

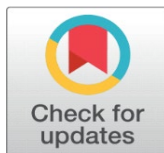
MAN AND WOMAN - A CREATION FOR RELATION IN AUSTEN'S NOVELS

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ABSTRACT

Jane Austen as a realist writer put genuine efforts to connect her characters with real life situations and circumstances to establish her as recognised socially realistic author. The selected novels of this chapter - *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Persuasion*, & *Mansfield Park* – are clear representation of real social lives of early 19th century. However, the representations are so knitted that it provides a bliss of reading romantic comedies. The romance, the love affairs, the restrictions for expressing love, expressions of male chauvinism or chivalry, good fortune, decent suitors, maintenance of dignity by the lady, are some of the keys induced by Jane Austen in all her narrations. The purpose remains static and it is made to feel the personal, emotional and social lives of the characters. It is like living the age with the characters and having bonds with their emotional experiences. This is a narrative technique of Jane Austen that makes her novels not only romantically successful, but also identified as socially real entities.

Keywords: Creation for Relation in Austen's, Background, Personal Interpretation.

1. INTRODUCTION

A magnificent way of narrating the relationship between man and woman is found to be the forte of Jane Austen. Her depiction of woman with substance and man with unprecedented power of love makes narrations worth every romantic flight. Relationships are the core of Austen's work. Men and women are created for relations. The intention of God's creation for men and women was to see them in good relationship. Austen has created a web of relationships in her novels. She understands them deeply and unfolds the thrills and challenges of falling into a relationship. Man and woman are made to love each other to know the meaning of life. Austen proves this fact through her craftsmanship where her novels portrays middle class people's pursuing beneath intense emotions, moments of fierce passion, little and sharp turn in life and relationships to reveal the hard realities of life. The narrative techniques of Jane Austen remain predominant with the efforts to combining realism with romantic illustrations. The most interesting part of this effort is of course the admixture of comic incidents and witty dialogues that makes the reading process a delighted experience. The writings of Jane Austen is thus a clear blend of amusement, and narration of lifestyles and emotional experiences of human life in real terms.

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early 19th century. However, the representations are so knitted that it provides a bliss of reading romantic comedies. The romance, the love affairs, the restrictions for expressing love, expressions of male chauvinism or chivalry, good fortune, decent suitors, maintenance of dignity by the lady, are some of the keys induced by Jane Austen in all her narrations. The purpose remains static and it is made to feel the personal, emotional and social lives of the characters. It is like living the age with the characters and having bonds with their emotional experiences. This is a narrative technique of Jane Austen that makes her novels not only romantically successful, but also identified as socially real entities.

The relationships between man and woman have been explored from varied dimensions. The expressions of emotions and feelings during courtship, love and marriage, has remained predominant fact in this research work. Apart from these thematic approaches, the focus is laid upon relationships that were marked within families, siblings, and relatives. Every chapter of this thesis will offer a new understanding of the relationship between man and woman in connection to the modern way of perceiving the same by the researcher. There is a kind of analytical approach that has led in terms of knowing relationships that existed in the early part of 19th century and the value and ethical notions that it still adds in contemporary modern social constructs.

2. BACKGROUND INFLUENCES

Jane Austen (b.1775-d.1817) was very well versed in understanding British social construct and the rule of patriarchy as implied for man and woman, especially in terms of establishing a relationship. As identified Olsen (1999) the society of Britain during the early part of 19th century considered different roles to be played by the male and female members of the family. The idea is not only about the distribution of household responsibilities but also a clear reflection of the patriarchal mentality that was observed in societal structure of that time. Olsen (1999) the predetermined duty of man in a family or relationship is to take care of any kind of financial burden. It is at this pursuit that the suitable suitors in all the novels of Austen were identified to be from wealthy background. Along with social stature, there was a high demand for immense wealth and future scopes of prosperity. As for the female characters, the core responsibility is to please the male characters and establish the strong bond in their relationship. For the British social practices of the early 19th century, Olsen (1999) stated that women were destined to take care of the children and men was supposed to earn and offer her with a good life. There were definite failure noted in the writings of Austen, yet at the same time Austen tried to support entire scenario with the possibilities of intelligence and love in the female characters. The sense of inequality as identified Olsen has been well depicted by Austen in her novels, yet with very least possible rebel against the prevalent patriarchal structure. In a humble way, Austen highlighted the inequalities in the plots, and to a great extent tried to accept the same with a strong remark towards the act of establishing equality. The political format of Britain in her time restricted women from voting and were even forbidden from choosing certain kinds of professions. Austen's approach thus remained more subtle in showing these loops, yet with clear specifications.

