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## CHALLENGES OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION: A STUDY OF JANE AUSTEN'S *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*

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**Abstract:** The modern civilization is a long way that has been walked by our ancestors. They have been able to get themselves as a united whole and knitted themselves as a social unit only because of the creativity that have been inherited in human beings when they are born in this world. Every potentiality is hidden in our own self. They don't want to go by the variation or any new idea that can take them to uncertainty. The period when women in world were forced to burn with the pyre of the dead husband, the new creative idea of the widow women remarriage was less accepted in the society. It had never been an easy task to persuade the society to follow the new pattern suggested by many a scholars. They gave new idea to the society which was a challenging task. But today when we think about such ideas which were prompted by those prophets of human rights and social reformers, we salute them for the expression of their creative thought which was a challenging effort made by them. Austen uses the feminist narrative techniques to establish feminist authority and deconstruct the male consciousness. Different from the traditional male writing style, Austen regarded female as the center part of the novel.

**Key Words:** Feminism, challenges, social values, modernism, Austen Novels

Creativity is not an attribute that can be achieved by doing some diploma or degree of academics. It is a spontaneous process that is installed in human beings which is a god-gifted virtue. It comes as naturally as a fountain sprang out quite naturally and as the rain comes naturally from the heaven on the earth. Once human beings used to live like other animals in forests and eats raw flesh to be sustained. The modern civilization is a long way that has been walked by our ancestors. They have been able to get themselves as a united whole and knitted themselves as a social unit only because of the creativity that have been inherited in human beings when they are born in this world. Every potentiality is hidden in our own self. The only need is to give it an output and make it sharp. Every society has its own ethics and cultural norms.

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I don't think I can give you an answer to this based on expression. I'll have to use words on this one, since you can't see me. Expression is a look that can be of sadness, joy, or anger on someone's face. You can find more information here:

Expressive arts: activities such as drama, music, sport and gymnastic work through which people can find personal expression and development. The feminine mind has qualities, the negative, and the positive. The positive is love, the negative is jealousy; the positive is sharing, the negative is possessiveness; the positive is waiting, the negative is lethargy, because waiting can look as if it is waiting and it may not be, it may be just lethargy.

Jane Austen is a very creative writer who gives preference to the women predicaments through her novels. She has become a voice of the womanhood in her age. Jane Austen who started writing, as a tool for entertaining her family members is now considered as one of the greatest pioneers of the feminist movement in English literature. Born in 1775, in a small town in southwest England where she spent most of her life, Austen was the seventh child of a middle class family. The winter was with extreme cold that year, so she was publically christened on April 5, 1776 and got the sweet name – Jane. Her father was an intellectual and sensitive man who encouraged all his children in their love of reading and writing. Her mother was also known as a woman who was talented in producing literary works such as poems and short stories. She has written six novels starting with *Sense and sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1815), *Northanger Abbey* (1818, posthumous), and *Persuasion* (1818). She has written non-fiction work as well.

The earliest readers of *Pride and Prejudice* were surprised that such a clever book could have been written by a woman. It is the book, from which Austen's most famous line comes. It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife. Playwright Richard Sheridan advised a friend to "buy it immediately" as it "was one of the cleverest things" he had ever read - high praise from a man of the Regency period. Austen seemed to know too much about everyone's imprudence and was so worldly that nothing shocked her. It's a form of knowing satire that has

become a national trait: deliver your irony with a polite smile, keeping the tone 'light, bright and sparkling', as Austen she aimed to do.

The novel starts with news that Mr. Charles Bingley: the rich, handsome, young and single man has rented the manor of Netherfield Park. The news creates a great stir in the Bennet family. Mr. Bennet, the patriarch of the family, is a simple, bookish man somewhat irresponsible towards his duties of marriage of his five daughters. He is a man with modest income and some inherited property. His ironic nature and cynical sense of humour irritate his wife, Mrs. Bennet who is in contrast to him in nature. She shows great haste in her actions, having the sole aim in her life to marry her daughters with well-settled bachelors. Her impulsive, exciting, frivolous and unexpected behaviour sometimes makes everything and everyone embarrassing. The following quotation from the text will help elaborate further about Mrs. Bennet and her married life:

