

2013

Satire and irony in jane austen's pride and prejudice

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI
INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED PEDAGOGY
ENGLISH-KIRUNDI DEPARTMENT

SATIRE AND IRONY IN JANE AUSTEN'S
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

.By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Award of the degree “Licencié en
Pédagogie Appliquée, Agrégé de
l’Enseignement Secondaire en
Anglais ”

Bujumbura, July 2013

DEDICATION

To my beloved parents ;

To my brothers and sisters ;

To my relatives and friends ;

To you, who are dear to me ;

I warmly dedicate this work.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been completed without the contribution of many people whom we owe much gratitude.

I am particularly indebted to Dr. Eric S.Njeng, Senior lecturer at the University of Burundi, who despite his various responsibilities, kindly accepted to supervise this work. His corrections ; outstanding help, suggestions and constructive remarks brought this work to the present stage.

My gratitude also goes to all my teachers who taught me from primary school to the University of Burundi, especially those of the Institute for Applied Pedagogy, English-Kirundi Department. Their pieces of advice and various skills have been valuable to me during of my learning and writing process of this work.

I am also grateful to the Government of Burundi in general and the ministry of Higher Education in particular for their effort bringing me lecturers from abroad and supporting, paying me scholarship. I cannot forget the contribution of Government for having sent me to Makerere University- Uganda for Academic purposes.

Last but not least, I warmly thank my parents for their love and material support. My heartfelt gratitude is also extended to my friends, relatives and any person who, morally and/or materially, assisted and encouraged me the whole long path. I also express my thanks to my classmates for their unflinching togetherness, unity and encouragement.

ABSTRACT

This work *Satire and Irony in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* is intended to focus on Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* in general and on two literary devices it uses in particular : satire and irony. My study, as a social satire, could not avoid the relationship between characters and their environment, especially their society.

The effect on the characters is not only to be sought in the nature of events and personality of each character, that is their weaknesses and vices being taken into consideration ; but also in the nature of interactions between characters. By using satire, Jane Austen foresees certain vision to her society-England.

It is written against new historicism theory. This literary theory examines a literary text as participating in the historical processes. In that sense, it conceives and pays close attention to the historicity of the text and the textual nature of history itself. New historicism suggests that literature be studied and interpreted within the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Great poets and writers create in their imagination a real man and make him play a limited social role. He often peeps out of his social personality into his universal individuality. A literary work is thus imagined but reflects a certain society and its realities. In her work, Marie Noëlle Ndayizeye shows her readers the relationship between literature and society when she states that

Literature is both the product and the moulder of the society. It stems from a social reality and silence forth perceived by many as a product of the society. It is a moulder of society because it leads very often to social changes.(1)

From the above assertion, we understand that literature goes hand with the society which has produced it. Literature is alive as long as the society exists. It is, of course, used to promote good and useful aspects of culture, to make people abandon bad practices, norms and beliefs. Here the writer will not hesitate to point out the weaknesses prevailing in a society. This is the case of Jane Austen with her novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

Jane Austen lived through a turbulent period of the history. As her life begins, the global power that is Great Britain is under the rule of the king George III. There is also a growing conflict with American colonies which would result in the American revolutionary war. That military conflict would be first of the three wars Great Britain would participate in during Jane Austen's short life . A decade after , the north American colonies gained independence.

During most of Jane Austen's adult life, Britain was at war with revolutionary France (1793-1815), while at home a traditional agricultural economy and culture was being gradually transformed by a rapidly developing industrial revolution. The aristocratic eighteenth century was challenged by radical political thinkers, who argued for greater democracy.

The upper and middle classes of the period were organized on traditional and hierarchical principles. In general; people remained in the station, in life into which they were born. Though by hard work, an exceptional individual might make a fortune in trade or the new industries, the social tone was set by the landed gentry, proud of their ancient ancestry and homes.

The moral code was clearly defined and much more severely applied than our own. Manners and speech were more elaborate and formal than of today. In the best society, men managed their estates, but otherwise they did not work, while the only recognized success in life available to a woman was to marry well.

During that period of foreign upheaval, the domestic English society in which Jane Austen was born, women were; however, not given the same opportunities like men. Marriage was thought to be the only viable option for economic security and being gradually part of the social norms.

Jane Austen's life coincides approximately with the first phase of the great shift in culture called Romanticism. In literature too, there were a host of famous writers such as Samuel Johnson and Samuel Richardson, and poets such as Samuel Coleridge, William Wordsworth, John Keats and Lord Byron. It was a time of progress in education for woman, leading to the proliferation of novels written and read by women, women writers who included Jane Austen herself, and also her predecessors such as Fanny Burney and Maria Edgeworth. Finally, the Georgian period was a time of moral questioning and debate. The beginning of feminism appeared at this time with Mary Wollstonecraft and her ground breaking work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with strictures on political and Moral Subjects* (1792)

A general background of the social and cultural setting in which the novel is written is important for most novels mirror the customs and values of a particular society, often criticizing it. The Hertfordshire country town where the greater part of the novel is set in Longbourn, only a mile from the market town

particular society, often criticizing it. The Hertfordshire country town where the greater part of the novel is set in Longbourn, only a mile from the market town of Meryton and twenty-four miles from London. In Jane Austen's time, most Englishmen regard English novels as useless pieces of literature. They pose a risk to the virtuousness and decorum according to which the members of the English society, especially the female ones, are expected to have.

Writing a novelist regarded as an even worse to do than reading one. Hence, in particular female writers of Jane Austen's time stress the educational character of their novels, thus meeting the society's expectations. The consequence of this is that most of the novels are riddled with didactic comments and attempts at moral indoctrination, lucidly expressing the religious and virtuous end of their pieces of literature.

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* appears on the English literary scene in 1813. The author has worked on its realistic style and content for more than fifteen years, for she is perfectionist in her approach to writing. Her first novelist unlike any of the hundreds of others written at the time, which are mainly romantic (filled with emotion and passionate) or gothic (filled with humor). Jane Austen is the first novelist to portray realistic characters by using the direct method of telling a story in which dialogue and comment take an important place. She uses the methods to dissect the hypocrisy of individuals and the society in which they play games of love and courtship. From the beginning, Austen's literature centers on character study, where a person's common sense or lack of it is developed in detail. Her chosen setting is always limited to a small social group of upper classes and composed of few families. Family life is always central to her novel which portrays traditional and belief in rationality, responsibility, through humor, irony and sarcasm, which her undesirable characters portrayed as ignorant, proud or silly human beings, not evil villains.

Biography of Jane Austen

Jane Austen was born on 16 December 1775 at Steventon in Hampshire, in England, where her father, Reverend George Austen, was a rector. The latter was an Oxford graduate without personal fortune. He then supplemented his income as rector of Steventon by taking pupils side whom he would teach his own children.

Jane Austen was the second daughter and seventh child in a family of eight children. The Austen's did not lose a single one of their children. Cassandra Leigh, Jane months, and then sent them to a wet nurse in a nearby village to be looked after for a year or longer. George Austen's children comprise five boys and two girls.

Jane Austen was educated in part by her elder brothers, two of whom were to become clergymen, while two rose in the rank of admiral in the Navy, and another, Edward, was made a member of the landed gentry through adoption. Austen was mostly tutored at home, and irregularly at school, but she received a broader education than many women of time. She started to write for family amusement as a child. Her parents were themselves avid readers, of course. Jane Austen's favorite poet was Cowper and her earliest known writings date from about 1787. Very shy about her writing, she wrote on small pieces of paper that she slipped under the desk so that if anyone came in the room would read it.

In her letters, she observed the daily life of her family and friends in an intimate and gossipy manner. The wide range of activities within the Austen family such as country walks, charades, reading, writing stories and family plays

constituted a rich informal education for the children, and stimulated Jane Austen's ambition to become a novelist.

Reverend George Austen supported his daughter's writing aspirations by using her paper and a writing desk. The first twenty-five of years of her life, Jane Austen spent them in Hampshire. On her father's unexpected retirement in 1801, the family sold off everything including Jane Austen's piano, and novel to Bath. Aged of twenty-five years, Jane Austen and her elder sister, Cassandra aged of twenty-eight years, were considered by their contemporary people and standards as confirmed old maid, and followed their parents. Torn from her friends and rural roots in Steventon, Jane Austen abandoned her literary career for a decade.

