

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**  
**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**  
**Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra**  
**Faculty of Letters and Languages**  
**Department of Foreign Languages**  
**Division of English**



**A Portrayal of Women during the Nineteenth  
Century in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice***

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**Board of Examiners**

Mr. Said SMATTI ..... Supervisor

Mr. Adel BOULEGRONE.....Chair

Mrs. Boutheina AMRI.....Examiner

**submitted by**

Samiha LAMARA

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to

My parents, my brothers, and to my friends

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## abstract

The aim purpose of this study is to show Jane Austen's portrayal of women in her novel *Pride and Prejudice*, this research shows how the novel examines the suffering of women and how they overcome difficulties and achieve success. From the novel we notice that Jane Austen's portrayal of her protagonist is based on her real world and experience. She established herself as a distinguished feminist woman novelist in her treatment of the situation of woman, especially the matter of marriage. This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter involves an overview about the Victorian society and literature. Its aim is to show the characteristics of the life and literature of the Victorian Era. The second chapter studies the background of the author Jane Austen and the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, the aim of this chapter is to spot the light on the reflection of the novel in the real life of Jane Austen. Finally, the third chapter centers on the analysis of the characters and on the content through the discussion of the concepts of marriage in the Nineteenth century. Through the different investigations that have been carried out with the portrayal of women, the one can argues that Jane Austen really in her novel portrayed the women in the nineteenth century, especially by using the theme of marriage.

## ملخص

الهدف الرئيسي لهذه الدراسة هو فحص تصوير جين أوستن للنساء في روايتها كبرياء وتحامل. هذا البحث أظهر كيف أن الرواية تفحص معاناة النساء وكيف أنهن يتغلبن على الصعوبات ويحققن النجاح. نلاحظ من الرواية أن تصوير جين أوستن لبطلتها مبني على عالمها وتجربتها الحقيقيين. جين أوستن أسست نفسها كامرأة روائية بارزة في معالجتها لوضعية المرأة، خاصة موضوع الزواج. اعتمد البحث على منهجين رئيسيين هما: منهج السيرة الذاتية و المنهج الوصفي. تنقسم هذه المذكرة إلى ثلاثة فصول. يتضمن الفصل الأول لمحة عامة عن المجتمع الفيكتوري والأدب. هدفها هو إظهار مميزات الحياة والأدب في العصر الفيكتوري. الفصل الثاني يدرس خلفية الكاتبة جين أوستن والرواية كبرياء وتحامل. الهدف من هذا الفصل هو تسليط الضوء على انعكاس الرواية على الحياة الواقعية لجين أوستن. وأخيرا الفصل الثالث يركز على تحليل الشخصيات وعلى المحتوى عبر مناقشة مفهوم الزواج في القرن التاسع عشر. من خلال التحقيقات المختلفة التي أجريت حول تصوير النساء، يمكننا القول أن جين أوستن حقاً صورت المرأة في روايتها كما كانت في القرن التاسع عشر، وخاصة باستخدام موضوع الزواج.

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## General Introduction

In the early of Nineteenth century, women lived in hard situation characterized by inequality in rights and education and freedom, and they were expected to remain under the power of their fathers and husbands. Britain witnessed many changes in Victorian time that influenced English society in Philosophy, economic, Politics, Social values, and it was an important period of English Literature by the sparkling of many novelists in feminist literature as Jane Austen.

England, during Austen's period, noticed a rapid change in different fields and aspects of English Society, as Aristocracy, monarchy and liberty, equal rights and woman's situation, because woman had no such choices in the English society, and they thought that she was as a slave, she was the weaker gender under the power of men, and English Society restricted women's freedom.

*Pride and Prejudice* was published in 1813. It was considered as a classical novel, it has a romantic theme which is love and marriage. This was the topic that Jane Austen struggled with in her own life, and she presents an important reality of English women, and she exposes the social and moral follies of her society. This presentation includes social classes, values, marriage and women's status.

*Pride and prejudice* presents an important theme in the late of 18th century which is marriage, and portrays life in the general rural society. Here the protagonist Elizabeth plays the role of an intelligent woman who rejects the social values, rules, and arts. She struggles with her own society in terms of gender inequality.

The novel focuses on the heroine's searching for a suitable husband as Austen addresses the theme of marriage from the early beginning of the novel: "it is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife" (Austen 01). This research will present *Pride and Prejudice* as an innovative work during the Victorian Age by illustrating the real status of women in their conservative society.

*Pride and Prejudice* was considered from 200 years ago as a popular and international novel, which dealt with an important social phenomenon in Jane Austen's career, and through the Bennet daughters, Austen shows us the primary goal of woman in the Victorian society to find a suitable partner for marriage. Through these attempts to figure out the theme of marriage, one main question arose as follows: To what extent Austen illustrates different kinds of marriage within her characters in *Pride and Prejudice*?

To carry out the study, it is supposed that Jane Austen has chosen a woman to be a female protagonist of her novel. It means that the work describes woman in her society seen from a woman's point of view in the case in *Pride and Prejudice novel*, which it reflected the title and supported by the character of the heroine. Also, the way in which they are represented.

So, Jane Austen portrays the women and especially marriage in Victorian era as a representation of her own life through the content of *Pride and Prejudice*. Thus, in our research, we attempt to show the position of woman and the portrayal of marriage in Victorian society; the following questions could be raised:

- How was the status of women in Victorian society and literature?
- How does the novel *Pride and Prejudice* reflect Jane Austen's life?
- What are the concepts of marriage in *Pride and Prejudice*?

This research, will adopt two main approaches; the autobiographical approach to figure out the elements and experiences in *Pride and Prejudice* that reflects Jane Austen's life, and the descriptive Feminist Approach to describe the reality of woman's disadvantages in equality and dignity compared to man, with reference to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. This research will be based on data gathered from books, dissertations, essays, and internet.

The main goal of this research paper is to find out how Jane Austen portrayal the status of women in her time, through *Pride and Prejudice* as a main theme, and specifically the idea of marriage.

After doing some research about how does Jane Austen portrays women in *Pride and Prejudice*, we have found some books and dissertations that examine the same issue as L. A. Hall, in his book *Grounding the figure of the heroine: the « other women » in Jane Austen's novels*. He states that Jane Austen uses *Pride and Prejudice* to criticize the economic and social privileges afford to men and denied to women. We notice that Hall deals with Austen's presentation to the phenomena of privileges of gender in the novel (Chang 77).

Geller argues in his book *Here Comes The Bride: Women, Wedding, and The Marriage Mystique*. That "A spinster herself, an outsider peering in at the rituals of the married, Jane Austen exposed matrimony's contradictions and incongruities [...]" (12). Here Geller wants to show that Austen depicts life and the different facets of love in a world where not every marriage began or ended with love and mutual respect. It was more often based on financial and social standing than reciprocal affection, but nonetheless the institution of marriage was something most women had to aspire to as their only means of survival. Also Svetlana Buchman in his book; *Less than ideal husbands and wives: satire*

*and serious marriage themes in the words of Jane Austen and Oscar Wilde*, mentioned that it is clear from the start of the novel that Austen is mindful of the reality of social conditions under which her characters live, in particular the differences in the autonomy that economic independence grants to men and the independence that is expected to women (Chang 77). The novel contains many themes concerning English society during Victorian Period, and many critics have seen *Pride and Prejudice* from different angles, but this research will study the woman as a theme in the novel and how she plays her role to discover herself within the concept of marriage.

