

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Jane Austen: Her Life and Works

Jane Austen was born in 1775 in the village of Steventon in the county of Hampshire in south-central England. She was the daughter of Cassandra and the reverend George Austen who was a rector. The Austens were a very close-knit family; Jane had six brothers and one sister, Cassandra, who would later draw a famous portrait of Jane. She was educated mainly at home and never lived apart from her family though she attended the Abbey School in Reading, Berkshire. She had a happy childhood amongst all her brothers and the other boys who lived with the family and whom Mr. Austen tutored. From her older sister, Cassandra, she was inseparable. To amuse themselves, the children wrote and performed plays and charades, and even as a little girl Jane was encouraged to write. The reading that she did of the books in her father's extensive library provided material for the short satirical sketches she wrote as a girl.

Austen started writing at an early age and her family was highly supportive, though as was done at the time her works were published anonymously. Her combination of irony, humour, and sophisticated observations of the societal and cultural machinations between the classes epitomize the often absurd problems of inheritance, courtship, morals, and marriage in Regency England. Modestly successful during her life, her works have gone on to inspire adaptations to the stage and film and have endured the test of time even into the 21st century.

At the age of 14 she wrote her first novel *Love and Friendship* and then *A History of England by a Partial, Prejudiced and Ignorant Historian*, together with other very amusing works. In her early twenties Jane Austen wrote the novels that were later to be re-worked and published as *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and*

Prejudice and *Northanger Abbey*. She also began a novel called *The Watsons* which was never completed.

Austen wrote numerous influential works contributing to the Western literary canon. So, her works are regarded as the world's classics. Jane Austen was well connected with the middling-rich landed gentry that she portrayed in her novels. Her first major works, among them *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) is her first published work. It is the story of the impoverished Dashwood sisters, Marianne and Elinor, who try to find proper husbands to secure their social position. In addition, *Sense and Sensibility* brings to the fore issues of property, patronage, and gender that were prominent in the years following the French Revolution. Austen's next novel *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), one of the world's most popular novels, is humorous portrayal of the social atmosphere of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century England, and it is principally concerned with courtship rituals of the English gentry. The novel is much more than a comedic love story, however; through Austen's subtle and ironic style, it addresses economic, political, feminist, sociological, and philosophical themes. Similarly, *Mansfield Park* (1813) is Jane Austen's most complex novel and deals with many different themes, from the education of children, to the differences between appearances and reality. *Persuasion* (1818) is a novel of second chances, expectations of society, and the constancy of love. *Northanger Abbey* (1818) is in part a burlesque of the Gothic and sentimental fiction that was popular in nineteenth centuries, particularly of Ann Radcliffe's novels, such as *The Mysteries of Udolfo*. And finally, Austen's most characteristic work *Emma* (1816), on which the present research is based is dealt in detail in the review section.

Jane Austen and her works are generally considered representative of the late eighteenth century classical world view and its values – judgment, reason, clarity of

perception – those of the Age of Reason. In its best sense, this is a moral world view, reflecting the values of the Enlightenment. Austen’s values represent order in the face of disorder, but her concept of order embodies what is true, organic, living, not the static order imposed merely on the exterior, from “society” or “the church,” for example. Austen’s attitudes actually differ in subtle ways from the conventional manifestations of the classical attitudes and forms of the late eighteenth century – of the excesses of classicism that the Romantics rebelled against so vehemently. However, Jane Austen’s novels can also be called anti-romantic because they counter the extremes of the romantic imagination epitomized by the Gothic novels so popular during her time, and satirized by Austen in *Northanger Abbey*. In *Emma* she also satirizes romantic excess, particularly in the character of Harriet Smith who, in a sense, enshrines Mr. Elton by keeping as “her most precious treasures” relics of a scrap of “court plaister” he handled and an old pencil piece that had belonged to him (Duckworth 9).

The ordered society in Austen’s world is one in which people live in authentic harmony – socially, economically, emotionally, and ethically. Balance, order, and good sense exist in the face of too much sensibility; a balance of intellect and emotion, thought and feeling, outer and inner experience, society and the interior life, is the key to understanding Austen’s schema of meaningful experience and right relationships. Throughout *Emma* we are part of the energy of the novel leading toward the fulfillment of this ideal in the vitality of the characters.