Had Elizabeth's opinion been all drawn from her own family, she could not have formed a very pleasing opinion of conjugal felicity or domestic comfort. Her father, captivated by youth and beauty, and that appearance of good humor which youth and beauty generally give, had married a woman whose weak undemanding and illiberal mind had very early in their marriage put an end to all real affection for her. Respect, esteem, and confidence had vanished for ever; and all his views of domestic happiness were overthrown. [...] To his wife he was very little otherwise indebted, than as her ignorance and folly had contributed to his amusement. This is not the sort of happiness which a man would in general wish to owe to his wife; but where other powers of entertainment are wanting, the true philosopher will derive benefit from such as are given. Elizabeth, however, had never been blind to the impropriety of her father's behavior as a husband. She had always seen it with pain; but respecting his abilities, and grateful for his affectionate treatment of herself, she endeavored to forget what she could not overlook, and to banish from her thoughts that continual breach of conjugal obligation and decorum which, in exposing his wife to the contempt of her own children, was so highly reprehensible. But she had never felt so strongly as now the disadvantages which must attend the children of so unsuitable marriage, nor ever been so fully aware of the evils arising from so ill-judged a direction of talents; talents, which, rightly used, might at least have preserved the respectability of his daughters, even if incapable of enlarging the mind of his wife. (42)

The kind of female intelligence that Jane Austen brings to bear upon the world she anatomizes is irresponsible and tends to blur such distinctions as those between author, narrator and heroine. In *Pride and Prejudice*, it links the style of the narrator with that of the heroine; the sarcasm of the narrator's opening declaration of 'a truth universally acknowledged' is echoed in Elizabeth's account of how she came to love Darcy: "It has been coming on so gradually that I hardly know when it began; but I believe I must date it from my first seeing his beautiful grounds at Pemberley" (59). The same sarcastic manner, but here more caustic, is evident in Elizabeth's reply to Miss Bingley earlier in the novel: "Your examination of Mr. Darcy is over, I presume, said Miss Bingley; and pray what is the result? I am perfectly convinced by it that Mr. Darcy has no defect he owns it himself without disguise" (61).

Some months later, Elizabeth and her uncle Mr. Gardiner visit Pemberley, Darcy's estate. Here again, Elizabeth comes to know of a different side of Darcy's personality. She, in her preconceived notions, thought to learn more about Mr Darcy's cruelties from the servants. To her great surprise, however, she is told of Darcy's humility and gentleness and that too when Darcy himself is away. All of a sudden, Darcy returns and behaves courteously and graciously towards the visitors. He is extremely polite in his demeanour. He welcomes them with civility and warmth and introduces Elizabeth to his younger sister.

While Elizabeth is still puzzled about her feelings towards Darcy, a crisis takes birth in Lydia eloping with Mr Wickham thus causing a lot of embarrassment to the Bennet family. Elizabeth immediately returns to Longbourn while her father and uncle Gardiner try to trace the runaways to get them married so that the family reputation is not tarnished. Finally the couple is found and the marriage ceremony is performed. However, later on it is discovered that it was Mr. Darcy tracked the couple to save the honour of Bennet's family. Also, he fulfilled Wickham's demand for money to marry Lydia.

Elizabeth now feels obliged to Mr. Darcy. Now Bingley arrives and proposes to Jane to marry him. Everything seems in order once again and the resolution of the complexities seems near. Meanwhile Lady Catherine arrives there to force Elizabeth to reject any proposal of marriage from Darcy. At this juncture, Elizabeth asserts herself and frankly tells Lady Catherine that she cannot make any promise against her own happiness. Later on when Darcy and Elizabeth get a chance to walk alone, Darcy reiterates his feelings. Elizabeth is too embarrassed to say a word. After a short pause, her companion adds: "you are too generous to trifle with me, if your feelings are still what they were last April, tell me so at once. My affections and wishes are changed, but one word from you will silence me on this subject forever" (178). Elizabeth who has grown into maturity with the passage of time now agreeably accepts Darcy's proposal to marry him.