The present research contains a General Introduction, and three main chapters, then General Conclusion. The First chapter will give a theoretical framework and literary background of the Victorian society and literature. The second chapter will study the Reflection of Austen's Life in *Pride and Prejudice*. The third chapter will deal with the concepts of *Marriage in Pride and Prejudice*. Finally, we will end the research with a general Conclusion to what have been discussed and future perspectives.

## **Chapter one: A Theoretical Framework and Literary Background**

### **1.1. Introduction**

The Victorian Era is characterized by many changes in society, economy, the status of women. Before studying a literary work, it is important to make an examination of the Victorian Period such as the way of life, tradition, and social norms. In this chapter we will deal with Victorian Society by focusing on the social, economic aspects, and showing how was the position of women in their conservative society. Also we will point up the features of Victorian Literature by concentrating on women's literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And then we will present the major recurrent images of women in Victorian Literature.

### **1.2. Victorian Society**

The Victorian period is a period that was characterized by rapid changes in different fields as the society, economy, literature, and the position of women. Also, it was the period of the Industrial Revolution; this revolution was fundamentally a technological revolution by using and focusing on the sources of inventions (Allen 2). In which these changes affect the life in different aspects.

In the mid-nineteenth century and by the beginning of the inventions Britain witnessed many changes which affected the life of the people; however, those inventions and technologies such as; the industrial factories, telegraph, shipbuilding, and the expansion of the railway, all those were seen as a disappearance of the old rural England (Bedrani 36).

The changes in social roles of women happened as important members, they had opened up for works which were not available before, they supposed many different skilled jobs in society such as writers, nurses, teachers and journalists. Also Victorian women during this period of invention changes their place in society to the best in different aspects such as politics, economics, and other aspects that organized their life(qtd. in Merizig 14).

### **1.2.1 Social Aspects**

Nothing distinguishes the Victorian society so much as its quest for self-definition. The 63 years of the reign of Queen Victoria witnessed enormous social changes and amazing inventions, and enormous potential in rapid succession of events produced wild prosperity, and unimaginable poverty, humanitarian reforms and deliberate exploitation, large and destructive ambitions (Henderson and Sharpe 567).

English society in the nineteenth century consisted of various structures containing the three classes: the upper, middle, and the working class. This distinction in social classes could be recognized by imbalances in riches, education, working and living conditions. Accordingly, the essential nature of day by day life for individuals in Victorian England rested on a hidden structure dictated by social class and formed by customary lifestyles in nation, town, and city. Furthermore, the classes lived in particular regions, Victorians accepted that every class has its own guidelines and individuals were relied upon to comply with the parts of their class (qtd. in Merizig 15). And each class has its own norms and values concerning the social life.

Victorian daughters provided a major issue to landowning families, for their needs to be offered well, without loss of status; yet the little girls rarely brought the inheritance with them. Ladies could possess arrived property, and a noteworthy number especially widows did; yet the custom in arrived families by and large was to keep the domains in

men's grasp. Therefore, to discover and secure suitable relational unions for their little girls was a matter of interminable figuring and camp aligning for the landowner and his wife. To make his little girl alluring on the marriage advertise, a landowner generally gave a share on his girl at the time of her marriage ("Society and Economy in England" 57)

Working class is the lower rank of social classes, although the biggest numbers were farming works, local hirelings and factory hands. They were found in unskilled and skilled works such as mining, angling, transportation, industry and other manual exchange. However, their advantage was simply acquiring to stay alive and battling the neediness and disease. In this way talented laborers who made up 15 percent of regular workers were acted as printers, bookbinders and shoemakers (qtd. in Merizig 3). And they work so hard all the day just because they are the lower class in the society.

During the nineteenth century, there are numerous kids do not go to the school and a large section of them grew up not able to peruse and compose, and wound up in a workhouse, which housed and encouraged individuals who had no force to help themselves, else they were given something to do. Young girls and young men needed to begin work extremely youthful and they regularly helped in the work done by more established individuals from the family (qtd. in Merizig 15). They suffer a lot because they work so hard by few wages.

The nineteenth century was described by what was known by social awareness or mindfulness. The mechanical revolution changed the social structures and social relations. It decimated the old, individualistic, progressive universe of positions, requests and degrees, and realized an altogether social framework, in view of aggregate and clashing characters, which were come about because of the making of the working and white collar class. However, the working states of modern England were upsetting. The laborers got

next to no wages and had no job wellbeing measures (Bedrani 20-21; 25). The industrial revolution affected the economic life of the working class and make them out of job.

As indicated by Robert Hughes in *The Fatal Shore*, the number of inhabitants in England and Wales, which had stayed enduring at 6 million from 1700 to 1740, rose drastically after 1740. The number of inhabitants in England had multiplied from 8.3 million in 1801 to 16.8 million in 1850 and, by 1901, had almost multiplied again to 30.5 million.[91] Improved conditions prompted the number of inhabitants in Britain expanding from 10 million to 40 million in the 1800s. The Industrial Revolution was the first period in history amid which there was a synchronous increment in populace and in every capita wage (“Industrial Revolution”).

### **1.2.2 Economic Aspects**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a time stamped by a time of economic extension, fast changes in mechanical system and generation and new advances, a time of critical property for the British economy, on the grounds that the nation was the instigator of the modern upheaval and thus turn into the workshop of the world. For instance, extricating crude materials and changed topic to products then sold it again to the next European countries. Indeed, agriculture was replaced by industry as the basis of the British economy. Also new machines and inventions were partly replacing manual work. (qtd. in Merizig 18)

In the Victorian era communication took a step forward, especially for those who work in the cities and want to correspond with their families who live on farms. This has been the development of the Penny Postal System, which began on January 10, 1840 this was a simple system, and allows the people to send letters a day, and to anywhere in the United Kingdom by only a penny, and this was accessible to everyone rich and poor



("Victorian Inventions"). So by communication the life of the people developed better than before.

The Industrial Revolution brought destitution and hopelessness fundamentally for the job whose quality was supplanted or supplemented by machines and this was what diminished from the work opportunities (Bedrani 37).

The Agricultural Revolution has been supplanted inside the connection of a more steady and complex methodology of economic advancement. Clarifications for the extension of British agrarian yield no more focus upon the revelation of a couple of systems and creations yet upon the components which invigorated an additionally ambitious way to agribusiness from the most recent years of the eighteenth century. The Agricultural Revolution, and the enclosure movement, specifically, was seen as a social debacle by contemporaries (Cook and Stevenson 417).

Significant changes in the economic life of the nation should fundamentally irritate its entire social structure, and the Industrial Revolution was no special case. Commonly, as well, it reared another demeanor of mind to the old issues of society; neediness, wrongdoing, obligation, disasters, and waste, and obviously, a discriminating disposition to the old and wasteful protected machinery which bore so little connection to the needs of society (Plumb 84).

The reason behind the quick development of industry is the more serious abuse of the exploitation and techniques for association of the center years of the century, and partly to the impetus of an extended war, which was felt most strongly in the combat hardware and material commercial enterprises (Plumb 146).

The course of the Industrial Revolution had been hindered by an absence of sufficient transport and managing account offices; however, these obstacles were generally

somewhere around 1784 and 1815, or if nothing else, they got to be satisfactory to such a degree as to manage the heaviness of a faster mechanical development (Plumb 146). The industrial revolution turns the economy upside down for the agricultural.

### **1.2.3 Status of Women**

During the nineteenth century, women had few opportunities in many fields, as education, works, and votes. The ideal of Victorian woman was supposed to be domestic,

Women faced much difficulties in different fields, they did not have enough rights; their rights were very limited in this era. When the Victorian man and woman get married, all the rights of the wife will be given over to her husband; because, the married couple became one under the law, so the only one who has the right to represent this entity was the man. When the woman became married, she must give her husband rights to what her body produced; as sex, bring children, and domestic works (“Women in The Victorian Era”). The women were considered as machines just to do the domestic affairs.

