益。另一方面，城市公园中的假面舞会也是 18 世纪英国城市化的象征。在小说中，公园成为了人们释放内心肮脏欲望的地方。贵族和詹姆斯上校等上层阶级不断邀请小说中女性人物参加假面舞会，企图夺取他们的忠贞，假面舞会成为了满足他们欲望而设置的陷阱。假面舞会上很多女性也撕下了平时矜持温婉的伪装。詹姆斯太太在假面舞会上为接近布思特意重新换装，出现了和其他女性“争夺”布思一幕。马修斯小姐威胁布思与其约会。贝内特太太被说服陪同埃里森太太去参加假面舞会时，利用勋爵对自己的“情感”，满足自己的虚荣心和获取利益。她第二次代替阿米莉亚去参加舞会时仍不忘利用勋爵对阿米莉亚的“喜爱”，为自己的丈夫谋得一份升职令。



小说最后主人公继承遗产，回归乡村的喜剧结局一直以来都是批评家们争议的焦点之一。黄梅先生在《推敲自我》一书中针对贯穿这部小说沉郁的气氛使得最后的喜剧结局太突然这一说法指出，“作者似乎是不屑少许填平横亘在阿米莉亚的困苦状况和骤然来临的好运之间的深沟，是有意提醒人们体现诗意的公正的喜剧结局是多么不现实”（254）。而本文通过分析认为，小说的结局——回归乡村也似乎是作者急于为人们逃离这座“黑暗”城市寻找出的一条出路。毕竟，在小说的最后，布思夫妇所有家当都已经典当，一直以来的守护者哈里森博士也无力独自承担保释金解救布思。此时的布思夫妇生活已经到达了最低谷，“传统主义小说家”菲尔丁不得不为这对天真的夫妇另想出路。这条出路不是突如其来的，在菲尔丁心中，宁静质朴的乡村生活始终是他心目中的乐园。小说中哈里森博士管理的教区被比喻成天堂，布思短暂的农民生活宁静而幸福。虽然小说最后，布思回到过伦敦偿还债务，但他只呆了两天，从此就再也没有离开家三十英里之外，在这里，一家人过着简单幸福的生活。这些情节的描写都反观了作者回归乡村、回归传统道德的主题思想以及对都市“丑恶”生活、人性堕落的批判。

## **Résumé and Publications since Entering the Program**

### **Résumé**

Date of Birth: Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, 1993

B. A. Degree: Bachelor of Arts in Literature, Xiangtan University, June 2015.

### **Publications since Entering the Program**

李婉夕. 论《阿米莉亚》中的黑色城市书写. 青年文学家, 2017(11): 119. (省级刊物)