

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEN & WOMEN:  
A STUDY OF SOCIAL REALISM IN THE  
NOVELS OF JANE AUSTEN**

A Thesis

*Submitted*

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# **CHAPTER 6**

## **CONCLUSION**

The most important aspect of Austen's novels is her commitment to relate the truth of actual people. Her actual people are those 'who emerge from her writing'. She blends fiction and the fact to differentiate the people she has encountered in real life and those she has confronted in her imagination. The previous chapters of this thesis were an attempt to discuss Austen as a social realist novelist. She is an artist of real stature. Her novels is an essay on art for reality sake. The allegorical mode displays the versatility of Austen as a novelist. Since man and woman forms the nucleus of a family and their relationship depends on a social strata within a society that creates a situation or circumstances for a relationship to be good or bad. This research hopes to bring a development in the field of English literature to understand Austen's point of view and the reality the depicts in her characters. It will disseminate knowledge based on its wider perception. The issues classified under different headings forms an integral part of human relationships. It will identify knowledge gaps, promote new ideas synchronised through different chapters gives a clear understanding how a writer experiences and explores the hard realities of life and offers solution for better understanding in human relationships.

Chapter one was an attempt to discuss Austen as a social realist where all her novels were textually analysed where the conclusion reached to the point that writer is a part of society and her creation is the product of circumstances and situations. Chapter two presented the ideology of Austen and how her times shaped and moulded her to depict an exact social life to be called as a social realist. Chapter three made a serious attempt to throw light on men and women and how these relations are created for serving the purpose and cause. Chapter four deals with the issues of marriage and other problems to understand oneself and to have a journey of self analysis. Chapter five hope to bring into light Austen's view about love and money and how these two are the paramount forces for leading a happy and successful life

Jane Austen's plays stand important in the history of English novels. The range and scope of her novels is very wide. She focusses on simple, social and

domestic life. Her novels revolves around social themes. There is a tussle in her countryside, middle classes and ordinary men and women. Her household and the home life is the centre of attraction for all the novels. Jane Austen wrote only six novels.

Though in quantity the novels are few but in quality they are great. She writes about people in action and gives a psychological study of men and women around her. She goes deep into the thoughts of human nature and presents her characters with her own reason and experience. There is a wisdom driven force and a moral purpose behind her writing. Her perception is clear. She has magical art of characterisation. Her themes are simplified, her magnified style and her craftsmanship of creating a novel is simply great and this makes her one of the great novelist. Austen occupies one of the formidable position in whole of the English fiction of 19<sup>th</sup> century. The realistic novel reinforced by knowledge and information gives an ample evidence that Austen studied sociology and psychology very well. Austen has been identified with her age whereas the other novelist are critical and hostile of their times. She accepted the society the way it was where she did not pose any question. Her novels are blend of morals and morality where conventions and morals are prevalent but she defers although in a subtle manner. Austen's personal experience are record of her six novels. Her characters are ordinary from real life, they are agricultural, farmers, miners and even paupers. Like a realist novelist she avoids heroic deeds and figures and even those movements in the novels. She justifies her novels, she gives a true picture of society where she does not shirk from reality, morally judging others and reflecting on the lives of others. Infact, she gives a clear picture of the society of her days. Humanitarianism is one of the keynote of her works. As a novelist, she has contributed extensively in plot construction, characterisation and technique of the novel. The critics of her times evaluated her as a writer who is in want of ideas and who heightens morals and emotions, elevates virtue which is beyond the composition of a charm of a novel. She was critically examine in terms of her subject matter and smallness of range but Jane Austen as a social realist exposes important theme which a country faces and no one can surpass the values she talks about. She exemplify those values in all her novels be it life value of its style and reason and restraints. She treats her good and bad characters equally. She reveals the difference between the facts and its appearance. She is