Maybe the existence of conduct rules in Victorian society was the most important aspect that restricted the freedom of woman. Woman was judged in social gatherings based on her behaviors according to social norms. However, men had bigger advantages in being the privileged gender (Gran 1).

The rights and the advantages of both single and married women were very limited; they had hardship works and women had enduring the inequalities in rights, and had financial and sexual disadvantages within their marriage and their situations, by providing men with much advantages, stability, and financial power and positions over their wives (“Women in The Victorian Era”).

When the woman became married, she will lose the few civil rights she had before, because she became as one body with her partner, as well-known that the women had no

legal rights to own property comparing to men. But when The Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882 were passed, they gave women the rights to own wages and any property they owned before marriage (Henderson and Sharpe 579).

The author Guen mentioned that

"feminist theory consider that woman was morally and politically opposed to marriage among the rich husbands to provide a secure financial life, family wealth automatically passed down the male line; if a daughter is able to inherit anything, it was a small percentage, and this comes only if she had no brothers, and came from a very wealthy family, and remained unmarried, could a woman become independent. A very wealthy woman might make a premarital agreement for her wealth to be held in a trust fund, but in the majority of cases marriage stripped a woman of all her assets and handed them to her husband"(14).

The this supposes that woman was politically and morally conflicted to marriage among the wealthy husbands to grant a stable financial life, and the wealth of the family will be passed to the male because in this society woman is not able to inherit her family's wealth, only in case that she came from very rich family, she can inherit very small percentage.

In the mid-nineteenth century, England saw important challenges and developments about the Women Question, where many women called-for more rights, and were emphasized on the need of ownership greater economic, political, social and educational opportunities.

### **1.3 Victorian Literature**

Victorian period is considered as a high point in literature that synchronizes in extension with the reign of Victoria's Queen, and most of the nineteenth century and the writer Merizig explains that

"Victorian literature has become a very important source for historical facts and the life style of the 19th century England mainly because it relies on a realist mode of representation. Thus, as known of Victorian era that was a time of development of science, Victorians explored issues related to their historical

and social context such as industrialization, rural urban life and the condition of children and women. The later are present in many literary work in which their role and position were of interest of both female and male writers”(06).

This literature is mainly about the age which saw great changes in the life style of England because it relies on numerous inquiries inside the representation of society, verifiable and industrialist standards. It has one significant point which calls attention to the consideration at the issues of the Victorian culture to awaken recognition of the individuals.

The Victorian writers created the literature that portrayed and commented on the religious, economic, social and philosophical ideas of that time. Victorian stories were written as messages to teach the readers moral lessons.

### **1.3.1 Woman’s Literature in The 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

The energy of Victorian literature is its most outstanding feature, and Self-exploration is its favorite topic. The Victorians produced a staggeringly large body of literature, and famous for its quality and quantity, where there are many characteristics that distinguish their writing such as its eccentricity, fantasy, earnestness, humor, self-consciousness(Henderson and Sharpe 585).

The writer Thompson Nicola mentioned in her book "Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question" that in the Victorian literature most of the women writers as Emily and Charlotte Bronte, their novels are inherently complicated and concentrates on the “woman question” and the ongoing discussions about the position of woman and her nature. They were absolutely conflicted by their own beliefs about the proper roles of women (1; 3).

In the nineteenth century, there was a more noteworthy interest for fiction, which was utilized as one of the methods for the working classes to merge their financial, political and social strength. In addition, the woman perusing also reached out as the working class family was equipped with domestic servants and to the creating number of commodities that could be acquired in the shops as instead to being made at home, which suggested working class women had less and less to do in the family unit. Books and magazines could help fill more of their relaxation time. Confronting this awesome interest, women were not substance to remain just readers, also they were additionally excited to compose; from one viewpoint to help themselves financially on the off chance that they had no other salary, and then again to consider their legitimate circle through the novel. (Xiaojie 68)

Victorian novelists such as Charlotte Yonge and Margaret Oliphant, their novels deal clearly with the themes of the limitations that faced the Victorian women in their conservative society (Xiojie4).

### **1.3.2 Recurrent Images of Women in Victorian Literature**

In the mid-nineteenth century, there was a wave of discussions about different woman's matters such as marriage, women's rights and property, and their opportunities in education and employment. The Victorian women writers mostly, their female protagonist stands against the background of the status of women in Victorian society (Thompson 2).

Feminist criticism is a discriminating hypothesis and a development in the assessment of literature .It has its starting points in the battle of women's rights which developed in the late of eighteenth century. All through its long history, feminism has looked for disturb the certainties of such a patriarchal culture, to affirm a belief in the

gender equality. It grew as a vital power to shape and focus on women's rights with the accentuation on social, political and economic changes. It found its approach to literature in the 1960s, when there were clear indications of new methodologies in connection to women journalists and writing. This was clear in numerous women's feminists working and writing of women as Virginia Woolf who was a feminist and investigated her books from alternate points of view. Consequently, in the same way as other women's feminists, she concerned with women's economic and social weaknesses contrasted with men (Merizig 22).

As the writer Nicola Diane Thompson presents in her book "Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question" an example of the conventional marriage from Eliza Lynn Linton's novel *The Rebel of the Family* (1880), this novel "reveals a definite sympathy with Perdita's failure to fit in to the conventional marriage-obsessed mindset of her family, a sympathy which subverts the ostensibly conservative didactic message of the story", also Linton was the rebel of her family, and her father deprived her from the inheritance, because she told him about her plan of leaving home and going to London to work as an authoress (5).

Likewise the three sisters: Emily, Anne, and Charlotte Brontë, who present the female character. They portrayed a picture about women and their fights in Victorian England. Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) that depicts women's position in Victorian England endeavoring to achieve vanity in an overall population known by its mistreatment and abnormality between social classes. Moreover, Anne created *Agnes Gray* (1847), the record of a minister's daughter who takes advantage as a guide, a position that unmarried women take as a teacher in Victorian society. Also the feminist writer Elizabeth Gaskell, which is considered as one of the major literary figures of the nineteenth century. Her books

were the mirror picture of reality of the time .She composed *North and South* (1855) which is known by their social concerns (Merizig 9).

Jane Austen is one of the enormous principles of the british literature. The greater part of her writing had the same plot .It focuses on women at her time. Her novel *Pride and Prejudice*(1813) portrayed this point, this implies that the novel are sentimental .Her primary investment was the ethical, social and mental conduct of her courageous women .She composed essentially about youthful champions as they grew up and scan for individual bliss (qtd. in Merizig 9)

We have also George Eliot (1819-1880). Her novels are examples of what some critics call fiction with purpose, because her purpose is a condemnation of the social ills and moral rigidity of Victorian society. Her real name is Mary Ann Evans, she used the nickname of man, because in her time, the works which written under the name of women were not accepted (Attia 123). This leads the writer Jane Austen to most of her novels about the status of woman, especially the novel *Pride and Prejudice* refused many time because it is written from the female point of view.