After her father's death in 1805, Jane Austen lived with her sister Cassandra and her hypochondriac mother in Southampton where they suffered financial difficulties and were forced to rely on the charity of Reverend George Austen's sons. It was at that time, while on holiday in west country, Jane Austen fell in love, but when the young man died, she was deeply upset. Later she accepted a proposal of marriage from Harris Wither, landowner and brother to some and closest friends but she changed her mind the next morning and was greatly upset.

Neither Jane Austen nor her devoted sister Cassandra, married. When Cassandra was engaged, her fiancé was tragically drowned.

In 1809, Jane Austen's brother, Edward offered his mother and sisters a small country house at Chawton, on his Hampshire estate. It was there that Jane Austen, now a favorite maiden aunt with her brother's children, wrote and revised earlier work, achieving sufficient literary success to attract the attention

of the Prince Regent, to whom Emma was dedicated when it was published in 1815.

During 1816, Jane Austen became an invalid and in May 1817 she took lodgings in Winchester, to be near a good doctor. She died on July 18, 1817 in Winchester at the age of forty-one years when she was writing the unfinished Sanditon. The cause of her death is however unknown. It has been claimed that Jane Austen was a victim of Addison's disease. According to Claire Tomalin, she may have died of lymphoma. Katherine White has suggested in British Medical Journal Medical Humanities magazine that Jane Austen died of tuberculosis aught from cattle.

Her main novels include *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Northanger Abbey* (1811), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1816), and *Persuasion* published together with *Northanger Abbey* in 1817. *Pride and Prejudice* was first called *First Impressions* and *Sense and Sensibility* had *Eleanor and Marianne* as its first version.

Motivation

The choice of our topic *Satire and Irony in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* has motivated by the fact that the eighteenth century period in England where girls hastily get married. Unfortunately some of them do not spend harmonious life in the end whereas others are prospering. Some get married for pure love while others consider marriage as a mean of refuge. Then, Jane Austen uses satire to reveal the plight of women during the nineteenth century in her novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

Her candid attacks on English society directly correlates with her belief on the status of women forced to face during this time period. The different situations that occur throughout the novel can be seen through her use of irony, satire and caricature. Jane Austen satirizes then the concept of marriage, coarse and inadequate social standards. She laughs at the silly behavior of characters she disapproves of. She satirizes thus the social and moral standards and manners, which are almost entirely those of money and snobbery.

Though *Pride and Prejudice* is set in eighteenth nineteenth centuries in England, it is still important for us to shed light on our own society and times. We are personally touched by the fact where some people hastily get married purely for material things instead of marriage based on mutual understanding.

Aim of the work.

This work “*Satire and Irony in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice*” aims at studying problems rooted in hierarchy of class in Jane Austen's society-England. This study focuses more on the distances placed between characters due to their social standing and wealth. Some characters are mere caricatures. We intend to discover the ridiculousness of the value placed upon money –of

which the middle class has very little. We will show that social standing and wealth are not always necessarily advantages in the world.

Definition of the key terms

For the sake of clarity, some terms require particular definitions. We are going to define satire, irony and caricature, because the clarification of these key terms will help my readers to better understand the work. We have judged better to use *A Glossary of Literature Terms*, for the definitions, of M.H. Abrams.

M.H. Abrams defines “satire” *as the literary art of diminishing a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusements, contempt, indignation or scorn (167)*. The same writer goes on saying that satire differs from the comic in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end in itself, while satire “derides”; it uses laughter as a weapon, and against a butt existing outside the work itself. It is here important to mention that butt may be individual (in personal satire) or type of a person, a class, an institution, a nation. Satire has usually been justified by those who practice it as a corrective of human vice and folly.

Critics make a broad division between formal or direct satire and indirect satire. Formal satire is concerned with the satiric voice speaking out in the first person. As far as indirect satire is concerned, it is cast in another literary form than that of direct address. The most common form is that of fictional narrative, in which the objects of the satire are characters who make themselves and their opinions ridiculous by what they think, say, and do. They are sometimes made ridiculous by the author’s comments and narrative style.

In formal satire, we distinguish two kinds of satire: Horacian and Juvenalian satire. In Horacian satire, the character of the speaker is that of an urbane, witty and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more often to wry amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human follies, pretentiousness and hypocrisy. That man uses a related and informal language to evoke a smile at follies and absurdities, sometimes including their own. On the other side, in Juvenalian satire the character of the speaker is that of a serious moralist who uses a dignified and public style of utterance to decry modes of vices and errors which are no less dangerous because they are ridiculous. He also undertakes to evoke contempt, moral indignation or an unillusioned sadness at the aberrations of people.

As far as irony is concerned, M.H. Abrams suggests that, in Greek irony comedy, the character called eiron was a “dissembler”, who characteristically spoke in understatement and deliberately presented to be less intelligent than he was. For him, irony is “*the difference between what is asserted and what is actually the case*”. (89). Irony is thus a rhetorical device or literary technique or situation in which there is a sharp incongruity or discordance that goes beyond the simple and evident intentions of words or actions.

There are many types of irony: verbal, structural, dramatic, Socratic and situational irony.

Verbal irony, which was traditionally classified as the tropes, is a statement in which the implicit meaning intended by the speaker differs from that which they ostensibly assert. Such as an ironic statement usually involves the explicit expression of one attitude or evaluation, but with implication of very different attitude or evaluation.

Recourse to irony by an author carries an implicit compliment to the intelligence of the reader, who is invited to associate himself with the author and the knowing minority who are not taken in by the ostensible meaning.

In structural irony, the author, instead of an occasional verbal irony, introduces a structural feature which serves to sustain a duplicity of meaning. One common device of this sort is the invention of a naïve hero, or else a naïve narrator or spokes person; whose invincible simplicity or obtuseness leads him to persist in putting an interpretation on affairs when the knowing reader—who penetrates to, and shares, the implicit point of view of the authorial presence behind the naïve personal just as persistently is called on to alter and correct.

It is important to note that verbal irony depends on knowledge of the speaker's ironic intention which is shared by the speaker and his audience whereas structural irony depends on a knowledge of the audience, but unknown to the speaker. On its part, dramatic irony involves a situation in a play or narrative a narrative in which the audience shares with the author knowledge of which a character is ignorant, here the character acts in a way grossly inappropriate to the actual circumstances, or expects the opposite of what fate holds in store or says something that anticipates the actual outcome, but not at all in the way that he means it.

There are other kinds of irony but we will focus more on situational irony, verbal and dramatic irony because they will be used in our study.

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (7th edition), caricature is defined as “a description of a person or thing that makes them seem ridiculous by exaggerating some of their characteristics” (114).

Caricature is an exaggeration by means of often ludicrous distortion of parts or characters. Caricature implies then ludicrous exaggeration of the characteristic features of a subject.

The common aim of satire, irony and caricature is to expose and correct individuals', society's, people's or institutions' wickedness, weaknesses, vices and follies through exaggeration and ridicule.

Literature Review

Jane Austen is the most prominent of the women novelist of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. But she was not well known in her era, her reputation has risen very high in modern times and her fame among English novelists is secure. With meticulous attention, Austen portrays the quiet, day-to day life of members of upper-middle classes, for she lives around an environment of the class. Jane Austen is also a novelist with an extremely narrow focus that extends, surprisingly, into a wide range of concerns. Almost all her books can be viewed most simply as early good romance novels, more broadly as sharp critiques of nineteenth century vanity, cruelty and folly, and broadest of all as an indictment of a social system and economic system dedicated to the marginalization and commodification of a full half of the human experience. Jane Austen's works brought her little personal renown because they were published anonymously. Although her novels quietly became fashionable among opinion-makers, such as Princess Charlotte Augusta of Wales, they received only a few published reviews. Most of their reviews were short and a favorable balance, although superficial and cautious. Sir Walter, a leading novelist of the day, contributed one of them, anonymously using the platform from which to defend the then disreputable genre of the novel, he praised Austen's realism.

Another important early review of Jane Austen's works was published by Richard Whately, an English rhetorician, logician, and theological who also served as the church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, in 1821. He draw favorable acknowledged great as Homer, the greatest such Greek epic poet; and Shakespeare, praising the dramatic qualities of her narrative. Whately and Scott set the tone for almost all subsequent nineteenth century Austen criticism.