famous for her own value and the character she presents. They are naturally and normally related to the environment. Though she writes about money and the social and economic standards of her times, it somewhere seems as if she is a Marxist. She exposes the social behaviour with all her passion and honesty. Like her writing span is very limited in the world of literature, her range of human society in the novels is also very limited. Her characters are kind of people she knows closely. We do not find hunger, poverty , misery or terrible vices in hr novels but there is an ample evidence of moral values in her characters, we do not see any major political happening and also Nature is rarely described. Infact her characters are presented inside the houses in their limited range and circle with some occasional parties and picnics. As chapter one deliberate upon Austen as a social realist, her subjects taken in the novels centre around everyday issues like marriage and courtships. Her relationships are broken and mended , it is the courtship times which develops tension but as far as marriage is concerned either it is good or bad, right or wrong, it has to stay on the basis of judgement and self knowledge. Austen's heroines are able characters who judge others and it is their ability to choose suitable husbands. Austen's heroines can marry a man to their choice and this fact is quite prevalent in each and every society with a change of time or a transition of period that a girl can choose a boy of her own choice. Pride, prejudice, sense, sensibility and even persuasion forms the burning topic in the novels. The novels *Sense and Sensibility* talks about two sisters where one represent a woman of sense where other represent of foolishness. In a way this novel has a double plot where the moral says that it is wise to behave sensibly and it is foolish to have too much sensibility. In every home, such characters exists where *sense and sensibility* goes hand in hand and it decides the joys and sorrow of home. The relationship based on the mind and heart hardly displays any truest emotions. The theme of sensibility is prevalent in the whole novel. The superiority of sense over sensibility marks the progress of a novel. In this novel, Austen glorifies sense and the dual plot gives an artistic beauty to the novel.

The novel *Pride and Prejudice* deals with the theme of marriage like her other novels where there is an intended revelation for exposing good or bad marriage. In this novel the leading characters apologise to eachother for their initial pride . the novel describes few marriages through which the theme is developed. In the broader sense, the theme of marriage is the theme of pride and prejudice, its like

the feeling which comes in the way of marriage and this theme is very well represented by the character of Elizabeth and Darcy. The plot and symmetry of events is very well balanced. In the history of English novels *Pride and Prejudice* is one of the most popular and successful novel in terms of Austen's characteristics response to the world. She clears this view when Elizabeth Bennet tells Darcy: " follies and non sense, whims and inconsistencies do divert me, I own and I laugh at them whenever I can....."

The novel *Mansfield Park* centres around its heroines Fanny Price who is a symbol of well cultured, cultivated harmonious way of life. The plot of this novel shows remarkable development from immaturity to maturity. The marriage issue in terms of material, intellectual and emotional compatibility are dealt with nice craftsmanship of Austen. The novel informs us that the material and social aspects are very important consideration for a marriage. Edmund is one who in want of emotional attachment and intellectual understanding finally makes it the good decision to marry Fanny, depending upon their similar ideology.

The novel *Emma* introduces the theme and the structure of the novel in a beautiful manner. The plot carries inward and the outward movement. This novel can be compared with *Pride and Prejudice* in terms of self-deception. The focal point of the novel is the self-discovery of the leading character Emma. Here Emma is resented as a heroine who illustrates her own delusion and lack of judgement.

The novel *Northanger Abbey* presents the stark reality of life with dual theme and it is the educative process of a heroine which provides a sense, not to be deceived by literature and not to be deceived by life. The heroine of this novel Catherine is lie Emma Woodhouse who indulges into mistakes and misjudgement due to her ignorance. It is a revelation through the character of Catherine who makes her stand on realism and sense.

The novel *Persuasion* persuades Annie not to marry Captain Wentworth and it is the Lady Russel who imparts title to the novel. The theme of the novel is love where Annie is in constant love for Wentworth and finally gives a second chance at happiness. The other theme which shadows the novels is pride and vanity. Pride can be understood in one's social position and vanity can be explained in one's

personal appearances. Persuasion is a novel which carries a serious message. It is concerned with ageing and heroine is older, sad and experienced than other heroines.

The textual analysis of all these novels serve as an indispensable source to students and scholars in Indian universities. The relevant critical commentary is presented in an easy and simple manner which will be beneficial for all those students of literature who studied Jane Austen.