The two novels of the Victorian woman writer, Mary Elizabeth Braddon; *Aurora Floyd* and *Lady Audley's* are stories about gender and class, in which a woman has the right to create her perfec persona, and those novels are classified typically as Victorian sensation novels, and works in this classification frequently all the while challenge social standards, and, eventually, are compelled to comply with those unique societal confinements. The fame of the class, and particularly the developing proficient people in Britain, consolidated with relatively unconventional and shocking topic, permitted creators like Braddon to both speak to option originations of sex and to teach a more extensive crowd on conventional sex roles. Concerning her representations of mid-century Victorian working class manliness, Braddon's novels introduce the middle class man, who is

regularly idle, lethargic, and unconcerned with work or marriage, qualities that are all the more frequently utilized as a part of portraying aristocratic masculinity (Lewis 15).

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, this chapter has shown the characteristics of Victorian period in different phases as well as the general conditions of social life .It has examined the economy and the position of women in society. Last, it has provided a short overview about the Victorian Literature, which examined the women's literature and the recurrent images that presented in their novels. I found out that Victorian women writers were influenced by the values of their conservative society, and their novels are similar to their experiences. In next chapter, we will see the reflection of Jane Austen in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.



## Chapter Two: the Reflection of Austen's Life in *Pride and Prejudice*

### 2.1 Introduction

Each picture of the nineteenth century is focuses on the reality of society, or on the personal life experience of the author, in the income of a literary work. In this chapter, we will review the biography of the author Jane Austen by concentrating on her life, works, and her personality as a feminist. Also we will give a short background of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*. and this chapter is an illustration to the study of female social, psychological and social reality in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, and it is an explore to the characters and social norms comparing to Austen's special perspective on feminism in the patriarchal society.

### 2.2 Jane Austen's the Woman

Jane Austen was born on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1775 in Steventon, Hampshire in countryside. She was the seventh child of a family of eight, six brothers; James, George, Edward, Henry, Frank, Charles, and one sister, Cassandra Elizabeth. Her father was the Oxford-educated country person, George Austen, and her mother, Cassandra Austen (Bloom 10).

Her father taught two of his sons and few students of Oxford. He had a good library and Jane benefitted from it. There was a decent arrangement of reading aloud in the family: sonnet plays, and novels were delighted in, and the family went in for novice theatricals, organizing plays in Mr. Austen's animal barn. The parents obviously created a cultured atmosphere for the children to grow up in, and Jane knew French and Italian, could play

the piano, sew, draw, dance, embroider, and clearly, converse very well indeed (Austen VI).

Jane and her sister Cassandra were very close, as evidenced by the many letters from Jane to Cassandra that have survived. In 1785, Jane and Cassandra went to the Abbey boarding school in Reading. More than this, the Austen girls had little formal education outside their family, and she left it at the age of nine, and her education continued effectively at home; nonetheless, this was uncommon for the times (Bloom 10).

Austen girls never get married. Jane appears to have been involved in a few amorous relationships. In 1802, she accepted an offer of marriage from wealthy landowner Harris Bigg-Wither, who had the resources to provide for her entire family, but she changed her mind only a day later decided to revoke her acceptance, and resolved never to marry for money over love. She remained unmarried until she died. Also Cassandra never engaged again after the death of her fiancé Thomas Fowle (Bloom 11).

Though Jane was born during, the French revolution and the rise of Napoleon were coming up, about to turn upside down most people's ideas of social stability and the class system nothing of this events, which were to change England so completely in the imminent years, really touched families of Jane Austen's nature, upper middle class, professional, conventional (qtd. in Guen 27-28)

Austen's family moved several times during her later life. In 1801, Jane, her sister, and her parents moved from Steventon to Bath. In 1805, her father died. In 1806 they moved from Bath to Clifton, and then to Southampton, between 1801 and 1809, Austen did very little serious writing, leading many critics to suppose she was unhappy with her surroundings during this period (Bloom 11).

As she was surrounded by a lively and affectionate family, she divided her time between domestic chores and writing. Nothing much happened during her youth: she

attended various social activities such as visiting friends and going to fashionable balls in the vicinity. On the whole, her life was relatively uneventful (“Jane Austen’s life” 13).

Austen became mildly ill, she had Addison’s disease in 1816, and she was forced to move to Winchester for medical reasons, although she continued writing. She died on 18 July, 1817 (Austen VII).

### 2.2.1 Jane Austen’s the Author

The first major woman novelist, Jane Austen did not have a place with any of the scholarly developments of her time: she mocked sentiment and nostalgia in the majority of her novels and satires the Gothic fashion in *Northanger Abbey* (1803). Her scope of vision is limited, for she demonstrates the connection between people in little commonplace groups, generally concentrated around the heroine’s finding a husband and her discovery in the process. But the form is always perfect, the dialogue witty and the light cast upon the character is ruthlessly searching. For Jane Austen is a comedian who is interested on behavior in so far as they reflect ethics (Grellet and Valentin 190).

Austen made the comic drama of conduct of middle class English life in her time. Her written work is noted for its mind, smart sensitivity, authenticity, and splendid prose style. Through her treatment of common individuals in regular life, she was the first to give the novel its uniquely modern character (Attia 128).

The famous novels of Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility* was published in 1811, which distinguishes the personalities of the two sisters; where Elinor governs her life by sense and reasonableness, while her sister Marianne is ruled by her feeling and sensibility. *Mansfield Park* was published in 1814, the novel traces the career of a Cinderella-like heroine, who is brought from a poor home to Mansfield Park, the country estate of her relative, she is raised with some of the comforts of her cousins, but her social level is

maintained at a lower rank. *Emma* was published in 1816; the plot is about the heroine Emma a girl of high intelligence, vivid imagination, and her desire to control others' life, she influenced by her old boyfriend who is her superior in intelligence. *Persuasion* was published in 1818, the novel is most directly expressive of Jane Austen's feeling of her own life(Todd 47,75,94,114).

### 2.2.2 Jane Austen as a Feminist

As a female author, Jane Austen began her own literary creation when consciousness of women was awakened bit by bit in the late of the eighteenth century. Austen cared about women's social position and guaranteed for the rights of women to work and attempted to look for the value of women in society and her push to subvert the male-commanded value system can be seen in her novels. Her feministic methodologies are reflected in two ways; narrative content and characterization. She ignores the narrative modes utilized by male writers of her time who concerns much about historical events. In characterization, Austen dependably makes the female figures principle characters of her novel, and makes them the focuses of the stage. She depicts women as what they truly are and advocates another thought of love and marriage. With her sensible female narrative systems, Austen successfully gets rid of the control of manly discourse and creates narrative power (Wang and Liu 1828).

Novels of Jane Austen: *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Mansfield Park*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Persuasion* are re-read and re-examined from a feminist point of view in order to call attention to Austen's awareness of women of second-class position in her society. The experiences of women in time of Jane Austen are compared to the experiences of women in society today in order to demonstrate, in some way, the wonderful improvement the feminist movement has made. In addition, by examining what

Austen exposes about the material reality of women in her time, it is possible to investigate the heritage that modern women have inherited (Guen 29)

### 2.3 Short Summary of *Pride and Prejudice*

*Pride and Prejudice* tells the story of a big and middle class family, Mr. Bennet, Mrs. Bennet, and their five unmarried daughters; Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Lydia, Katherin. They live in a small country called Hertfordshire. The mother looks all the time for finding a suitable husband for her daughters. When a single rich man with a good fortune, Charles Bingley came to the country with his two sisters Louisa and Caroline Bingley, and his friend Fitzwilliam Darcy. Mrs Bennet wants to marry one of her daughters to him (Guen 36).