Austen deals with the domestic life of the village though her novels have universal significance. She has knowledge of a certain aspect of domestic life and she deals with that aspect in her novels. Austen’s novels show us the inner lives of her characters, and depict the contemporary system of patriarchy. Being a moralist, Jane

Austen believes in right and wrong and seeks for justice in the society. Austen is the writer of familial affairs as her novels explore the problems of a family in relation to patriarchal society of her age. Most of her novels represent everyday life of society and mingle satire and sentiment.

The time of late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century when Jane Austen wrote was patriarchal. Women did not have their own individual identity and they could not realize their autonomous existence. The atmosphere of the society for women was unfavorable. The female writer had to struggle more than male writers to establish themselves. There was no organization that favored women. As a result, women could not develop the sense of unity nor could participate in the activities of the social world. The male governed society laughed at women and ridiculed their arts, so the female's works did not flourish in Austen's time. However, to make their works popular, some female writers disguised their names. When Austen appeared in the literary field, the Age of Reason was about to end and the Romanticism was emerging as a dominant literary movement. Miss Austen wrote in the Romantic era but her style and temperament seems to be classical.

Jane Austen was writing novels in the period of political turmoil. The whole Europe was plunged into the state of war, causing tremendous political as well as social changes. The instability of Europe led to the execution of French Monarch, Louis 14th in 1783. Thus the whole Europe during Austen's time was in turmoil that ultimately ended in the early nineteenth century with the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo. It was the period of political unrest which caused poverty, unemployment and injustice in England. The very situation of England was reflected in art, music and literature.

The scenario of politics and society was changing tremendously in Austen's time but Austen was quite aloof from the political changes and the state of warfare. She did not give any space to violence and war in her works as she thought it was frightening and painful to the readers. Her fictions were quite different from the events of her time. She was preoccupied with the social norms, and values and the vision of eighteenth century. Her novels neither depict any urban cities nor the complicated life of the people. All the characters of her novel are brought together, either by marriage or by other social ties. Thus, her vision is limited on the unquestioning acceptance of the contemporary society. Critics like Sir Walter Scott his book *Jane Austen's Art* praises Austen's art as "corn fields and collages and meadows," and says that her novels are instructive to "youthful wonderers who may return from their promenade to the ordinary business of life" (108). He appreciates her novels stating that they were witty with a variety of characters and presented a remarkable originality of the middle class society. Margaret Oliphant is one of the female critics who stated: "Austen is not the judge of the men and women she collects round her" (qtd in Robinson 194). Austen's skill was just to pick up what was in environment. Austen's habit was the result of a feminine mind which helped her to identify human psychology.

Austen's novels have aroused intense emotional attachments among readers, and critics. Later, critics started to centralize their criticisms to her texts. For example, George Pellow appreciates: "Austen as the wittiest and the brightest women" (176). He admires Austen's simple description of the common familiar environment and finds her novel entertaining. He adds that Austen possesses one rare faculty: scientific precision in literature and art.

Madeleine Hope Dodds evaluates Austen's heroines with a new perspective. According to Dodds, Austen's heroines are courageous and independent in their thought. Thus Dodds comments:

It is a plea for independence of thought [. . .]. It is one of the curious anomalies of criticism that Miss Austen's heroines are censured nowadays for being prim and colourless, while in her own time they were regarded as dangerously willful and head strong, setting a bad example to other young women. Of the two, the earlier opinion is the more correct. Under their demure air, they all hide strong characters and independent mind. (qtd in Southam 88)

Austen's heroines are the products of her dreams. They are symbols of women's valiance. Like Austen's, Virginia Woolf's feminist feelings are too expressed directly in literature. Indicating Austen's success, she says that Austen achieved it only due to her keen observation and feminine feeling. Woolf praises Austen and her works and says: "Jane is thus a mistress of much emotion than appears upon the surface she stimulates us to supply what is not there" (qtd in O'Neill 26).

Rebecca West, the publisher and bookseller finds a consciousness in Austen, which expresses itself even in the chaotic environment of the Napoleonic wars. West in 1932 praises Austen's feminist feelings and audacious thought in the topic: "The Feminism of Jane Austen in *Jane Austen: the Critical Heritage* (1987) which shows Austen's attitudes contrary to her age" (294).

Modern critics have distinct concepts regarding Jane Austen. Their techniques to criticism are scientific and their perspectives are inventive. Therefore, Austen's novels are better received than they were in the Victorian period. Today, Austen is honored as a fine painter of life. D. W. Harding admires Austen in 1940 for fulfilling

the duty of a citizen that is of the presentation of the comic foible and amiable weaknesses of people which shock the society. Harding regards Austen's novels 'interesting and innocuous caricature of life' (42).