Because Austen's novels failed to conform to Romanticism and Victorian literature expectations that powerful emotions be authenticated by an egregious

display of sound and color in the writing, nineteenth critics and audiences generally preferred the works of Charles Dickens and George Eliot. Though Austen's novels were republished in British beginning in the 1830s and remained steady sellers, they were not best sellers. Austen had many admiring readers in the nineteenth century who considered themselves part of literary elite: they reviewed their appreciation of Austen's works as a mark of their cultural taste. Philosopher and literary critic George Henry Lewes expressed this view point in a series of enthusiastic articles published in the 1840 and 1850s.

Around the turn of the nineteenth century, members of a literary elite reacted against the popularization of Austen. These referred to themselves as Janeites in order to distinguished themselves from the masses who did not properly understand her works. It is then important here to clarify the Janeitism. According to Austen scholar Claudia Johnson, Janeitism is the self-consciously idolatrous enthusiasm is the "Jane" and every detail relative to her.

Leigh's *A Memoir of Jane* published in 1869 introduced Austen to a wider public as "dear aunt Jane", the respectable maiden aunt. Publication of the memoir spurred the reissue of Austen's novels. The first popular editions were released in 1883 and fancy illustrated editions and collectors' sets quickly followed.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the first books of criticism on Austen were published. In fact, after the publication of the Memoir, more criticism was published on Jane Austen.

Several important works paved the way for Austen's novels to become a focus of academic study. The first important milestone was an 1911 essay by Oxford Shakespearean scholar A.C. Bradley, which is "generally regarded as the starting point for the serious academic approach to Jane Austen. With the publication in 1939 of Mary Lascelles' *Jane Austen and Her Art*, the academic study of Austen took hold. Lascelles innovative work included the analysis of

the books Jane Austen read and the effect of her reading on her work, an extended analysis of Austen's style, and revisionist views art". In a spurt of revisionist views in the 1940s, scholars approached Austen more skeptically and argued that she was a subversive writer. These revisionist views, together F.R. Leavis's and Ian Watt's pronouncement that Austen was one of the great writers of English fiction, did much to cement Austen's reputation amongst academics. They agreed that she "combined Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson's qualities of interiority and irony, realism and satire to form an author superior to both.

Pride and Prejudice was first published in 1813 although Jane Austen had written it between October of 1796 and August of 1799. At that publication of *Pride and Prejudice*, women were expected to stay at home just be a pretty face, not think for themselves, and not involve themselves in politics, or other careers. Men were authors, women were not. Austen's father first submitted *Pride and Prejudice* to a publisher in 1797, under the title of "*First Impressions*", but was rejected probably for the sole reason it had been written by a woman. Regardless, Jane Austen is one of the most widely read authors of English literature and there is no doubt in mind as to why is true. She has a lot of to say about women and society in England during the late eighteenth and early century nineteenth century.

Pride and Prejudice is quite comic and it points a clear picture of how women lacked their own fortune of ten had to forsake love to marry for economic security and social status. Austen's keen awareness of the world she lives in and its inhabitants is also remark clear in *Pride and Prejudice*. She nocks the pompous attitude of the upper of the upper class with Mr. Darcy's character, the life of clergymen withy Mr. Collins, the idea of the dashing young officer with Mr. Wickham, other clear mimicking of different social characters.

From what we understand about Jane Austen, before there were no other authors whom narrated the human psyche as much as she did with the writings

of the novel. Her descriptions of social and of the inner the minds of the English literature. Her merits consist much in the force of a narrative conducted with much neatness and point, and a quiet yet comic dialogue, in which the characters of the speakers evolve themselves with dramatic effects. *Pride and Prejudice* is then a novel that closely observes not only the social hierarchy of the times in which it was written, but also human natures and personalities that are eternal. It is truly a novel for everyone, of every time and place.

Now, let us have a look on satire and irony literature review. Many writers have proposed definitions of satire. According to Macmillan English Dictionary, satire is the “*use of humor to criticize someone or something and make them seem silly*” (1258). But this word satire is full of complexity in its origin. In his work, *A Dictionary of Literary Works*, Anthology, J. says that

It may be a cooking term in origin. Quintilian used the term to refer to the kind of poem written by Lycilius. Elizabethans writers, misled by the etymology, supposed that it derived from the Greek Satyr “Woodland demon (598).

The situation was later cleared up by Johnson who defined satire in the same work as “*a poem in which wickedness or folly is censured*” (598). As it is, this definition is not accurate; that is why Dryden preferred to give only the end of satire: “*the amendments of vices*” (598). In addition to the aforementioned, one of the most famous definitions is Swift’s and it interests us in this work. For him, in *Epilogues to the Satire*, as quoted by Anthony, J. in his aforementioned dictionary

Satire is a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover every body’s face but their own. Which the chief reason for that kind of reception it meets in the world and that so very few are offended with it (598).

As far as irony literature review is concerned, Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. 12, says that “*irony is a form of speech in which the meaning is concealed or contradicted by the words. Irony involves the perception that things are not what they are said to be or what they seem (682)*. It is particularly employed for the purpose of mockery or contempt.

M. GRAY, in *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* defines irony as
A manner of speaking or writing that is dispersed through

all kinds of literature: 'Irony consists of saying one thing while you mean another. The EIRON ('dissembler') in Greek comedy continually pretended to be stupid, while the ALAZON was a stupid and complacent braggart. Irony, then, is EIRON's method of achieving meaning via understatement concealment and allusion, rather than by direct statement (108).

Some people in their ways of living do not express clearly their thoughts or needs. They pretend to take things as simple but in reality those things are serious or important. According to Tala, irony is "*a term that refers to the recognition of the different between appearance and reality. It involves some sort of discrepancy*"

Literary approach

In this work, we have judged better to use new historicism approach. In *Glossary of Literary Terms*, M.H. Abrams defines new historicism as "*a form of literature theory that examines a literary text as participating in the historical process that it conceives and pays close attention to historicity of the text and textual nature of history itself*". New historicism is also a theory applied to literature that suggests literature must be studied and interpreted with the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic. That literary approach was born in Anglo-American history scholarship and applied to texts by readers in the late 1970s and 1980s. The theory arose in the 1980s with Stephen Greenblatt as its main proponent. It became popular in the 1990s. Its other proponents include Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, Frederic Williams, Hayden White, Mikhail Bakhtin and others.

New historicism evaluates then how work is influenced by the time when it is produced. It also examines the social sphere in what the author moves, the psychological background of the author, the books and theories that may have

influenced the author, and many other factors influencing the work of art. M.H. Abrams once adds that, “*in place of dealing with a text in isolation, new historicists attend primarily to the historical and cultural conditions of its productions, its meanings and its later critical interpretations*” (182-183).

In their work, Espérance H. and Jean H. admit that, “*texts as social documents reflect and the world that produces them*” (5).

Ann B. Dobie views the new historicism by asserting that, “*the new historicism treats literature as a participation for change becomes important because it means that literature has a role to play in a formation of a society, with its help, power bases can be restricted and the marginalized recognized*” (167).

New historicist literary theorists, then attempt to place their interpretation of literary texts firms with their historical contexts, with special attention being given to the marginalized aspects of a text’s historical context and setting. As the case in point, Jane Austen’s *Pride and prejudice* is confirmed to a very limited sphere of society namely the landed gentry. She asserts its preeminence above any other class of society. The author is then quite critical of those who marry beneath their social status.

Scope and delimitation of the work

The work *Satire and Irony in Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice* will focus more on the social satire used all along the novel *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. We will not limit ourselves on the use of satire in the novel, but we will also focus our attention to the author’s reasons behind the use of that device.

This work comprises a general introduction, three chapters and a general conclusion. As far as the introduction is concerned, it presents how the study is

organized. It gives then a general overview of the study. In addition, it is in this section where background, the aim and hypotheses of the study, definition of key terms, literature review, literary approach and scope and delimitation of the work are presented.

The first chapter: “*Caricature in characterization*” is mainly concerned with the analysis of some characters as satirical figures. It is through speeches and actions that characters are discovered. We will also discover how particular fictional society.