The Bennet's daughters meet the visitors in the first Ball, and their fathers introduce them. Everyone likes Mr. Bingley, he and Jane start to flirt, and they dance with each other all the party, while his friend Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy refuses the proposal of Elizabeth to dance with her. Then he says to Bingley that: *"She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me"* (Austen 15), and he thinks that there will be other girls, who are more interesting than her. When Elizabeth hears those words, she has no doubts that he is proud with a hard heart, cold, serious, and strange man. Mr. Bingley's sisters and Mr. Darcy, concern that this affection for Jane develop very quickly, and they cannot tolerate her lower status, the manner of her family especially her mother, Mr. Darcy, in spite of his better wisdom he becomes obsessed and attracted to the charm and intelligence of Elizabeth ("Overview").

Jane is invited to Netherfield by sisters of Mr. Bingley, and on her way she caught in the rain; she comes down with a bad cold. Mrs. Bennet is delighted, because this puts

Jane near to Mr. Bingley and his wealth. Jane becomes more ill, and her sister Elizabeth goes to Netherfield to nurse her. Mr. Darcy likes the concern for her sister and strength of her character, but he is afraid of his obsession with someone who is economically inferior.. Then the girls return home, when Jane's health improves ("Overview").

When they return home, they find Mr. Collins visiting their family. Mr. Collins is a young clergyman who stands to inherit the property of Mr. Bennet, which has been entailed, meaning that it can only be passed down to male heirs, because Mr. Bennet has only daughters. Shortly after his arrival, he makes a proposal of marriage to Elizabeth. She refused his proposal. Meanwhile, the Bennet girls have become friendly with a handsome young soldier Sir. Wickham who is friendly toward Elizabeth and tells her how Darcy cruelly cheated him out of an inheritance (SparkNotes Editors)

The Bingleys and Mr. Darcy leaves Netherfield for London and Caroline Bingley writes to Jane to inform her that they will not return until winter. She hints in her letter that Mr. Bingley intends to marry Darcy's sister. Elizabeth correctly recognizes that Bingley's sisters and his friend are trying to keep him from the Bennets, because her family is not outstanding enough for their aspirations ("Overview"). Another shock comes with the news that Mr. Collins has become engaged to Charlotte Lucas, best friend of Elizabeth, and the poor daughter of a local man. Charlotte explains to Elizabeth that she is getting older and needs the match for financial reasons. Charlotte and Mr. Collins get married and Elizabeth promises to visit them at their new home. As winter progresses, Jane visits the city to see her friends, also she hopes to see Mr. Bingley. Though, Bingley's sister visits her and behaves impolitely, while Mr. Bingley fails to visit her at all. When spring comes, Elizabeth visits Charlotte and Collins's home; which they live near the home of patron of Mr. Collins, Lady Catherine de Bourgh; she is also Darcy's aunt. Darcy goes to Lady Catherine's home and encounters Elizabeth; her presence leads him to make a number of

visits to the home of Collins, where she is staying, and just to meet her. One day, he makes a shocking proposal of marriage for her, which Elizabeth quickly refuses. She tells Darcy that she considers him selfishness and unlikable, then scolds him for steering Bingley away from Jane, and treating Wickham poorly. Darcy leaves her, but soon after that he sends her letter. He confesses in the letter that he supported Bingley to distance himself from Jane, because he thought that their romance was not serious. As for Wickham, he informs Elizabeth that Wickham is a liar, and the real cause of their disagreement was the attempt of Wickham to escape with his sister, Georgiana Darcy.

Shortly, Elizabeth receives a letter from Jane, tells her that Lydia and Wickham have been eloped, and they live together without marriage, in a shock, Elizabeth informs Darcy about what Wickham has been done. Meanwhile, Mr. Gardiner sends a letter, saying that the couple has been found and that Wickham has agreed to marry Lydia. The Bennets are thought that Mr. Gardiner has paid off Wickham, later on they realize that it was Darcy's work.

Bingley and Darcy return to Netherfield and call on the Bennets. Bingley displays genuine affection to Jane and asks for her hand. Darcy remains distant until her aunt; Lady Catherine visits the Bennets and demands that Elizabeth deny any connection between her and Darcy. Elizabeth refuses his proposal, A little later, Elizabeth and Darcy go out walking together and he tells her that his feelings have not altered since the spring. She gently accepts his proposal, and both Jane and Elizabeth are married (SparkNotes Editors)

#### 2.4 **The Reflection of Austen's Life in the novel *Pride and prejudice***

Jane Austen does not look like just one character in *Pride and Prejudice*. Actually, Austen possesses some characteristics of herself and her life that emerge in some way through mainly Bennet daughters. Additionally, there are some qualities of the family

of Austen that are similar to the Bennet family in the novel. In fact, it is well-known that Jane took most of her plotlines from her life experience, and used her family, her sister, as inspiration to her novel. Her heroines are centered, or push upon courtship and marriage, and their importance in woman's life; her position, her education, and her marriage (Autobiographical Elements in *Pride and Prejudice*).

#### 2.4.1 Wealth and Family

Jane Austen expressed the ideas of the influence of wealth and money on marriage instead of real love through the character Mrs. Bennet, this can be seen on the following quotation: *"Oh! Single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!"* (Austen 06). Mrs. Bennet recurrently presses her daughters, especially Elizabeth, and Jane the idea of marriage from a wealthy man. Jane Austen and Elizabeth Bennet, the two recognize that the ideas of the mother are wrong and the truth is to find a suitable love (Autobiographical Elements in *Pride and Prejudice*).

*"Mr. Bennet had very often wished, before this period of his life, that, instead of spending his whole income, he had laid by an annual sum, for the better provision of his children, and of his wife, if she survived him"* (Austen 336). Jane Austen experienced childhood in a town in a family not exactly well off in society; Mr. Bennet and his wife are excited to have their girls wed those that are richer, so that some inheritance can go to the family (Dickie par 04). This is what Austen has been struggled with in her own time, when she accepted the proposal of a rich man with a large wealth.



## 2.4.2 Education

Nandana defines education in his article "Emphasis on Education in Jane Austen's Novels" that "*education in the largest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense, education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, and values from one generation to another*". (1)

Jane Austen was very interested by education and reading, and she introduces that in her characters, Elizabeth and Marry. An essential part of this education is on the other hand to obtain the ability to read (Sales xvii). Also the novel pride and prejudice in focus around this idea of an educated woman, and how she plays her role in society with her education ("ENGLISH 306... JANE AUSTEN").

Women in the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain were not allowed to continue their higher education, so private tutors, governesses, and private schools were the extent of structured education open to them. For example, a clever woman as Elizabeth Bennet with an energetic mind, she is able to get her education independently through reading (Benrabé 330).

Jane Austen's father had a library around 500 books, she did a fair amount of reading, and she wrote that she and her family were very interesting in reading novels, and not shamed of being so. However, in proper way she chose to be in her own novel *Pride and Prejudice* ("Biography: life(1775-1817) and Family").

"*what say you Mary? For you are a lady of deep reflection I know, and read great books, and make extracts*" (Austen 10). This quote shows that Mary is book smart and she is deep thinking, and Austen compares herself to Mary Bennet's self-independent and her intellectual ambition (Todd 23). Also marry reflects Austen's admiration to education and reading, because she spent her life reading books and creating her own books.

### 2.4.3 Social setting

Jane Austen wrote during an era when England was experiencing limitless financial and social changes realized by the Industrial Revolution. These progressions influenced the lives of each social class and single person.

*"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife"* (Austen 05). Mr. Bingley in the content is the sort of rich northern working class industrialist energetic to put his money in the area and wed into the aristocracy or nobility to increase social recognition and eminence. To purchase land and turn into a refined man agriculturist, to own a nation house that served as a middle of impact and taste, to mimic distinguished proprietors in their behavior and style of life got to be according to the white collar class a design to take after, as well as a vital move to make respectability, and a blameless societal position in light of arrived property could eventually prompt a seat in Parliament (Bensemmane et al 84-85).