3. AUSTEN'S PERSONAL INTERPRETATION

It is interesting to note that Austen never has a conjugal life, yet was very proficient in elaborating the experiences of romantic courtship and eventually leading the loving couples to marriage. In all her novels, Jane Austen described the feelings and emotions of unmarried girls and that remained interesting enough for male readers. The tricky part of Austen writings is that all these unmarried girls were so narrated that the male readers fall for them in an obvious manner. It is in this state that Austen added the importance of offering value and respect to the woman of their dreams. In a very systematic manner Austen brings down the idealised unmarried heroine to the floor of ordinary life and made the male reader understand that for winning over his lady love, he must maintain some gentlemanly behaviour. Rules to impress the lady love is so well furnished by Austen that even the male chauvinist writers could not disagree to her plots. All her women characters were structured as per the patriarchal expectations, yet they were also created with the purpose of establishing equal rights in the same society. The naïve and coy unmarried heroines of her novels were also bold enough to prove that they are not easy to impress. At this point, it is appropriate to consider Austen (2002) who expresses that the female characters of Jane Austen were not always positive, and were silly to a great extent. Austen (2002) also finds that it is the sense of humour and the wittiness of the author that saves the female characters from facing utmost embarrassment. There seems to be a stereotyped portrayal of characters in Austen (Austen, 2002). However, it is also right to see that apart from fortune and successful lifestyle, all the heroines of Jane Austen wanted to have a life partner who understand their dignity and are assured to treat them well even after marriage.

4. PURPOSE OF RELATIONSHIP

In the novels of Jane Austen the creation of relationship between man and woman were usually directed towards matrimony. Though the target remains towards the creation of happy matrimony, yet Austen was particular about showing the other sides of matrimony as prevalent in the society of her time. It is in the lead affair that moral and dignitary matters are emphasised with great values and virtues. Rest of the relations were justified by ordinary human feelings and preferences. However, the common thing that persists in all kinds of marriages mentioned above, is the feeling of security and satisfaction in the lady love. No marriage is possible unless the lady love gives her consent. The grounds for consent can be anything like materialistic luxury to family expectations to sexual satisfaction.

5. ELEMENTS FOR RELATIONSHIP

On personal note, Austen always preferred having the elements of honesty and respect above all the other kinds of expectations. Though Austen was never married, yet her novels were always constructed in terms of idealising love affairs on the basis of true love and respect for the soul mate. Equality of status and economic security were definite expectations, yet at the same time gentlemanly treatment towards a woman remained the most preferred principle for happy and successful marriages. Belief in love rather than money was always prioritised by Austen and it is here that the element of romance gets over the state of realism. All the young women in all the novels of Austen were dependent either on their families or on their lovers (Moore, 1990). It is only the main female character that appear to remain full of independence in thoughts, irrespective of being economically dependent on family. The position of the unmarried women are more glorified by Austen. The purpose remained static about adding transition to traditional social construct. The thematic use of dependence of female unmarried characters over own or other families is much illustrated by Austen.

6. PICTURISATION OF MEN AND WOMEN

The craft of offering satiric representation of early 19th century patriarchal society made her writings gain adequate attention and the tag of being matured enough to reflect the society in general. Her target to add transition to patriarchal social format attains great deal of contributions from her writings. She was a kind of writer who was successful to in transitioning neoclassicism of 18th century to romanticism of 19th century. It is her skill to look through human expressions and character that made Jane Austen evolve as one most popular realistic novelists of 19th century and the time to come. Picturisation of men and women in Austen's novel were handled very elegantly.