Chapter two entitled “*Irony in Pride and Prejudice*” aims at the study of the author’s use of irony throughout the novel. We will focus on situational irony, verbal irony and dramatic irony through characters interactions and speeches.

As far as the third chapter “*The author’s vision*” is concerned, we will make an attempt on the author concerns and views on her society throughout the novel *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. Last but not least, a general conclusion gives a brief summary of the dissertation and above all the main phases of the study are given. We will trace direction to eventual future researchers interested in Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* in general and in its satire in particular.

CHAPTER ONE

CARICATURE IN CHARACTERIZATION

This chapter seeks out to identify characters being caricatured in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. But it is difficult if not impossible to treat this chapter without starting defining characterization. Richard Taylor is one of the writers who helps us to define characterization as “*a mere construction of experience meant to express an idea or view of experience and be considered in relation as action and setting*” (62). In the same angle of ideas, M.H. Abrams contributes a lot in our understanding of characters. He posits characters are defined as “*the persons presented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say—the dialogues and by what they do—the action*” (20). Characters are then identified with by what they say, think, do and how they behave in some situations.

Characters are very important elements of a work of art since they are responsible for creating actions and events. The conception and creation of characters in a work of art, and therefore, have a great the selection of events. However, a character should not be confused with or taken for a real, but he is an imaginative creation through works meant to express a view of human experience. That is why a character must not be analyzed in isolation but he must be studied in relation to other characters.

In order to know characters better, we examine their thoughts, feelings and behavior individually as a way of understanding their emotional and mental problems. The novel under the study presents some characters satirically. The way Jane Austen creates her characters in *Pride and Prejudice* is set according to a pattern that displays characters with their goals to fulfill or attain in their minds. Then some characters are created to attack and satirize others whereas other characters are mere objects of satire.

It is worth recognizing Jane Austen's power of characterization. *Pride and Prejudice* portrays several characters that the reader is asked to consider. Then the reader knows them from inside to out; not only their physical appearances are drawn but also their inner being so that we get to know their feelings and motives for actions. Jane Austen's characters, though of quite ordinary types are drawn with such firmness and precision and significant details as to retain their individuality intact throughout their entire creatures of flesh and blood, pulsating with vitality. She studies her characters kindly but objectively.

On Jane Austen's power of characterization, Sir Walter Scott makes a fine comment where he affirms that "*the author's knowledge of the world, and the peculiar tact with which she presents characters...reminds us something of the merit*"(internet). Another critic who acknowledged the author's ability in characterization is Lord Cecil. He posits that "*her lucid knife-edged mind was always at work penetrating beneath such impressions to disown their cause, discover their principles that go to make up his individuality*" (internet).

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen attacks the idea of marriage for money and social standing, thus marriage without solid foundations. She also attacks the absurdness of common attitudes towards marriage and customs that are practiced in her society. Her criticisms are of the people who make up and embody the different class systems, usually those who are acting in what could be considered as the correct manner of her time. Austen tends to portray more her rebellious characters as heroes. For instance, Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy are very atypical of the social correctness of time, whereas the characters accepted by Austen for her time are socially acceptable for time. It is mostly around the crucial issue of marriage that Austen weaves the subthemes of social criticism, making fun of snobbery, hypocrisy and spiteful gossip of respectable housewives.

Caricature is used in *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen in order to show deficiencies in morals and ethics of the characters that she disapproves of satire is also used to attack some characters and bring about change. The different characters Jane Austen satires are hierarchical and or ignorant. Again Austen still endeavors to portray the deep and inescapable influence of bad manners regardless the class. In order to fulfill this, she creates characters and situations that are humorous, yet easy to identify with and this accomplished by satire. Caricature is then used in *Pride and Prejudice* particularly manifest in the characters Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Mr. Collins, Mr. Wickham, Mrs. Bennet, Mr. Bennet, etc in order to impart we readers with a genuine understanding of the consequences that ignorance, pride and prejudice produce in any class.

The resulting effect of the device under the study is to laugh out loud humor and characters who possess a significant amount of the said unwanted qualities. Beginning at the top of the social ladder, Austen uses satire through Lady Catherine de Bourgh to establish that no society group is free from gross imperfection. Lady Catherine de Bourgh though the highest character in the novel is presented as rude and has very little real power. For instance, when she hears rumors of Elizabeth's engagement to Mr. Darcy, Lady Catherine de Bourgh travels to Longbourn to attempt to dissuade Elizabeth.

Her rudeness compels Elizabeth to refuse to answer her questions. Of a possible marriage between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, Lady Catherine de Bourgh remarks that, "*Honor, decorum,....your name will never even be mentioned by any of us*"(27).

Austen displays the ways in which nobility does not necessarily result in good manners. Austen disapproves of Lady Catherine de Bourgh. She is demanding and thinks that she can order who never she wants around. An instance of this when she visits the Elizabeth's family after hearing the rumor that Mr. Darcy is to propose like Lady Catherine thinks she and people like her are better than everyone because she says "I know it must be a scandalous falsehood"

Lady Catherine accuses Elizabeth of trying to get Mr. Darcy from the beginning. She tells: *“Your arts and allurements may, in a moment of infatuation, have made him forget what he owes to herself and all his family”* (29).

When Elizabeth replies with a smart aleck comment Lady Catherine de Bourgh says *“Miss Bennet, do you know who I am?”* By telling this to Elizabeth, Lady Catherine de Bourgh wants to mean that Elizabeth should not talk back to her because she is one of the highest people on the social ladder. When Lady Catherine de Bourgh thinks she can order whenever she wants to promise not marry Mr. Darcy if he proposes. She thinks she can order whomever she wants just because she is high and mighty ordering servants around her is a lot of different from ordering other people around because servants work for her whereas other people do not. Furthermore, being an aristocrat who upholds arranged marriages, superior breeding and unlimited snobbery, Lady Catherine de Bourgh is convinced that social rank automatically confers individual distinction. She, for example, fatuously claims that if only she had learnt piano she would have been a great proficient.

Jane Austen gives us a good portrait of Lady Catherine. She notes:

Lady Catherine de Bourgh was a tall, large woman, with strongly marked features, which might once have been handsome. Her air was not conciliating, nor was her manner of receiving them such as to make her visitors forget their inferior rank. She was not rendered formidable by silence; but whatever she said, was spoken in so authoritative tone, as marked her self-importance, and brought Mr. Wickham immediately to Elizabeth’s mind. (136).

Lady Catherine de Bourgh is caricatured by Austen in order to show how the wealthy could often be without a sense of compassion. Her manner towards her social inferiors is ludicrous. She believes that she has a moral duty to intrude, as Elizabeth notes, “*nothing was beneath this Lady’s attention, which could furnish her with an occasion of dictating to others*” (138).

Lady Catherine de Bourgh symbolizes the old aristocracy that lost its vitality and which is dying. The fact that she wants only flatters around her who constantly acknowledge her greatness reflects her declining status. If she if she depends on the fawning admiration of Collins to be a great lady, then her position is certainly insecure. Those are some of the reasons why Lady Catherine de Bourgh needs to be changed.

Another character being satirized in Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice is Mr. Collins. William Collins, like Lady Catherine de Bourgh, thinks and talks highly of people higher than himself. An example of this is when they are invited to dine with Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Mr. Collins tells Elizabeth

Do not make yourself uneasy, my dear cousin, about your apparel. Lady Catherine is far from requiring that elegance of dress in us, which becomes herself and daughter. I would advice you merely to put on whatever of your clothes is superior to the rest, there is no occasion for anything more. Lady Catherine will simply think the worse of you for being simply dressed. She likes to have the distinction of rank preserved. (135)

This shows how high he thinks Lady Catherine is and this sort of behavior shows that Mr. Collins thinks he is better than her by implying that he doesn’t have any elegant dress.