### 2.4.4 Sisterhood

The themes of sisterhood or female friendship are visualized in scenes involving Elizabeth and her sister Jane (Sales 20). We notice that in chapter four, when the two sisters sleeping together in the same bed, and discuss their evening, and Jane confesses her secret admiration to Mr. Bingley, she said that *"He is just what a young man ought to be"*, she said *"sensible, good-humoured, lively; and I never saw much happy manners!- so much ease with such perfect good breeding"*, then Elizabeth replied *"he is also handsome"* (Austen 18). Jane is generous and kind and she always thinks the best of everyone as it mentioned in the novel *"to take the good of everybody's character and make it still better, and say nothing of the bad"* (Austen 19). Elizabeth claims that Jane likes to take only the

good things of that characterize every-body, and she does not say anything bad about others (Bloom 23).the quote above proves the close relationship of those sisters, Jane is so confident in her sister that what she told Elizabeth in secret about her concerning how much she admired Mr. Bengley.

The close relationship between Elizabeth and Jane is very similar to Jane Austen and her sister Cassandra, they were confidants to each other, especially because they are the only two girls in the family, and the two are described as inseparable. Also Jane Bennet and Cassandra Austen were the two older sisters as the Bennets.

#### **2.4.5 Refusing Proposal of Marriage**

The rebellion and disagreement with the unsatisfactory status of marriage in Jane Austen's family is clearly expressed in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

When Mr. Collins asks Elizabeth to marry him, and he says that: "*My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced that it will add very greatly to my happiness...*" (Austen 141). He is so confident for her acceptance, but she interrupts him:

*"you are too hasty". She cried "You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without further loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honour of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them"*(Austen 123).

Though, she rejects his proposal, because she is well known that she has no feeling toward him, and she wants to marry for love not for wealth or just to be a wife. The same thing happened to Jane Austen, when a wealthy and a great severity man, Harris Bigg-Wither, proposed marriage to her. In the beginning she accepted him, but she spent the

longest night of her life thinking about what she had done; even though, he will take her to her beloved place Hampshire. In next day, she refused his proposal, because she loved many times and she wanted to marry only in love. Jane Austen remained unmarried all her life (Sales 15-16).

*"Mary was the only daughter who remained at home"* (Austen 423). Mary did not get married and she stayed at home, also Jane Austen and her sister Cassandra, were never married.

## **Conclusion**

The life Jane Austen was not particularly eventful or long lasting, but its impact on her classical literature is forever left in importance for chapping her novels to be as they are. The family, life, and circumstances all served to influence different aspects of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*. In all, the personal life of Austen served as the starting point to fuel her creation. Also this chapter was a survey on Jane Austen's socio-historical context and her position as a woman and as a writer, and its impact on *Pride and Prejudice*. In the following chapter, we will encounter with the different aspects of marriage Austen's characters.

## **Chapter Three: Concepts of Marriage in *Pride and Prejudice***

### **3.1 Introduction**

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife "(Austen 05). In those lines, Jane Austen reveals two primary themes of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, which are marriage and class; as indicated by money. Also the novel concentrates on the female characters as they struggle to succeed within this oppressive patriarchy. Although, the important aspect that is depicted in the novel is how the society controls the mindset of people concerning the proposals of marriage between the higher and lower classes. In this chapter, we will see how Jane Austen portrays the different concepts of marriage through her characters.

### **3.2 Concepts of Marriage in *Pride and Prejudice***

In the eighteenth century, searching for a suitable husband is very important matter in the life of any unmarried woman(Taawo 06). And in the same time it was very difficult to find him, because of social classes and status in the society.

In the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen weaved five kinds of marriages; these marriages are totally different from each other. Here Jane Austen shows us the true social problem during her time and its characteristics, and she implied her own principles of marriage (Pei and changle and xiaolin 148).

#### **3.1.1 Marriage of beauty: Mr. and Mrs. Bennet**

Mr. Bennet is the father of the Bennets family, and the husband of a wife of little understanding; he is much closer to his daughter Elizabeth because she is very intelligent

and accomplished. Mrs. Bennet is an unbelievably annoying woman, she is selfish, foolish and so noisy. Her only goal is to see her five daughters married and she does not care about anything else in life, her character is summed up in the last lines in the first chapter

*"Her mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented, she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news"* (Austen 08).

Jane Austen uses her character to draw attention to the necessity of marriage to unmarried women (Yu 680). She has an empty mind, and shares all her thoughts with anyone, neither she is educated nor she is a lady in good manner and mentality, she is talkative and her only thoughts are in marriage, money, and wealth.

Mr. Bennet married Mrs. Bennet just because he is infatuated by her beauty, and he did not care about her behavior and individual character, but after having five daughters, he feels the vulgarity of his wife, and takes refuge in his library just to avoid looking for the way his wife takes care of their daughters. Also, because he is not able to find a peace with her mentality, her illiberal mind makes him disappointed and drove him apart from his family. For that, there were no love and affection in their marriage (Khalaf 87)

Mrs. Bennet is focused only on getting her daughters married. Also she got a shock and much pain when she knew that Mr. Collins has the right to inherit their property after the death of Mr. Bennet, because he has only daughters and no son to inherit him. But she planned to marry her daughter Elizabeth to him, but she failed.

She is a person who only cares about what she wants. Her mood is fickle. If something isn't as good as she expects, she will keep complaining or caviling at other's behaviors. However, when things follow the right track, her thoughts will change as fast as possible.

Take for example, Mr. Darcy, who has been hated by Mrs. Bennet since the first encounter. Her reaction to him reflects her capriciousness most.

### 3.1.2 Marriage of love: Jane and Bingley

Jane is the beautiful elder daughter of Mr. Bennet, and Mr. Bingley is a wealthy man "*Mr. Bingley inherited property to the amount of nearly a hundred thousand pounds from his father, who had intended to purchase an estate, but did not live to do it. Mr. Bingley intended it likewise, and sometimes made choice of his country; but as he was now provided with a good house and the liberty of a manor* (Austen 19). Because he is a man with a good fortune, Mrs. Bennet plans to marry Jane to him (SparkNotes Editors).

Mr. Bingley is described by Jane Austen as "*Good-looking and gentlemanlike; he had a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners*" (Austen 13). The first impression of Jane Bennet about Mr. Bingley that "*He is just what a young man ought to be*" said she "*sensible, good-humoured, lively; and I never saw such happy manners! - so much ease, with such perfect good breeding*" (Austen 18). It is very clear that Jane fell in Mr. Bingley's love from the first time she met him in the ball, and especially when he asks to dance with him twice "*I was very flattered by his asking me to dance a second time, I did not expect such compliment*" (Austen 18). Also their dance made her mother very happy because Mr. Bingley chooses her daughter to dance with him in front of all the people "*Mrs. Bennet had seen her eldest daughter much admired by the Netherfield party. Mr. Bingley had danced with her twice, and she had been distinguished by his sisters*" (Austen 15).

Mr. Bingley and Jane were very clear in showing their love for each other, and he describes her "*The most beautiful creature I ever beheld*" (Austen 15) he obsessed by her

beautiful from the first meeting. The two are very similar to each other: both are cheerful, and always think of the best thing of others, compatibility and goodwill are their principle characteristics (SparkNotes Editors). The relationship between Bingley and Jane continues to be very deep during balls, dinners, and family visits, but Bingley's sisters were very appalled by the vulgarities of her mother, her younger foolish sisters, and their lower economic status between the landed owners (Yu 680). And this is a strong reason that makes Mr. Darcy convince Bingley to leave Longbourn for a while, although he wants him to forget her.