As against her contemporary believes and practices, Austen took a bold step to offer a very contradictory platform for expressing dignity of women against patriarchal chauvinism. Her writings were not only bold, but also dignified enough to place women on equal stature with men. In a very diplomatic manner Austen seemed to satisfy the egos of her male reader, and at the same time making the point of equality and respect for women very distinct. Her writings stood contrary to male-centric social structure.

The relationships of man with women has been redefined by Austen by keeping in consideration with love and sentiments of both the beings. There is hardly any biased expression used against any man or women in all her novels. Traditional values of man centism as observed by her contemporaries get managed and handled well by Austen. There remains no trace of prejudice, but explanation to understand and follow emotions of women as well. Human emotions and social concerns related to love and marriage were expressed equally for both men and women. It is the essence of honesty and truthfulness that were kept in toss by Austen. Irrespective of class wise demarcation, Austen made sure that love and marriages are made in heaven and nobody on earth can bring hassle to the union of loving souls. There was a sense of holiness that Austen followed to express every incident related to love and marriage. Social discriminations were handled extensively and with wide ranges elaborations so that the characters get justified in expressing their honest feelings for the right suitor. Reflection of truthfulness and honesty in a man are the basic elements that Austen focussed to demonstrate the ways to win over lady love. Feminine consciousness gets assured in terms of bringing in profound inclination towards the practice of respecting emotions of both men and women. Though woman has the upper hand in accepting a love or marriage proposal, yet Austen made it obvious that the man too needs necessary space for expressing his love for her.

7. COMPETITIVENESS IN RELATIONS

The relationships between man and woman in the novels of Jane Austen, always remains highly competitive. The male and the female protagonist were equally good-looking and dignified. There remains a constant tug of love-and-hate that eventually leads to the state of breaking all barriers to meet the destined soul mate. If the suitor has good fortune and

looks, the beloved is also equally gorgeous and intelligent. The combinations of the male and female characters in all her novels are unique and extensively decorated to meet the ego of both male and female readers. It is very interesting to note that Jane Austen could read the minds of real life people and hence is so successful in depicting their realistic thoughts in the romantic characterisations. Her precision in placing perfect couples always juxtaposed with mismatched and ill-suited couples. As for instance, illustrations of Mr Bennet and Mrs Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr Elton and Mrs Elton in *Emma*, confirms that it is not necessary that all couples are suitable for each other, and that life ends up being rosy. There is the thread of practicality hold tight by Jane Austen, whereby the instance of love appeared not only challenging for both man and woman at their social level, but also very much perplexing at personal level. Jane Austen states very clearly that it is also inevitable to separate human emotions from personal experiences. It is thus, very necessary that every person try to understand the other person with adequate amount of considerations for his or her experiences. To understand the mind and emotions of the opposite gender is a complex task, but with genuine love and honest dedication every relationship can attain appropriate mutual compatibility.

8. AUSTEN AND THE MATTER OF REALISM

The term realism in literary arena is noted as a literary tool that is abrupt in rejecting the extended extravagance and the state of escapism. There remains no room for illusion, but space for practicality. The narrative approach led by Jane Austen remains very close to this instance of realism. However, it is the lifelike illusionary narration that makes her novels depict romance and comedy in association with realistic experiences. The characters were always ordinary people, with ordinary sensitivities and egos (Kirkham, 1997; Newton, 1986). The locations, the events, the meetings, etc. were all placed with adequate amount of simplicity and elegance. Austen was very much aware of the interest and lifestyles of her readers. It is this experience in her that makes her novels so appealing to people in general. The real life depictions of 19th century middle class society remains predominant in all her novels. The inclination towards fortune, yet at the same time maintenance of personal dignity are the two basic characteristic features of 19th century middle class population that made Austen a highly appreciated author of her time. As the participation of the middle class population in reading was increasing, Austen made it obvious for them to read and know the expectations and lifestyles of the high class population from the perspective of characters from middle class origin. Austen was very abrupt in rejecting high class snobbishness and show offs, and the same were used to be the core elements in the major protagonist. Mocking extravaganza in *Emma*, exemplifies such expressions. This is a thematic approach that appealed to middle class readers in a huge manner.