Austen did not make it her business to preach a doctrine on some moral theme. Infact she saw herself as a rational observe and interpretor of the life as what she actually saw. Her novels are tedious practices of author where so much time has been spent to compose stories, her methods and creativity and a great control over his writings produced a wonderful writing material. She has created her characters so deeply so as to touch the lives ant it seems as if Austen's speaks on their behalf as a true narrator of live story teller. Her novels are principally concerned with fabric of 19<sup>th</sup> century England where there are conventionalism and conservatism and at the same time cry for a change with alteration of system and a reconciliation with the ideological norms. The attention is focussed on the life of characters who live in the realm of dreams, aspiration and also wants to have a better life. The novels are full of detailed description of love, money, romance and other important issues of life. The physical frame of her novels and process of life, the food, drinks, clothes, lodging and conveyance reveals Austen's life style. She confines herself to an educated class who are land owners and professional men. The courtship is portrayed as her autobiographical touch. Her novels contains no politics, no literary or aesthetic life, and even there is no elements of sex radicalism, supernaturalism. Even there is no where mention of class problems, no landscapes, the simple, common, natural life of people is shown. The topics of her novels and the places she mention looks as a part of society where Austen has spent most of her times. The quality of characters is revealed fully. Her love is given a prime importance in the novel and humour add another colour to life. The below mentioned passage from *Pride and Prejudice* clarifies as to what kind of society Austen experienced and her characters reveal important aspect of love and humour.

Austen seems more than spiritual. her characters loved materialism where the individual pleasure is more important than the collective. Austen grasped things as they were. The relationship between her ideology and the world she see around is enclosed proximation. She presented human beings of all kind. The social world of Austen is a product of her own experience and imagination. Love is shown as a powerful force which tries to settle all issues. The theme of marriage is a self-definition of girls in a society. Money is seen everywhere and Austen seems to enquire from every corner the source of money for wellbeing through her character. The adolescence life is revealed in reality. The social life off Austen is a combination of realism, imagination and charity. Her characters are very just and faithful interpretor of human nature.

The concluding chapter throws light on various aspects of Austen and her novels and the research title taken for the study has following dimensions:

#### **Austen as a novelist:**

Jane Austen is one of the most successful novelist of her times. Her personality is towering among her peers and contemporaries. She depicts real life characters. The convincing power of Austen makes her different from other novelists. She add dramatic elements in her works. She depicts sentiments and romance. She shows the comic side of life and painful side too. Her attachment and detachment with the world is a result of moral purpose. Though her range is limited, she shows the whole spectrum of life. The lighter and the brighter side of living and loving is beyond description. She has got a supreme understanding of being true to life and that makes her surpass other novelists. Her stature is very elegant. She is a skilled novelist. She devoted herself and the entire span of her life in writing the kind of novels which the whole world appreciates and she is places among the best novelists of English literature. Her works are blend of romanticism and classicism, the daily life of country gentry, though the stories are not very exciting but they are very sentimental which touches human heart. She is born story teller and her works gives everlasting appeal. She faithfully observes her characters. She does not

Pretend to be a social reformer. She cannot tolerate sin and her novels shows her complete mastery as an artist over her material. The art of her observation

as a secret to define her as a novelist. She is far from impartiality, the individualities and differences of her characters and the way she depicts makes her one of the leading novelist. All the six novels of Austen taken for study explains her as a novelist which reveals her craftsmanship, mastery and skill as a great writer.

### **Austen as a social realist:**

Her realism is visible in every work through the disposition of real life characters. The sociology behind every character reveals the fact that her characters forms background of her describing as a social realist novelist. Her English voice and her novels are result of what she is as a product of society and socio-economic colour what she is touched with. She experienced life when English society was transforming from agriculture to urbanisation. The social problems alongwith the global issues like social, economic and political times transformed Austen's psyche and she becomes a psychological and social ideologist which she blends in her characters. The realist literature presents human beings as real men and women who find expressions in the work of novelist. The emotions and the deeds are presented in a realistic sense and the social experience of Austen makes her writing very authentic and real. Realism shook the entire Europe during 19<sup>th</sup> century and the writers of that time are capable of presenting external reality with an addition of internal reality through empirical investigations. Austen as a realist novelist took this painstaking research and achieved a place as no one could achieved as an accurate and realist. Realism is a particular method of composition and as an approach in the world of art and writing situates characters in a social setting which never were deprived of their true personalisation. Austen stifled literary experimentation with freedom of expression, thought and feelings. The common theme running through her writings is a moral aim of creating works which must be dominant, superseding aesthetic consideration. Austen broke the prevailing element of social realism in all her novels. The selection of cities and towns and the action of workers who lived in toil gives genuine presentation of English society. The study of social realism in the works of Jane Austen in relation with the man women relationship is a larger social system, and the study of her works consider social reality as one of the powerful medium to reflect authors' genuine effort to create social realism. Austen could not publish her novels while she was alive and she got wider popularity after her death

and the literary production of her work did not face any difficulty as her works are more appealing and life touching and which pave way for voluminous works, critical commentary and critical reviews. Her study as a soial realist is view in the context of an understanding of English society, its culture, manners and modes of living which made her to depict her characters lifelike and living.