Mr. Bingley has a good temper, but he is modest and has no opinion about his personal affairs especially marriage, and he believes so much in Darcy's opinion and representation of Jane's truth status, and he leaves her for a while, because his sister does not like her and they try to convince him of choosing Darcy's sister as a wife for him, because she is very superior to Jane. Mr. Bingley starts to doubt in the affection of Jane to him, and this happened because of the influence of his sisters and Mr. Darcy (Pei and changle and xiaolin 148). This unexpected decision of Bingley hurts and confuses Jane. She tried many times in her own way to forget him, but she later discovered that she had fallen deeply in love with him and she cannot live without his love, while most of the character's view on marriage is naïve and generally on the social circumstance. It seems that Jane is a different being from most of the characters, she does not view marriage and relationships from the point of view of social standings, and really she falls in love with Mr. Bingley. Also Mr. Bingley falls in her love. He believes that love alone is enough reason to get married, and he shouldn't get married only with a woman of certain superior family, unlike his friend Darcy who cares only aspect of the girl's family and their social status. In the end, we find that Jane and Bingley realized how in love they were with each



other and they got married and have a happy ending. This kind of marriage is something special in their society that was not commonly existed during that time.

The preconception of Mrs. Bennet with her daughters and their mates leads her to be almost a social oddity. Also she constantly sets a bad name for her family, because of her irregularly behaviors and vulgarity in front of public ball and the important persons ("Marriage in Pride and Prejudice"). And she hurts her daughters' honor and pride by these behaviors toward others.

### **3.1.3 Marriage of security: Charlotte Lucas and Collins**

Charlotte Lucas is the closest friend of Elizabeth, and she is described by Jane Austen as "intelligent" and "sensible" (Guen 45). She is unromantic woman and plain. She was always thinks dreadfully in her status as unmarried woman, and she wants to get married because she hates her status as unmarried woman.

Mr. Collins is the cousin of the Bennet daughters, he is the only man who will inherit the Bennet property. He feels that his duty is to marry pne of Mr. Bennet's daughters, and his first targets are toward Jane, but Mrs. Bennet informs him that she will engaged to Mr. Bingley, then he turns his intention to Elizabeth, and he is confident in his proposal, but Elizabeth refuses him, although her mother does anything to convince her to marry Collins, and her father supports her not accept Collins's proposal of marriage ("Marriage in Pride and Prejudice"). Collins main aim is just to get married with one of Bennet daughters, he does not care on individual point of view, and he thinks that the main concept of marriage is to happen in term of comfortable life.

Charlotte and Mr. Collins's marriage is based on money and comfortable life as Charlotte said *"I am not romantic, you know; I never was. I ask only a comfortable home;*

*and considering Mr. Collins's character, connection, and situation in life. I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people can boast on entering the marriage state"* (Austen 143). She replies for her friend, because Elizabeth was very surprised by the news, and she cannot believe that her friend Charlotte gets married with Collins only because his money, and then Charlotte explained to her that she is not romantic and she does not want to be married under love, and she became old, she needs for a satisfying home and life. But Elizabeth cannot understand enough the resolution of Charlotte; because, Elizabeth believes that marriage is based on mutual affection, as Southan interprets Elizabeth's way of thinking as follows: "*Perhaps the principled and high-minded Elizabeth Bennet, who was so angry and upset that poor Charlotte Lucas should marry Mr. Collins for the sake of a home, is deep down a victim to the same temptation, even if it comes in a more insidiously acceptable disguise*" (qtd. in Dobosiova 15), the opinion of Southan toward the character of Elizabeth that she is a strong woman and she is different from the other characters as Gilbert and Gubar indicate that: "*all heroines in Jane Austen's novels are literally or figuratively motherless that is why they must look to men for security, they seek their husbands to escape from home*" (qtd. in Dobosiova 15). This point of view is a suitable portrayal of Charlotte Lucas's character, but Elizabeth is an exceptional character.

Also we notice that Charlotte Lucas has much interest in chances of marriage, when she says to Elizabeth that if her elder sister Jane gets married with Mr. Bingley, she will have a good chance at happiness (Taawo 14). As she mentions that "*I wish Jane success with all my heart and if she were married to him to-morrow, I should think she had a good chance of happiness as if she were to be studying his character for a twelvemonth. Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance*" (Austen 28). She believes that there

are no much chances in life concerning marriage, for that she accepted her first chance of marriage from Mr. Collins.

### **3.1.4 Marriage of profit: Lydia and Wickham**

Lydia Bennet is the youngest sister in the Bennet family. She is un-self-conscious adolescent, she is noisy, wild, fearless, empty minded, and silly as her father describes her: *"From all that I can collect from your manner of talking, you must be two of the silliest girls in the country."* (Austen 35). We can explore from this quote that Mr. Bennet finds her daughter Lydia to be the type of a girl that has no ambition in life, but rather she is silly and more concerned with daydreams to care for sense and reality. Also she is often depicted as silly and has no interest in books or learning, and she is much more focused only on one aim which is to find a future husband. Lydia also is very talkative and selfish, caring more about games, gossip, and gentlemen, than any knowledge (Singleton and Emilie 1-2). And she is mostly looks like her mother's personality.

Wickham is an officer and a gentleman that Lydia infatuated by his good looking, wealth, and also all the girls likes him, but Lydia plans to marry him, for that Wickham and Lydia run away with each other to get married, but this news disappoints all the members of family. However, Wickham does not really love her, and he uses her just to get money from Mr. Darcy, because he is selfish and cares only about money, and he knows that Mr. Darcy will pay for him in order to marry Lydia, Wickham is an opportunist who has tried several times to seduce rich heiresses, and Darcy doesn't care about Lydia, but because his beloved Lydia's sister (Shoop Editorial Team).

When the news comes to the Bennet family that Wickham agreed to marry Lydia, Mrs. Bennet goes around the town telling everyone that finally her daughter become

married. She does not feel ashamed by her daughter's wrong, she cares only that one of her unmarried daughters get married. Also Lydia when she returns to her country she was proud of being married before her elder sisters, she doesn't care who paid for her wedding, and she ignored the fact that she made her family suffer, and she thought that she has chosen an immortal path (Khallaf 89).

At the end of the novel we find out that their love has been ruined into some difficulties and they have different goals. And their marriage didn't give them a happy ending, but disturbed and an uncomfortable one.

### 3.1.5 Marriage of real love: Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy

Elizabeth Bennet is the protagonist of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, and the second daughter of the Bennet family. She is very closest to her sister Jane, also she is lively, intelligent and quick-witted as her father says "*they are all silly and ignorant like other girls; but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters*" (Austen 07). She is admired by her father. Darcy is a wealthy man; he is the master of the great estate of Pemberley. His high status and wealth makes him very proud of his self as Elizabeth says "*that is very true, and I could easily forgive his pride, if he had not mortified mine*" (Austen 24). Elizabeth dislikes him because he hurts her vanity and pride when he says to his friend that "*she is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me*" (Austen 15). And he sees her as not pretty to dance with her. But her sister Mary explains to her the differences between pride and vanity "*Vanity and pride are different things, though the words are often used synonymously. A person may be proud without being vain. Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us*" (Austen 24). Elizabeth tries to understand the explanation of her sister, but she cannot change her impression toward Mr. Darcy.