Martie Haselton, senior author of the study and a psychology and communication studies professor at UCLA said: "A woman evaluates her relationship differently at different times in her cycle and her evaluation seems to be colored by how sexually attractive she perceives her partner to be." (Webster's online Dictionary)

The little network of relationships at the centre of the novel, the Bennet family, is flawed and the flaw is the result of an imprudent marriage. The analysis provided by the narrator here justifies the great care and attention devoted to courtship and marriage throughout the novel. It also gives additional significance to other aspects of the novel. Darcy, for instance, is proud and his pride prevents him from seeking a romantic alliance with Elizabeth. Darcy's pride here may be construed as social snobbery; Elizabeth's family is not high enough in the social scale for Darcy to contemplate marriage to her. At this level the concerns of the novel are being understood as overtly social. Darcy's pride however, may also be seen as moral snobbery; the condition of the Bennet family (as outlined by the narrator)- the stupidities of the mother, the flightiness of the sister, the irresponsibility of the father appears obnoxious to Darcy's sense of fitness. On this view, the novel is essentially moral. Quite obviously, the novel is neither exclusively moral nor exclusively social; at times the social consideration is to the fore and at others the moral one. The ambivalence itself is what is truly remarkable.

In this novel, Austen uses the feminist narrative techniques to establish feminist authority and deconstruct the male consciousness. Different from the traditional male writing style, Austen regarded female as the center part of the novel. She let her female characters describe the story as their daily life; transmit the information to the readers. In her novels, the heroines are not traditional angels or monsters defined by male writers. All of them are independent. They are narrators rather than objects in traditional novels. In this way, Austen successfully deconstructs the male's voice and establishes feminist narrative authority. Austen's writing itself is a rebellious act against the patriarchal rumor of the female intellectual inferiority and duping regulation of women's proper behaviors. Jane Austen is a remarkable woman in the literary area. Her contribution to the literature is partly to a special writing style and partly establishes a new status to women. She uses her special perspective of female to show that women are independent rather than dependent. As a conclusion, Austen lived in her limited world with her family, so it seemed that she was not influenced by the changing society at all. Unlike other realists in the 19th century, she has never dealt with social problems and revolutions directly. There are neither heroic passions nor astounding adventures in Austen's novels. Living in the countryside all her life, she was good at describing the people around her. So in her novels, she created a lot of vivid characters of snobbish and arrogant squires. She satirized the snobbery, pride and vanity of the middle class people with humorous words. Apparently she wrote about everyday life, but in fact, some social problems were disclosed in her novels. Like other



feminists, she cared about women's social position and claimed for women's right to work, and her point of view was reflected in her novels.

Thus, *Pride and Prejudice* remains a fresh and unique signature of Jane Austen in the sense that she is able to offer to the reader a female protagonist who no doubt grows into maturity with the passage of time and learns to appreciate the inner qualities of a seemingly proud and audacious man, but at the same time who makes her presence felt everywhere she goes and even a person like Darcy is forced to notice her. Had Elizabeth no voice, no individuality, she could not have won Darcy as her love. Darcy is certainly head and shoulders above all his male counterparts and Elizabeth gets him as her groom. Elizabeth thus emerges as a strong female character who can assert herself not only in the family but in front of characters like Lady Catherine De Bourgh as well. She is able to register her voice whether it is before Darcy or Wickham or Mr Collins.

Darcy's and Elizabeth's final interdependence seems, however, to highlight an irreconcilable difference between her and our assumptions as to the nature of individual personality. The difference is not solely that for her individuality exists within a society pervasively hierarchical. For us, personality means, primarily, uniqueness, how one person exists separately, establishes an existential independence. This is one reason our novelists stress the sensory, useful for identifying peculiarity: each of us has his own smell. For Jane Austen a personality exists only interactively. Or if we examine 'individuality' from a sociological point of view, we notice that our 'identity crises' never occur in her fiction. The question 'who am I?' arises when society does not comfortably answer it before it can be asked. While the societies depicted in Jane Austen's novels are neither so static nor so idyllic as is sometimes suggested, it is true that she does not (as we tend to) conceive social relations to be inherently in crisis. If our psychological and sociological presuppositions are so distinct from hers, and, as is obvious, if not enough of the cultural context of her art survives to permit a direct aesthetic (as distinct from antiquarian) appreciation of it, Jane Austen's twentieth century popularity is, indeed, a wonder.

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