Again when Mr. Collins introduces himself to Darcy at the ball, Mr. Darcy with an air of distant civility. Then Mr. Collins returns to Elizabeth, he holds her. Mr. Darcy seems much pleased with the attention. When Mr. Collins is so thick-headed that he does not notice Mr. Darcy's contempt towards him. He sees himself Mr. Darcy's sophisticated and well-liked than he really is. He continually brags about his so-called friendship with Lady Catherine de Bourgh. When Elizabeth by saying that Elizabeth cannot possibly refuse him for these reasons

My reasons for believing it are briefly these: It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, my connections with the Family of de Bourgh, and relationship to your own, and circumstances highly in my favor; and you should take it into further consideration that in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that be made you. Your position is unhappily so small that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall chuse to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females. (92-93)

In Collins, we are given a caricature of a worldly clergyman. A flatterer at Rosings, he brings a breathtaking conceit and pompousness to Longbourn, together with an offer of his hand. When Mrs. Benett deflects his attention from Jane Bennet in whom Bingley is showing an interest, Collins switches his ardor to Elizabeth in the time it takes to stir fire. He then proposes within a day or two to Charlotte Lucas. The fact is, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, on whom he pins his

hopes for advancements, has considered to tell he must marry; he cannot be too quick in pleasing her by doing so. His proposal to Elizabeth which seems worded to humiliate her is the most famous and fatuous.

Mr. Collins is caricatured when advocating reasons for marrying though he is a clergyman. Nothing we know that a clergyman does not marry. Here he enumerates some reasons for marrying:

My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think a right for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish. Secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and third which perhaps I ought to have mentioned early, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honor of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked too!) on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford-between our pools at quadrille while Mrs. Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh's footstool, that she said

"Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry- chuse a gentlewoman for my sake; and for your own, let her be an active useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her" (90)

Worse, Mr. Collins does not want to marry from his inner heart but he is compelled by Lady Catherine de Bourgh, his patroness. Mr. Collins and Lady Catherine de Bourgh share the same prejudiced views on royalty and marriage. Collins' style in conversations and his letter exposes him as a pretentious,

hypocritical fool who delights us by combining an extravagant reverence towards Lady Catherine with supreme self-importance.

Though a Christian clergyman, William Collins has neither charity nor compassion. This is seen after Lydia's elopement with Wickham. When Lydia elopes with Wickham, Collins writes a condescending eposes of apparent consolation to Mr. Bennet in terms that parody the parable of the prodigal son. He says, "*throw off unworthy child from your affection for ever*" (321). Having just recently attained a living as parson at Rosings Park, Collins is overwhelmed by his own accomplishments and his association with Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Living with people higher than him in the social ladder has started to make Mr. Collins think that he is better and higher than many people. He shows more of his arrogance after learning of Lydia running off to elope with Mr. Wickham. He then sends a letter to the Bennets saying that they have a faulty degree of indulgence". Even though he is right about the Bennets, Mr. Collins should have said it in another way. The letter shows his great arrogance. Austen satirizes Mr. Collins because he thinks that he is superior to everybody except Lady Catherine de Bourgh. People should not misconsider others they think lower on social ladder. That is why people like William Collins need to be attacked, satirized and then be changed little a person better, but worse. That is why people like William Collins need to be attacked, satirized and then be changed little by little.

Mrs. Bennet is another character who is also being satirized in Jane Austen's Pride an Prejudice. Being a wife to Mr. Bennet and mother of five unmarried daughters, Mrs. Bennet is mostly infatuated with seeing her daughters getting married. She seems to care for nothing else in the world rather to see her daughters get husbands. Again, Mrs. Bennet does not care about her daughters' happiness. Her goal is for daughters to get married to husbands who have a



substantial about money and prosperity. She is said to be miraculously a tiresome character and caricature. Jane Austen gives us her portrait.

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. (3)

The same author goes on giving us Mrs. Bennet's portrait saying that

She was diffuse in her good wishes for the felicity of her daughters, and impressive in her injunctions that she would not miss the opportunity of enjoying herself as much as possible advice, which there was every reason to believe would be attended to; and in the clamorous happiness of Lydia in bidding farewell, (...) (197)

From this deliberate description of Mrs. Bennet with single-minded pursuit of her goal tending to backfire. The author presents Mrs. Bennet as a character who needs to be changed through the use of satire. Her stupidity, rudeness and opiniate vulgarity need to be satirized and then changed. For instance she does not realize that her husband baits her contemptuously, that successful marriage is more than a pain money, jewels and carriages torture Miss Elizabeth with embarrassment.

Lacking any moral awareness, Mrs. Bennet is childish by telling her problem to everyone even those who may laugh at her. This stresses her weakness. In addition, she is self-centered and uncharitable in her judgment of everybody of

everybody outside her family. Mrs. Bennet is merely concerned with security rather than happiness. This is demonstrated by her own marriage to a man she cannot understand.

On one hand Mrs. Bennet is right in the part where she wants her daughters to marry husbands with money and land. It is important to mention that money and propriety are valuable assets to a successful marriage at her time. On the other hand, she forgets that happiness of people in matters of marriage is also important. Thus, people like Mrs. Bennet have to be changed. That is why Mrs. Bennet is satirized.

The fourth character who is being satirized in the work under the study is Mr. Bennet. He is a landed aristocrat and gentleman farmer married to a local lawyer's daughter. He is an intelligent, level-headed responsible estate-owner and head of five unmarried daughters. Even though, he is a head of family, Mr. Bennet has chosen by giving his authority and responsibility by giving free reign to the foolish impulses of his wife. He does not take any care to conceal from his children or anyone else the contempt he feels for his vulgarly stupid wife. It is said that Mr. Bennet's marriage to Mrs. Bennet his wife is merely based on sexual attraction-appearance that has proved disastrous.

Disillusioned by marrying in every sense beneath him, he diverts himself with books and with making fun of every about him. He does not even give any support to his own children. Mr. Bennet has thus withdrawn himself physically and psychologically from all parental responsibility. His only source of assertion and sense is remarked through a caustic mocking sense humor directed at his own wife and younger daughters.

Jane Austen helps us to see Mr. Bennet's portrait. She puts that Mr. Bennet, *"had married a woman whose weak understanding and illiberal mind had very early in their marriage put on end to all real affection, "To his wife he was very little otherwise indebted, than as her ignorance and folly had contributed to his amusement."* (198)

Satire is directed at Mr. Bennet by the fact that though being a high educated person, he prefers to flee familial and father's responsibilities. Normally, an educated person should be a shining star to others. Instead of fulfilling his responsibilities, Mr. Bennet prefers to abdicate in favor of his wife. He has replaced his family to a library where she spends most of his time. He is then a representative of all fathers who try to escape all their parental duties. People like Mr. Bennet can lead their families nowhere. That is why Mr. Bennet is satirized. He then needs to be changed.

Jane Austen satirizes also the class consciousness, particularly in the character of Mr. Collins, who spends most of his time toading to his upper-class patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Though Mr. Collins offers us an extreme example, he is not the only one to hold such views. His conception of class is shared among others. Here we can enumerate Mr. Darcy who believes in the dignity of his lineage until he starts disliking and despising others. Another example is Miss Bingley. She forgets that the money she has was earned in trade. Yet she has money and position, she is an example of shallow and hypocrite person.

Wickham is another character who is bitterly attacked. He will do anything he can to get enough money to raise himself into a higher position. George Wickham uses his handsome looks, good physique and conversational charm to manipulate every person he comes in contact with shopkeepers, his fellow officers, ladies in general and Elizabeth Bennet in particular. The truth is that he

is deceitful, liar and seducer. When other things fail, he aspires to be a clergyman. The fact reinforces our awareness not only of his hypocrisy but also hypocrisy prevailing in the church at his period.

All characters dealt in this chapter are taken as archetypes of the people who need to be changed. By reading Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, we assert for sure that those characters are representatives of the whole society at every period of time. The folly, hypocrisy, weakness and wickedness person. Jane Austen does not mention those persons as mere characters but as representatives who need to be changed and then grow.

CHAPTER TWO

IRONY IN PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

It is certainly not difficult to find definitions for the concept irony, since it is well-known and often used word. However, it is exactly that omnipresence of the word irony that makes it so hard to determine its true meaning. A.M. Abrams defines irony by saying that “*in most of the diverse critical uses of the terms “irony” there remains the root sense of dissembling, or of a difference between what is asserted and what is actually the case*” (89). Irony is then a literary or rhetorical device, in which there is incongruity or discordance between what one says or does, and what one means or what is generally understood. It is the contrast between appearance and reality.