9. CLASS-ORIENTED PERSPECTIVES

The connection of prejudice towards the high class society by the middle class population were well elucidated by Austen, yet at the same time Austen offered highly appreciation to the humanitarian behaviour of the high class population. This is an approach that noted the element of realism in Austen and was used to reject any kind of illusionary notion about either of middle or high class populations of 19th century. Amidst different kinds of real life character, Austen made sure that the lead characters will always represent goodness of being human and will remain compassionate about both social and personal lives. The opinionated characters of *Mansfield Park* and *Emma* were so real that appeared very easily among the real life family, friends, and acquaintances of the reader. The approach was very entertaining for the middle class population and hence gained extensive acceptance, especially through subscriptions, libraries, and different reading clubs. As every novel of Jane Austen gets interpreted there are mysteries unsolved about the emotional journey that one undergoes. The popularity of her novels made Austen one of the most read narrators of all time. In this research work the relationship between man and woman gets analysed. As for this chapter the creation of such relationships gains specific importance.

10. RELATIONSHIPS IN THE NOVELS SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

The topic of love in *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) is though not very intense as it is in *Pride and Prejudice*, yet the thematic way of representing the relationships between man and woman has been well illustrated by Austen. Being an epistolary

fiction, this particular novel demonstrated the term Sense in terms offering good judgement, prudence and the sense of wisdom. On the other hand Sensibility has been placed for sympathetic minds with adequate sensitivity and emotions. Austen offers her heroine Marianne as a lady with all expected sweetness and owner of attractive qualities. She is structured as a very desirable character with great intelligence, frankness, loveable heart and with musical talent. Her relationship with Willoughby is a very contrastive picturisation. However, Austen tried to pursue the message that love can make sense amidst all adversities. Irrespective of intense feelings for Willoughby, Marianne marries Colonel Brandon, and again the novel gives surprise by Marianne's decision. Tomalin in this context also reveals that for many readers this marriage appears to be an unsatisfactory ending to the novel (1997, pp. 156–157). It is the twist and turn of woman's heart in this novel that offers adequate space for exploring the reasons that create intimate relationships between man and woman.

ART OF NARRATION: LIVES OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

The key of narrative approach of Austen has deep-roots into the trends of narrating ordinary people with ordinary ideas and lifestyles. The innovative experiments adapted in her novels were kind of astounding experiences that got revealed. In no time the novel gives the feeling, the ambience, the characters, the anger, the prejudice, the hatred, the snobbishness, the sensations, and even the grieves of the characters. Everything gets placed in such a way that there were essence of familiarity in every page, yet the element of surprise and humour in every description. Acceptance of probable reality for a reader becomes obvious and smooth as he or she keeps on turning down the pages of Austen's novel. The reader can very easily related oneself with conversations at dinner table, preparing for community dance or ball, experiencing outing to a beach, get together, picnics, etc. Even the scenic beauty and landscapes appear familiar to the reader. It is the elementary narrative approach of Austen that defy the essence of realism from her works, yet the feeling of real life circumstances by the reader places her narratives back to realism. In a way, Austen implied the fictional plot to describe realism from social grounds and led the same to explore human feelings from romantic experiences. Her narrative venture attained base from social reality of her own social structure and conventions as followed by her friends, family, and acquaintances from Southern England during early part of 19th century. Respective class based behavioural differences and expectations are much expressed from real life experiences of the author. Thus, the essence of realism was not only strong in her novels but also are driven practically for illustrative understanding. Close encounters with real moral and ethical experiences are part of Austen's narrative. Expressions related to human relations are all made out of personal observations and experiences of Austen's acquaintances. She was deliberate in expressing ordinary relations with all kinds of twists and turns connected to the matter of love, hate, anger, and romance. Behaviour of the husbands, wives, parents, children and siblings are all collected from real ordinary lives. All her subjects are full of varied human emotions. Instances of feeling the pleasure by falling in love, having a suffocated relations, outburst of emotions, making decent friendships, platonic experiences of love, getting along with neighbours, are common to Austen's narrative.