### **Her style of composition:**

Austen has composed novels highlighting social hypocrisy through irony. She becomes the voice of the protagonist. Her literary style is a mixture of direct speech and realism. The presentation of women and men are sentimental presentation. She has a psychological depth for narrating her characters which explains her views and she explains realism as an important genre of research with the blend of sociological approach. She is a true realist in the sense that her final execution of her individual character and their everyday life keeps her in the realistic tradition . her stories about education, moral code of conduct where character see themselves as they are and tries to become better as they could be. The morality and literature of her times coloured with manners, obligations to society and religious sentiments are touching points of her novels. There is an indepth association between intellectual ans moral developments. She has been criticised for being a feminist writer taking up feminist theme on the ground that some female characters are dominant of their own small world, some are confine to their own houses both internally and externally. Her novels are wrapped around the lives of men and women who tries to live a life thrusted upon them. Her composition also involves some funny and witty dialogues where she laughs at love at first sight and she does not give any importance to passion over ambitions and duties. The heroic deeds and the chivalric works are bit far from her novels. Her works are full of irony which is a powerful literary technique where she explains the plain meaning in a comic statement. She uses satire to expose the social hypocrisy of her times. She criticises marriage market where she ridicules, “it is truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of good fortune must be in want of wife.” (P \$ P, opening lines). In *Mansfield Park*, she depicts irony in a very subtle manner, “she(Mrs. Bertram) was a woman who spent her days in sitting, nicely dressed, on a sofa, doing some long piece of needlework, of little use and no beauty, thinking more of her pug

than her children but very indulgent to the latter when it did not put herself to inconvenience." her irony lights the follies and mistakes of her individual characters and her society and at times she uses this irony to expose the flaws of law, legal customs and traditions, social taboos and conventions and all the manners and matters. Her language is very accomplished and she appreciates those women who have knowledge of music, singing, dancing and drawing. She justifies this in *Pride and Prejudice*, when Elizabeth remarks;

"No one can be really esteemed accomplished who does not  
Greatly surpass what is usually met with a woman must have  
A thorough knowledge of music, singing, dancing and the  
Modern languages to deserve the world; and besides all this,  
She must possess a certain something in her air and manner  
of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and experiences,  
or the word will be but half - deserved."

She gives a distinctive voice to her characters where they can be easily distinguished by their speech. From her writing technique and as a language expert fully justifies that she belongs to English class.

Austen's narrative technique is the combination of reality and romance which is both a subjective and objective was a rector of Stevenson in Hampshire was quite aware of the fact that her roots belonged to both religious and cultural ethos. She belonged to a very noble family. Her father was adopted by a rich uncle. So in a way Austen had both humble and wealthy background. This background makes her reflect the rich and the poor. Few sorrows enjoys of her own personal life makes Austen weep and laugh over her characters with whom she was deeply attached. The true source of inspiration of her culture is her own world where she appears to be social realist novelists. She adopted no means of success to be a popular writer, infact her contribution towards English novels lies in her innate strength of her own

literary powers presenting characters with all human force with much ease and naturalism. It is very comprising that at such an early age she could enquire the inside of human character then observation of manners and their natural display. All her novels shows affair and eloquent presentation to be a real presenter of events and happenings. She depicts the moral attitude, the taste and the warm affections as those characters really existed. Austen as a true observationalist and realist reflects her own sweet temper and real nature with beautiful heart. She was not very clever but valued, kindness, sympathetic and amusement were the genius of her works. The hopes and enjoyment, restlessness and jealousy, contentedness, unsuspiciousness, painful experiences are her truest reflection.

This thesis reflects Austen's autobiographical touches external truest records, internal mental conflicts and at the same time Jane Austen as a believer of realism and how relationships never leave human touch. Man and woman relationship are part of this whole global society and Austen's novels projects some of the glimpses of human portrayal as creation of this world who cannot exist without pain and pleasure.