Irony is one of Austen’s most characteristic and most discussed literary techniques. She contrasts the plain meaning of a statement with the comic undermining the meaning of the original to create ironic disjunctions. In her novel *Pride and Prejudice*, she uses irony and wit both in narrative and dialogues, as a means for social critique.

Jane Austen uses irony for several purposes namely to entertain her readers, to critique the society of her time, and most importantly to add in the development of her characters. On a primary level, Austen employs irony to describe her characters. She uses also irony to define and expand upon several themes in *Pride and Prejudice*, including the importance of correct judgment of others, the perils of detachment and the significance of maturity.

Some people are simple reproductions of their social type and have too plain personality to be able to think for themselves. They perform the role

society has given them and are thus like colorless figures. Characters in *Pride and Prejudice* are thus like colorless figures. Characters in *Pride and Prejudice*, that belong to colorless figures, are, for example, Mrs. Bennet and Lydia.

There are other people who actually make decision instead of being led. Austen uses irony as an instrument. While the clever and multifaceted protagonist often uses irony in her statements and thoughts; Mrs. Bennet neither understands nor is able to use irony. Austen's criticism is read by exactly those people she caricatures in her novel. There is chance that her criticism reaches and encourages people to reflect on their own character.

The differing characters are emphasized by the relative technique used to present them. While Mrs. Bennet's statements are demonstrated in direct speech, her husband's answers, if he answers at all, are displayed in indirect speech. This shows their diverting personalities fittingly: while Mrs. Bennet is straight forward, hence a direct person; Mr. Bennet is more subtle and often uses irony.

The depiction of Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet couple is, of course, highly amusing and ironic at the same time. The novel is about surmounting obstacles and misunderstandings in order to finally attain happiness in a harmonic marriage. However, the first impression of the aware reader gets of a married couple is that a couple which fails to communicate whereas communication must be use of the foundations of good and strong family.

Jane Austen uses irony as a tool for unveiling and describing all the incongruities between form and fact, all the delusions intrinsic to conventional art and conventional society. When one reads the letters Austen writes o her sister Cassandra, it becomes apparent that she is greatly sensitive to such

incongruities, especially to those behaviors, and that she finds pleasure around her. For instance, in her letter to Cassandra, Austen puts

Charles Powlett gave a dance on Thursday to the great disturbance of all his neighbors of course, who, you know, take a most interest in the state of his finances, and live in hopes of the being soon ruined. (internet)

The immediate effect of Austen's ironic statement letters as well as her novels, is that it makes people laugh. Both herself and her audience, be it her sister or the readers of her novels, are entirely entertained by comments on the discrepancy between what people pretend to be and what they really are. Does this mean Austen is solely a comic artist, whose only intention is to make her readers laugh?

Pride and Prejudice is, at first glance, simply an amusing depiction of England's social convention of the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, particularly of gentry.

A second look reveals the deep meaning of the novel by using a subtle ironic style, Austen indirectly criticism certain social political conventions.

Irony is thus the soul of Jane Austen's novels and *Pride and Prejudice* is steeped in irony of situation (situational irony), verbal irony (irony of narration) Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* we will explore these kinds of irony namely verbal, situational and dramatic irony.

A.M. Abrams defines verbal irony as "*a statement in which the implicit meaning intended by the speaker says from that which he/she ostensibly asserts*" (93)

Verbal irony is meant to be a disparity of expression and intention. It occurs when a speaker says one thing to mean another, or when a literal meaning is contrary to its intended effect.

The narrative of *Pride and Prejudice* has an ironic tone which contributes much to verbal irony. Jane Austen's verbal irony is established in the very opening sentence 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.*" (1)

At first glance, the above quote is straight forward and plausible, but the plot of the novel contradicts it : it is women without fortunes who need husbands and seek them out. The use of words "it is a truth universally acknowledged that" suggests Austen's wit in using irony.

Generally speaking, Austen likes to write on limited groups or families about the world around her surprising she is now writing it is acknowledged all over the world that a single man in a possession of good fortune must be in want of a wife. However, by the end of the novel, the truth of the statement is acknowledged only by a single character Mrs. Bennet, a mother seeking husbands for her unmarried daughters, rather the entire world.

An explanation to this Austen's use of irony in the opening sentence may be due to the fact that the novel was written by a female whereas they were allowed to write. Only men could write. At Austen's time, women were not allowed to all professions, for example politics, writing, entailment. Their only recourse was marriage in any way. Another fact may be that Austen, being a female writer, is attracting and impressing male readers to read her novel.

There are other instances of verbal irony in the novel are numerous. To give all of them would be to give a roll of quotations and then to write almost

half the novel itself. However, some episodes of the novel can be taken as illustrations. Although, Mr. Bennet is basically a sensible man, he behaves strangely because of his sarcasm with his wife. Trapped in a bad marriage, he makes like endurable for himself by assuming a pose of an ironic passive spectator of life, who has long ago abandoned his role as a husband and a father. He amuses himself by pestering his foolish wife or making insensitive remarks about his daughters. Mr. Bennet cruelly mocks his wife silliness and is shown to be sarcastic, and cynical with comments in these words.

By the words “*you are all kindness, madam*”, Elizabeth Bennet knows that Lady Catherine de Bourgh does not deserve any kindness. She is willingly using words which she knows are contrary to the intended meaning.

Another instance of verbal irony is met in Elizabeth Bennet’s words during the visit of the Gardiners to Longbourn. In her words, Elizabeth is telling the Gardiners things she knows are contrary to the known fact. She says: “*Stupid are the only worth knowing, after all*” (130).

By the quote above, it is unusual if not surprising to find how stupid men can be the only ones worth knowing. Normally, stupidity is the opposite of the knowledge. Stupid men are doomed to ignorance. What would become intelligent men if stupid men were the only ones knowing?

When Elizabeth was reading a longed letter from her aunt Gardiner explaining why Mr. Darcy was at and Wickham’s wedding, Elizabeth is told “*I am afraid I interrupt your solitary ramble, my dear sister?...but it does not follow that the interruption must be unwelcome*” (274)

Obviously, his interruption is unwelcome.

There are other instances of verbal irony in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. It is not easy to identify all of them. Those few instances may serve us as powerful illustrations of Austen's great ability to use verbal irony.

"...for as you are handsome as any of them, Mr. Bingley might like you the best of the party" (2)

From this quote, we see and understand how Mr. Bennet uses verbal irony to communicate to his proper wife, Mrs. Bennet, of mean understanding.

Another instance of verbal irony is found in the episode when Mr. Darcy meets Elizabeth Bennet for the first time at the ball. Darcy utters *"She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me."* (8) In this passage, Mr. Darcy acknowledges Elizabeth Bennet's beauty but he is rejecting that her beauty cannot attract him. The ironic twist in this statement becomes evident when Darcy falls deeply in love with Elizabeth and ends up marrying her.

Verbal irony is also met in the dialogue between Mrs. Bingley and Elizabeth Bennet. Miss Bingley says *"I am perfectly convinced by it that Mr. Darcy has no defect. He owns it himself without disguise"* (48). Frankly speaking, Darcy has defects; the fact is that he is at the first sight overly proud to the extent he disguises and insults Elizabeth Bennet. The words *"Mr. Darcy has no defect" and "He owns it himself"* suggest a verbal irony where the literal meaning of those words are contrary to their intended meaning.

Later on in chapter 37, in Elizabeth's dialogue with Lady Catherine de Bourgh, we discover that Elizabeth uses much verbal irony. She tells her *"You are all kindness, Madam, but I believe we must abide by original plan"* (177)

Situational irony is the disparity of intention and result: when the result of an action is contrast to the desired or expected effect. The time Elizabeth Bennet

refuses to dance with Mr. Darcy at the ball for the first meet, Darcy remarks about Elizabeth Bennet: "*She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me*" (8) . We relish ironical flavor of the above quote much when we reflect that a woman who is not handsome to dance with is really good enough to marry. Darcy removes Bingley from Netherfield because he considers imprudent to forge marriage alliance with the Bennet daughter, Elizabeth Bennet.

Another passage containing situational irony is seen in Charlotte's words to Darcy where she tells Darcy how she views marriage. She argues "*Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance*" (18) .Normally, people marry in order to become happy though some may become unhappy. No reasonable person would anticipate by saying that happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance. Happiness in marriage is prepared in advance, for a long period, if not that marriage won't be successful and last for a long time.