So, the two are the main characters of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, and they formed a pride and prejudice opinion for each other from the first meeting in the Ball, Mr. Darcy describes her as not handsome enough, but after a few time, his opinion and interest in her grew up, and Elizabeth is unaware that he began to observe her, and she has no idea that *"he began to wish to know more of her, and a step towards conversing with her himself, attended to her conversation with others. His doing so drew her notice"* (Austen 29). As critic Bloom mentioned in his book *Bloom's Guides Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* that: *"Mr. Darcy's attempts to observe and join conversations with Elizabeth are a source of annoyance to her"* (24). She does not know that he starts to fall in love with her in an indirect way.

Elizabeth is ashamed from the vulgar behavior of her mother in trying to hook Mr. Bingley. She is aware of how others would think of her family and she tolerates this load alone. And when Mr. Darcy surprisingly proposed her, she was infuriated and defended the honor of her family, and offended his own behavior, but when they met later again, she found out that he had changed his ways; she notices that he is not conceited, proud and arrogant as before. And when she knew that the marriage of her sister with Wickham was the result of the sacrifice of Darcy and his hard works, she understood that she had been so wrong in many things about him and she started to respect him more than she was. The courage of Elizabeth in refusing the proposal of Mr. Darcy was something that is remarkable, during their time where marriage was about rooting oneself in the society, she was one of the most suitable bachelors in the country with enormous wealth. But she did not accept just to be conventional to the ways of the society. But she felt that it is better to not marry at all than to marry someone who despises her family, and Elizabeth prefers to stand alone and fight for what her belief, as the critic Barry said that: *"this is the very strong character when almost all the girls never even think of standing and fighting for what they*

*believe, they are subjugated by the society and do not mind being a transaction in society*"(qtd. in khalaf 92). Elizabeth has very strong personality in standing against those who behave badly toward her dignity.

Mr. Darcy was shocked by Elizabeth's refusal to his proposal, but later his love to her correct his pride, and he knows that Elizabeth is not like other girls and money and wealth is not enough to convince her to marry him, and he cannot forget her, but later on when she realizes her wrong condemning about him, she realize how much she loves him, and Darcy proposed to her again, and the two got married with a happy ending. Those two characters does not view marriage as a transaction in the society, as Kumar indicates that:

*"they wanted to get married for the right reason. And though they made some mistakes, they were not afraid to accept their faults and mend their ways. This led to the right kind of marriage – one that is not based on social transaction. Nor was this marriage based on physical attraction and beauty but it was based on their willingness to accept one another's viewpoint and mend whatever mistakes they had made"*(qtd. in Khalaf 93).

In the first they misunderstand each other because of their pride and prejudice, but at the end their adulthood and love led to a beautiful and an exceptional marriage.

The internal change in the personality of Mr. Darcy is the change that Jane Austen wanted it to be in her society. By making Mr. Darcy break the rules of his society and marry a woman lower than his class. She is able to point out that how the social rules are a socially phenomenon used in wrong way by the upper class and especially by the men. path. The emphasis on personality and individuality should have greater importance than social class and rank. Mr. Darcy does marry Elizabeth and in so doing, he breaks the social conduct rules that Austen thought were too strict and unfair towards women (Gran 26). So we understand from this couple that Austen chooses those characters as the protagonist,

and they play the role as the rebellious from the social rules and values of that time, especially in case of marriage and in choosing the right partner.

The Bennet sisters concern their mother is the only person who chooses a possible candidate for their marriage, but they surely have the right to veto for the candidate they want and to refuse the men who proposed<sup>2</sup> to them. Finally Jane gets married to Mr. Bingley according to her mother's will. However, their marriage is also in harmony with their mutual fondness. Elizabeth and Darcy marry after permission of both Elizabeth's parents, but they marry each other because of mutual affection and understanding as well. The only daughter who married without the permission of her parents is Lydia. She has sixteen years old, and her relationship stems essentially from her physical attraction to Mr. Wickham. All the family looks for this marriage as a negative way, except the mother. Also Charlotte Lucas and Collins get married just for the sake of life, and they have not the power to choose their suitable partner for life (Dobosiova 13). The marriages complete the story happily after sort of way. Although these couples are married, their marriage did not come so easily. All those couples came through misunderstandings and of matching personalities.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

To conclude this chapter, we can say that Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* is considered as a classic novel; *Pride and Prejudice* focuses on a mother who wanted her unmarried daughters to become married mainly for financial reasons, but also because it was socially expected. The story revolves around choosing whether to marry for love or to marry for money and security; ultimately the daughters decided who they wanted to marry.

Mrs. Bennet wanted her daughters just to be married, and she doesn't care about the personality of the husband. On the other hand Mr. Bennet was not pushing them into relationships they did not want to be in. Elizabeth and Jane experienced love, but not without sorrow. And Jane Austen wrote this novel to criticize the bad thinking of the society of her time and by using those couples to portray the main theme of that time which is marriage.



## General Conclusion

The aim of this dissertation is to shed the light on the portrayal of women through marriage during Victorian era in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*

We have illustrated in the first chapter the characteristics of the Victorian Society, and we have shown how the Victorian literature reflected the historical, social norms of Victorian England shedding the light on a type of literary works which is the novel, also, English women writers and the major themes that women concerned about. We found that most of the women novelists illustrated their own experience in their novels because they were influenced by the social values of their conservative society.

Then, in the second chapter we have shown the background of the author Jane Austen and the novel *Pride and Prejudice*. And how the novel does reflects the life of the author. Also this chapter has attempt to study and to evaluate women and the position they held in their conservative society, and the novel is written from feminist perspective relied on feminist ideas about women conditions. Thus from our analysis, we have discovered the common point between Jane Austen and her protagonist Elizabeth Bennet, which this work include many aspects and events from the life of Jane Austen, that means the novel reflects Austen's real social life.

In the third chapter; we dealt with the theme of marriage and we saw how Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* illustrates many kinds of marriage, and it is a very good satirical novel. By choosing the theme of marriage, Jane Austen manages to point out the searching for a suitable husband, and how the people willing to take part in marriage with a wealthy man where there is no love, because during Victorian society marrying for wealth and social status is more common than marrying for love and stability. But Elizabeth here makes the strong choice to wait for love even she knows that it may never come. This is

the same thing that happened with Jane Austen, which she chooses to stay unmarried all her life instead of marry with a man she does not like him. Through the analysis of the characters of the novel, we see that Jane Austen portrayed the main theme of her time which made her suffer so much because she believes in love and self independent, for that she chooses Elizabeth Bennet to be her mirror that reflects her personality.

It is concluded that those who get married just because of attraction of physical beauty, want of stability in the society or want of wealth, they do not last in their marriage and maybe they will be unhappy couples. The main aim of Jane Austen seems to be in depicting how things can fall apart when one keeps an eye only on the physical world rather than the intellectual one. And she depicts this famous novel from her own experience.

In *Pride and Prejudice* Jane Austen has presented an important theme in nineteenth society, which is the division of women personalities according to their attitudes; Jane Austen's writing are always defending women; her main focus was on their personalities, manners and their intention toward each other.

At last, we can say that Jane Austen was a literary giant and one of the famous novelists of the history of English literature. Also, Elizabeth Bennet is one of the greatest heroines that amazed the literary world and reflected the atmosphere of the Victorian time, the novel is history portrayed in paper written by a female quill pen which is still read and admired by readers till now.

As a future perspective, this study could be used as the starting point of a future master or doctoral research, since the research does not undertake the whole themes of this literary work. In doing this analysis of the major themes of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*

it could be helpful to students and researcher of British Literature to work deeply in this theme or to make analysis to all the characters of the novel.

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