The relevance or importance of this thesis can be explained in terms of following points-

- English literature as one of the core literature serves as a medium to enhance literary knowledge, information about a particular society especially English society of Austen's time. The socio-economic milieu and her personal understanding of different literary genres especially English novels makes this thesis as one of the most relevant study for upcoming literary scholars who wants to know about Jane Austen.
- Social realism being one of the popular movement of 14<sup>th</sup> century paves way for writer like Jane Austen to apply techniques, methodology and strategies which makes the scholars to understand this literary movement well.
- Sociological approach as a viable method to critically examine any literary piece of art especially novel to impart it social authentication.

- Man and woman relationship since the time immemorial has made human society experienced various intricacies of life and this research work shall be a way to know and examine human life from various aspects to unfold the real facets of life.
- This work gives an insight into various novels of Austen- as a basis for textual analysis to grasp its meaning and form so as to interpret these literary pieces to apply it and connect it with our personal private lives.
- This research work is a painstaking effort to collect primary, secondary and tertiary sources to inculcate a sense of hardwork and perseverance in a scholar.
- This research shows a remarkable intellectual growth of a person from student to scholar.
- To be an intellectually and socially fruitful member of a society to fall into an elite class to show the worth of education and literary.
- To compare and contrast, the critical commentary of different authors and novelist serves as a medium of instruction as to how and where apply the literary techniques of a writing.
- Writing of this research work enables a scholar to enhance linguist skills especially reading and writing because writing is a mental expression which gives way to one's thoughts and emotions. It's a writer communication where a scholar expresses his views regarding his/her standpoint about a particular work which he/she intends to take. Reading is an extensive and intensive effort to decode a written message and translate it through writer's expression. As 18<sup>th</sup> century writer Francis Bacon has very well remarked in the opening lines of his essay 'Of Studies', "studies serve for delight, for ornament and for ability" which means that studies gives pleasure, reforms our communications, impart us joy and to make us able to compete in a world where science and technology making huge development and progress. Education through books is a viable media to equip and empower one's personality where Francis Bacon ideas are endorsed,

“ reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man.” Here reading and writing as well as speaking are given prime importance where reading can make a person full of ideas, ready to answer and learning to write in an exact manner. This work enables to understand the reading, writing and speaking abilities come into action.

- Critically examining the piece of art and associated with our real life situation and circumstances help us to know the worth of literature and a skill of writer.
- Picking up English literature and a particularly Jane Austen makes this work interesting on the basis that novel reading is still a passion of youngsters who want to live a successful contended life and novels offers ways and means to reflect on others life and implement important experiences in our personal lives. Jane Austen is one of the widely read author whose novels are popular throughout English literature community and when it comes to Indian English literature, Austen can be very compared with a social realist like R.K Narayan who gives a realistic description and picture of Indian society. Studying a foreign author like Jane Austen gives a world view to understand global society at a large and one particular society like English society and grasp the meaning of life by understanding a prominent global author who gives a writer spectrum of human being's in action.
- Research work and particularly this thesis has a purpose to be informed widely interms of education and getting a good literary place being a highly literate person.

This work might have lot of loopholes and limitations in terms of its academic and technical excellence but attempt has been made to explain the topic in a realistic manner and to correct and modify it as per the expert opinion and ideology.

The relevance of this topic lies with the fact that it is one of the most burning topic of present day study where relationships between men and women has

reached to a point where lots of confusion , chaos, misunderstanding, despair, dejection, separation, isolation, depression is revealed in the lives of men and women of present day society and lot of expectation in terms of happiness, joy, affection, love, care, satisfaction and contentment is needed to bring peace and love in families where isolation can be eliminated with the help of restoration and reconciliation in relations. This topic is an honest attempt to understand different relationship of men and women in its different capacities and having one particular writer standpoint who has established as one of the best social realist novelist. Books are the source of inspiration and Austen's novels unfolds many reasons to study human relations in its truest deep sense of understanding and how different misunderstanding and confusion can be removed and balance can be maintained between rich and poor, low and high, loved and unloved so as to make this planet worth living and relationship worth loving. Lot of studies have been accomplished and done by many scholars and it is a raw maiden attempt to make her novels one more time alive and characters live with us in a real life situations.