M.H Abrams helps us to understand more what is dramatic where he asserts that "*dramatic irony involves a situation in a play or a narrative in which the audience shares the author knowledge of which a character is ignorant: the actual acts in a way grossly inappropriate to the actual circumstance, or expects the opposite of what fate holds in store, or says something that anticipates the outcomes, not at all in the way that he means it*" (92). Dramatic irony happens when the reader has more information of what is taking place or what may develop in the story before the character of the characters. Then dramatic irony not only puts the reader in a superior position, but also it encourages his curiosity, his hopes and his fears concerning when and if the character will find out the truth inside the events or situations in the story.

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is rich in dramatic irony. The following are some illustrations of dramatic irony in the novel.

Mr. Bennet, addressing his daughter, Elizabeth Bennet uses words which suggest a dramatic irony. For instances he tells her

“Let Wickham be your man. He is a pleasant fellow and would just do you creditable” (116). In the words *“pleasant fellow”* is hidden a dramatic irony at the expense of Mr. Bennet, for Wickham is destined to make a considerable dent in Mr. Bennet’s complacency. Again, Collins proposes Elizabeth to marry him when her heart is full of Wickham and Darcy proposes her exactly at the moment when she hates him most. Elizabeth tells Mr. Collins that she is not the type to reject the first proposal of marriage and accept the second but does exactly this when Darcy proposes her for a second time. The Lydia Wickham episode seems an insurmountable barrier for Elizabeth and Darcy, but it is actually instrumental in bringing them together. Lady Catherine de Bourgh, attempting to prevent Darcy-Elizabeth marriage only succeeds in hastening it.

Dramatic irony is even more prominent in the novel. It is dramatic that Elizabeth who prides herself on her perception is quite blinded by her own prejudices and errs badly in judging others. As far as Mr. Darcy is concerned, he appears proud and haughty but at the end he proves to be a true gentleman when he gets Wickham to marry Lydia by paying him money. Darcy is also critical of his ill-bred Bennet family whereas his aunt Lady Catherine de Bourgh is vulgar and ill-bred.

Another instance of dramatic irony is found through Bingley, whom Darcy wants as a brother-in-law through marriage to Georgiana instead becomes himself his brother-in-law through marriages to Jane and Elizabeth.

Mr. Collins whose aspiration is to bask in the glory of his relationship to the distinguished Lady Catherine de Bourgh. He gets more than he aspired for

through the marriage to Elizabeth Bennet. Collins becomes Lady Catherine's relative while he does not expect it.

When Collins proposes Elizabeth the latter tells him that Lady Catherine de Bourgh would not approve Elizabeth. Surprisingly, it does turn out that Lady Catherine de Bourgh disapproves Elizabeth's marriage to Darcy.

Another instance of dramatic irony is where Mr. Darcy presents Bingley from marrying Jane Bennet because of her family, lack of real affection, and lower status but then goes himself to ask for Elizabeth's hand. It is important to remind readers that Jane and Elizabeth are siblings sharing the same family and status. Frankly speaking Elizabeth, at first glance has no affection for Darcy. We know that Elizabeth does not care for Darcy. Then Darcy too find out that fact when they both dislike each other at the beginning but end up by falling in love and finally marry.

When a proposal of marriage is done by Mrs. Bennet and insists that Elizabeth get married to Mr. Collins. Elizabeth is now put in dilemma-to obey her father or her mother. She is given an occasion to make choice between the two.

An unhappy alternative is before you, Elizabeth. From this day you must be a stranger to one of your parents. Your mother will never see you again if you do not marry Mr. Collins and I will never see you again if you do (95).

In the above passage, Mr. Bennet is giving her daughter, Elizabeth, an opportunity to open her mind and make a mature decision. It is then up to Elizabeth to choose between her father's proposal or her mother's. We hear that Mr. Bennet's speech to Elizabeth is not done openly but with wit.

After Elizabeth returns from Huntsford, Mrs. Bennet is speaking about Jane to Elizabeth. However she does not say it openly: "*Well, my comfort, I am sure Jane will die of a broken heart, and then will he be sorry for what he has done*" (191). As Elizabeth always rebels against her mother proposals, it is difficult to understand how Elizabeth can be called "*my comfort*", rather is considered a rebel. Mrs. Bennet's preoccupation is to see her daughters getting married, whoever husbands they can get married to. As far as Elizabeth is concerned, she does not love however rich he may seem. She is mainly concerned with marriage based on mutual understanding and love.

All along this second chapter, we have been dealing with irony in *Pride and Prejudice*. We find that Jane Austen does not show any cynicism or bitterness in using irony to draw satirical portrait of whims and follies. She uses verbal, situational and dramatic ironies to shake her major characters (figures) of their self-deception and expose the hypocrisy, pretentiousness and insanity of some of her characters through dialogues.

CHAPTER THREE

AUTHOR'S VISION

Jane Austen is not a proclaimed moralist. Unlike Fielding, a critic of her time, her aim is not to propagate the morality (Internet). She believes in the art for the sake of the art. In addition, she is the pioneer of the novels and her plots are well knit. Her main interest lies in irony and there is a hidden significance of morality as we come across moral in her novel through irony. Jane Austen is in a flavor of social prosperity than individuality. She upholds the organic unity of society. She stresses that the duty of human beings owe to others and society. The author maintains that individual desires have to be subordinate to the large scale. For instance, the Lydia-Wickham elopement is passionate and irresponsible. It shows how the society's harmony is disrupted and how other people's lives are ruined by the selfish act of the individual. On the other hand, the marriages of Elizabeth and Darcy, Jane Bennet and Bingley being happiness and stability to everyone, not simply to themselves.

The author discusses the individuals' short comings. Even the hero and heroine have no exception. For example, Elizabeth blinds herself absurdly because of prejudice whereas Darcy is full of pride.

It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy to your acceptance, or that establishment I can offer would be any other than highly undesirable (92), says Darcy in his characteristic bourgeois hauteur. We see that both Elizabeth and Darcy learn and understand each other. Their pride and prejudice are vanished. From the beginning of the novel, Darcy and Elizabeth dislike each other but they come to know each other as the story moves.

But all along the novel, the short comings of other characters are not changed. For instance, Mr. Bennet is described as careless and irresponsible man

for he does not care for his own family. Mrs. Bennet is said to be vulgar and stupid. Her main concern is to see her daughter get married in any manner. In addition, she tells whomever she meets the secret of her house.

Any society, however small it may seem, is divided in classes. Pride and Prejudice is an attempt to harmonize the two extremes of middle class lower end and top end marriage into one. This is realized through Bingley's marriage to Jane on one hand, and Darcy's to Elizabeth on the other hand. It is then Jane Austen's moral approach to rule the class distinction line of society.

Jane Austen also discusses the institution of family which is disturbed. The heads of Bennet family are not mentally bound. This is a kind of a matchless couple. Mr. and Mrs. Bennets' role as parents is not active. The disadvantages of such an unsuitable marriage attempt the daughters. On the other side, Bingley family is betraying because there is no head for them. The family is only guided by Darcy. Jane Austen is concerned with the growth of an individual's moral personality measured by the most exacting standards of the eighteenth century. The conclusion of her novel is always the achievement of self-respect. The principal of perfect sympathy with others. As the case in point, Jane Austen traces Elizabeth's prejudice and her anguished recognition of her own blind prejudice.

This is realized before Elizabeth is united with Darcy in a marriage based on mutual respect, love and understanding. At that level, Elizabeth regrets:

How despicable have I acted! I, who have pride myself on my discernment I who valued myself on my abilities (174). In the end, Elizabeth affirms that *"there can be no doubt of that. It is settled between us already that we are to be the happiest couple in the world."* (314)

One of the main themes of *Pride and Prejudice* is marriage. Jane Austen tries to define good reasons for marriage. Her moral concern though unobtrusive is ever present. For instance, marriages of Lydia-Wickham, Charlotte-Collins and of Mr Bennet-Mrs Bennet serve to show failures because they are not built on solid bases. Unlike those marriages, the marriage of Elizabeth-Darcy is one good marriage for it shows prosperity.