SOCIAL REALISM

Social realism for Jane Austen is a matter of understanding the perceptions that the society bears for women. Being a woman by herself, Austen was even very expressive in showing emotions of her lady characters. It was obvious for the 19th century society to perceive women as graceful entities, but through Austen, people started seeing women more closely. Austen made all possible expressions to show her reader how a woman feels and how she can be impressed. The hidden emotional world of women was much explored by the reader through Austen's novel. It was pretty interesting for the male readers who get to know women well through Austen. On the other hand, the female readers were surprised to see how beautifully their emotions are expressed by Austen. In a way there was a clear communication set between the men readers and the women readers. Austen also made it obvious that men must respect women to get their attention and love. A well behaved men is always appreciated by Austen's heroines and that appeared to be a trend setting practice for the 19th century society. The implementation was highly acclaimed by both middle and high class people. Austen's efforts to establish a balanced relationship between men and women attains high acclamations, as her novels were not only vivid but also synchronised with the idea of gaining a healthy loveable relationship for any couple. It is her thrive for realism that made all such depictions very real to the reader. The inclination towards building of a loveable relationship between man and woman, made Austen popular even after the ages to come. Her understanding of women emotions and things that makes her fall in love are much acknowledged by feminists. Though there are bifurcations in interpreting Austen by many feminists yet some way or the other, respect for women wins the game.

FEMINISTIC IDEOLOGY

Amidst the profound feminist ideologists like, Elizabeth Elstob, Clara Reeve, Maria Edgeworth, Hannah More, and Mary Wollstonecraft, Jane Austen, evolved as an author who was handling feministic ideologies neither from a social nor political point of views, but was dealing specifically on consciousness of women. Her novels depicted psychology of woman in a very subjective manner (Chelliah, 2017). The connection between man and woman for Jane Austen is a matter of understanding an idealised relationship in making a family. Austen remained very critical in knowing the psychology of men and female members of the families under patriarchal formal. The efforts were led towards the concept of ideal family where men and women are treated equally and there is always room for reformation. Austen was very particular in making her readers understand that though patriarchy is in favour of facilitating more power and independence to men, yet the role of women in fulfilling the life of men can never be ignored. Her detailed elaborations about women characters showed that men and women are in need of each other. With adequate amount of space and considerations the relationship between man and woman can be well nurtured. Austen's focus was on all kinds of relationship. When she referred to the relationship between man and woman, she meant the relationship between father and daughter, mother and son, brothers and sisters, husband and wife, and above all between lover and his beloved. Against the mainstream preferences, Austen made it sure that the female characters get the upper hand. Whether it is the wife, mother or beloved, there is always adequate amount of space for their expressions. There was a constant effort of having the wave for accepting changes in the patriarchal mind sets. The traditional believes 17th and 18th centuries to offer superior place to men in society, has been much challenged by Austen. The simple and ordinary approach I to look into family oriented structure when women in real life always has the upper hand. Though the society appears to be in favour of men, yet none can deny the fact that in the families most of the decisions were taken by either the wife or the mother. This is an ordinary trend that Austen highlighted and her reader agreed to the same. Emphasis over change is stereotype ideology of men-oriented society has been transformed to women-oriented family lives. The purpose remains very static in relation with the process of maintaining peace and happiness in every possible way.

THEME OF MARRIAGE

Quality life is stressed over snobbish and diplomatic way of entertaining men's ego. Austen was inclined to make her reader understand the ideologies as developed by Locke and Defoe. Austen as an author emphasised on "affective individualism" whereby the importance was given to individual preferences and needs. There is also promotional efforts led by Austen in understanding "companionate marriage" that defied traditional believes and practices of treating men as superior to women. Austen was clear with her words that for marriage and having a happy family both man and woman must have adequate amount of companionship. As marriage is all about having the secure bonding between the members of the family, Austen stated that the daily activities of every family should get well nurtured by compassion and care. Activities like bringing up children in very decent manner, and upbringing more peace to family life need equitable and very well balanced distribution of autonomy, independence and power among the man and the woman in the conjugal bonding. The shift made in the structure of sharing power within the family started affecting the age old perception of women as naïve and coy. The male characters were made to agree with the fact that the women characters are equally intelligent and smart. Moreover, they possess such beauty that can weaken male chauvinism. This ideology has been connected to welfare and maintenance of peace in society as a whole in every novel of Jane Austen.

CREATION OF BONDING

Thematic concern of creating a bonding and leading the honest bonding of heart to marriage remained very balanced in Austen's narratives. There were characters who were tied in the holy knot of matrimony, even though they are characterised as imbalanced entities. All such relationship were identified as a connection between hearts that has been justified by head. The element of love and respect wins over every hurdle that comes. As in case of Fanny and Edmund, the hurdles in the way of establishing their union gets fortified by their spiritual feelings for each other. Though Austen never ignored the fact that marriages are also established on the basis of physical attraction between a man and a woman, yet the author never let it happen in case of the main lead characters of her novels. The serenity of love and the dedicated honesty towards the partnership, are marked as the most delighted element of a successful relationship between a man and a woman. As for instance, Marianne in *Sense and Sensibility* expresses that she expects nothing from her partner, just that (Austen 1811)– "I could not be happy with a man whose taste did not in every point coincide with my own. He must enter into all my feelings, the same books, the same music must charm us both". As these simple

expectations of Marianne gets clouded she expresses her insecurity and anxiety to her mother, in the following manner (Austen 1811) – “Mama, the more I know of the world, the more I am convinced that I shall never see a man Whom I can really love. I require so much”

ROMANTIC MARRIAGE

The next common kind of relationship is the romantic marriage where love remains in the form of traditional practice of considering the man as the decision maker of the family and the wife meant to take care of the household. In this kind of conjugal affair both man and woman are gentle in nature, and are far from having any complications in their lives. The relationship between Fanny & Edmund Frank, Jane & Bingley Jane Fairfax, & Churchill Harriet & Mr Elton can be well exemplified.

MATERIALISTIC MARRIAGE

There were exceptions as in case of marriages of Maria & Mr. Rushworth, Charlotte & Collins, which were made for pure kind of comfort and convenience or the materialistic marriages. The role of fortune in these marriages were marked by Austen as the key element of choosing a life partner. Peace and happiness on a long term basis is never assured for such marriages.

TRANSGRESSIVE MARRIAGE

The last kind of marriage identified in the novels of Jane Austen is the transgressive marriage where there is immoral and degrading aspects were noted with matter of disgrace. Adultery and elopement were the keys in such marriages. As in case of Julia Bertram & John Yates, Lydia & Wickham, and Maria & Henry Crawford; the concerns were totally related to the personal feelings of the lovers rather than the restrictions and protocols as observes by the society. The important point to be noted here that the lead protagonists of each of the novel we all characterised by ideal marriage based on platonic love affair. The idea is to promote socially accepted dignified marriages than just flowing with the flow. Amidst all such variations, the only thing that Austen remained constant with, is the need to establish equality; both personally and socially. Such demands were not forwarded with any aggressiveness, but there was a calm and balanced way to interpret the imbalanced situation and put forward the right way of treating a woman.

11. CONCLUSION

Eventually, it can be well considered that the efforts to create relationship between man and woman, by Jane Austen is by far remarkable. As against many of her contemporaries, the boldness in her writings are subject to display the efforts to add transition to the traditional way of interpreting patriarchal set up of her age. The act of positioning both man and woman in a relationship, is very systematically arranged and narrated with all kinds of realistic sentiments and emotions. Challenging the patriarchal values and the appreciating feministic stand point to lead expressive minds, remained as basic forte of Austen. From the analysis mentioned above, the realisation of love and marriage in a human relationship gets marked by the sense of gaining a stable society. Austen did considered that the relationship between man and woman is definitely a matter of great complexities, but it is genuineness in them that relieves fundamental problems for attaining togetherness and this chapter has dealt with all the concerns and care of human life by highlighting various issues of marriage, love, togetherness and companionship where men and women cannot live apart. They are created to live together for living a proper life.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None

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None

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