Jane Austen also throws light on the materialism and economic concern of society. Charlotte is for instance more concerned with money than man. She is described as lusty. Her materialistic approach is judged through these remarks

I hope you will be satisfied with what I have done. I am not romantic, you know. I never was. I ask only a comfortable home; and considering Mr. Collins' Collins' character, connections, and situations in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is a fair as most people earn boast on entering the marriage state. (107)

Although Jane Austen is a writer in the period of romanticism and almost all her stories are love stories, she is not more romantic. The young women, who are the main characters in her stories, seems to be exercising rational moderation. Austen's strong point is depicted through the manner she describes characters. Though her characters are quite plainly and ordinary, she draws them really gets to impress and resolution, that she develop and complex characters. Also a charming characteristic that we find pretty often in her novel is her genuine and sometimes realistic view of life, expressed with a strong touch of gentle. In the world that Jane Austen describes her characters' main concern is marrying and advantageously.

Differences in class come to order in this novel as well. People of higher classes are proud, self-conscious and do not like to socialize with those of lower classes. The tension and suspense in the novel are often rising from financial necessity on one side and morals, friends and love other side. Pride and Prejudice focuses on analyzing the social prejudice of her time, in terms of gender as well as class and status distinctions. It then, discusses the concept of gender stereotypes as a part of the social norms and values in the society.

Through Jane Austen's female characters like Elizabeth, the author presents us women who have strong views and opinions and who are independent and certainly cannot be described as stereotypical. Austen is continually aware that characters like Elizabeth Bennet have to live in a certain milieu and that she is bound to a certain extent by social stereotypes of the time.

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is not only her way of entertaining people. But it is a way to express her opinions and views on what surrounds her, effects the author. She uses a variety of comic techniques to express her own view on characters, both in the book and her society in which she lives. We readers are often the object of the author's ridicule. Jane Austen makes the readers view themselves in a way which makes it easy for readers to laugh at themselves. *The novel has many character fails to exaggerate a character's faults or traits. Her comic techniques, irony and satire not only help to provide humor for Austen's readers, but also help her to give her own personal opinion on public matters. (internet)*

Jane Austen exaggerates many of her characters and therefore make caricatures of them in order to emphasize their ridiculousness. For instance, Mrs. Bennet is such a character. Her extremely unpleasant manner and reactions cause readers to delight in the situations which Mrs. Bennet places herself into.

Her harsh tongue and mean mind cause the readers to laugh, because they are so exaggerated that the readers think that such a person cannot exist in the world. Mr. Collins is another exaggerated character in *Pride and Prejudice*. But would such characters be humorous without somebody else to react to them? These characters are spices in Austen's recipe.

Such exaggeration works only when we place those characters besides other characters who seem very real. For instance, Mrs. Bennet is placed besides her husband to make her look all the more ridiculous. Again Mr. Collins placed besides Elizabeth seems to be unbelievable at times. Mr. Collins' proposal seems Elizabeth would not be as humorous without Elizabeth's reaction and response to him.

Jane Austen sees human life as purposeful and believes that human beings can guide their appetites and desires through the use of the reason. The only thing which matters most in life is love and affection rather than wealth. Yasmine G. rightly presents Jane Austen in these words.

Her views on marriage, on society, and on her position in society reflect her independent spirit and her critical intelligence and they are asked for own safety, behind the external surface of good manners, polite acquiescence to her superior in age and status, and of feminine difference that society expects to see and that she presents for its inspection.

Occasionally, when her judgment deems it right the mask is put aside and more property gives way to what is sympathetic, human and necessary (89)

From the above quotation, we see that Jane Austen is not against marriage. She is for marriage based on both love and mutual understanding. Her characters have to undergo and overcome many difficulties such pride and prejudice. For the author, human happiness is found by living in accordance with virtue where

self-knowledge has a central place. For instance, Darcy and Elizabeth are only freed of their pride and prejudice wherein their dealings with each other help them to see and recognize their faults and spur them to improve.

Jane Austen's choice of characters in *Pride and Prejudice* is meaningful. She uses characters like Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth as combatants in the story, as well as in real life. They are against social limitations for personal pursuit of happiness with society. The author's vision is seen and heard through the reactions of Elizabeth Bennet. Jane Austen correlates her views to those of Elizabeth. On that level, we see that a writer has a specific purpose when producing a literary work as Taban Lo LYONG puts: *A writer writes to teach, to entertain or to exhibit prowess in a medium or just to release emotion. A writer has to see everything in the world in terms of how they would affect him (39).* The author utters her concern through Elizabeth's words. It in that way Jane Austen does every so that her heroine to end happily in marrying successfully. She shares happiness and sorrow with Elizabeth Bennet. The author's moral concern is expressed in Elizabeth's affirmation where she puts "The more I see of the world, the more am I dissatisfied with it" () In addition, Elizabeth does not hide her success and happiness. She says "*I am the happiest creature in the world. Perhaps other people have said so before, but not one with such justice I am happier ever than Jane, she only smiles, I laugh*" (322)

According to Jane Austen, young people who pursue true love can overcome class boundaries and prejudices. Being herself a middle-class woman, she is calling for the emerging aristocracy and bourgeoisie as a new class by the Darcy Elizabeth and Bingley-Jane marriages.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In the nineteenth British society, there was commonly held belief that women wanted to marry a man of good fortune and who would provide for them. In *Pride and Prejudice* Jane Austen succeeds in tearing down the nineteenth British views on marriage by showing that true love in marriage conquers marriages based on desire for financial stability or any other reason. While the first sentence of the novel under the study seems to show that women of nineteenth century are ironically at a disadvantage in selecting a marriage partner. The author challenges such a social misbelieve by presenting the character of Elizabeth Bennet- a woman who does not yield to the standards of the society. Mr Collins is portrayed as archetype for the men of that time who believe that woman should accept any offer of marriage.

The study of a novel by Jane Austen ensures that the interest centers on the relationship and effects on characters. In fact, the first chapter shows us that some characters are satirized. The main objective of the first chapter is to detect vices and weaknesses of the characters, they are condemned for they contribute to the reduction of the status of characters. Indeed, the use of satire in characterization presents individual weaknesses and vices but they are representatives of the society at a large scale. It becomes a tern lesson to the reader to learn through the experience of characters and correct one's conduct if possible. Therefore, the aim of the author as a teacher and satirist is achieved.

In diminishing or questioning the status of characters, Jane Austen induces a certain amendment of vices and reformation of manners. She puts the manners of her characters in the line of her satire. We, readers are then invited to be participants not observers. Readers are also concerned with the experience in order to reform vices in turn.

The author is not content simply to satirize sentimental fiction or the didactic novel which heavily opposed sentiment. Instead, she presents characters who are good models of correct conduct and morality.

All along chapter two entitled “*Irony in Pride and Prejudice*”, we have dealt with some characters’ actions and reactions. It is through their speeches that they are easily identified. The main concern of chapter two was to discover the author’s power of using irony in amusing dialogues. It is in this section that we have been dealing with some forms of irony found in the novel. We have dealt with situational, verbal and dramatic irony. By using irony, the author wants to achieve something for her characters. It is then to readers to have side for characters.

The chapter three “*Author’s Vision*” set out the author’s moral and social concerns on her society Jane Austen wants to communicate something to her readers. But she does not do that directly or openly.

Though the story of *Pride and Prejudice* is set in British society in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, it is possible to set it in our society and time. In British society, marriage was thought to be the only provision for women. Some people get married for purely materialistic ends ignoring that any successful marriage has its roots in love, intelligence and mutual understanding.

People are not always what they are expected to be. Some are pure caricatures. They are not what they ought to be or supposed to be. That is why they need to be exaggerated through irony. By the use of irony in the novel, readers find themselves in the place of ridiculous characters who need to be changed. *Pride and Prejudice* does not only entertain readers but also teaches them to behave correctly by accomplished their roles and status. This is the case

of characters such as Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Mr. Collins, Mr. Bennet, Mrs. Bennet, etc.

Frankly speaking, we cannot pretend to have exhausted every aspect of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* limited ourselves on the satire throughout the novel. We would then invite eventual future scholars who are interested in Jane Austen's novels in general, and *Pride and Prejudice* in particular to go deeper. They may carry their study on parental responsibilities, marriage, society, appearance and reality, etc.

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