Most modern critics stress on her morality. Among them, Malcolm Bradbury in 1962 expresses his ideas: "Austen is concerned with two kinds of world- the social world and the moral world' and she does not simply mirror a society but subtly composes it into existence" (173). According to Brain C. Southam, Austen's novels reflect a mental duality: one is her internal humanity as womanhood and other is the social being as femininity. As Southam says, Austen is a heroine of the feminism. Southam praises Austen's skill to observe the human culture and the women's status in a very patriarchal society. Southam, giving more emphasis on Austen, says in 1987: "Jane Austen was welcomed by Victorian feminists as a fellow spirit of course; Austen is a feminist spirit for ever in literary field" (11).

In this way, Jane Austen is simply considered a pioneer of feminist movement. As a moral social artist, her attempt is just to picture the society as it is where she depicts genuine problems of women and seeks resolution. However, her morality and consciousness lead her to capture humanity broadly in her arts. Austen shows women's intellect as that of men and intends to empower them but she, finally, concludes that women can feel secured in the patriarchal convention.

Although Jane Austen was the novelist of Romantic period, her novels had a great impact on the Victorian period as well. Her novels like the Victorian novels were considered light reading for young, single women. Novels written with this in mind often contained sometimes heavy moral instruction, and, like earlier English literature, attempted to provide an example of the correct kind of conduct. So, a brief discussion of Victorian fiction is desirable.

1.2. An Overview of Victorian Fiction

Victorian literature is the literature produced during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) and it corresponds to the Victorian era. It forms a link and transition between the writers of the romantic period and the very different literature of the 20th century. The 19th century saw the novel become the leading form of literature in English. The works by pre-Victorian writers such as Jane Austen and Walter Scott had perfected both closely observed social satire and adventure stories. Popular works opened a market for the novel amongst a reading public. The 19th century is often regarded as a high point in British literature as well as in other countries such as France, the United States and Russia. Books, and novels in particular, became ubiquitous, and the "Victorian novelist" created legacy works with continuing appeal. Significant Victorian novelists and poets include: Matthew Arnold, the Brontë sisters (Emily, Anne and Charlotte Brontë), Christina Rossetti, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Joseph Conrad, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Wilkie Collins, Charles Dickens, Benjamin Disraeli, George Eliot, George Meredith, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Gissing, Richard Jefferies, Thomas Hardy, A. E. Housman, Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson, Bram Stoker, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Philip Meadows Taylor, Alfred Lord Tennyson, William Thackeray, Anthony Trollope, George MacDonald, G.M. Hopkins, Oscar Wilde, Lewis Carroll and H. G. Wells (although many people consider his writing to be more of the Edwardian age).

Charles Dickens is a prime example of Victorian novelist. Extraordinarily popular in his day with his characters taking on a life of their own beyond the page, Dickens is still one of the most popular and read author of that time. His first real novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, written at only twenty-five, was an overnight success,

and all his subsequent works sold extremely well. He worked diligently and prolifically to produce entertaining writing the public wanted, but also to offer commentary on social challenges of the era. The comedy of his first novel has a satirical edge which pervades his writings. These deal with the plight of the poor and oppressed and end with a ghost story cut short by his death. The slow trend in his fiction towards darker themes is mirrored in much of the writing of the century, and literature after his death in 1870 is notably different from that at the start of the era.

William Thackeray was Dickens's great rival at the time. With a similar style but a slightly more detached, acerbic and barbed satirical view of his characters, he also tended to depict situations of a more middle class flavour than Dickens. He is best known for his novel *Vanity Fair*, subtitled *A Novel without a Hero*, which is also an example of a form popular in Victorian literature: the historical novel, in which very recent history is depicted. Anthony Trollope tended to write about a slightly different part of the structure, namely the landowning and professional classes. The Brontë sisters wrote fiction rather different from that common at the time.

Away from the big cities and the literary society, Haworth in West Yorkshire held a powerhouse of novel writing: the home of the Bronte family. Anne, Charlotte and Emily Bronte had time in their short lives to produce masterpieces of fiction although these were not immediately appreciated by Victorian critics. *Wuthering Heights*, Emily's only work, in particular has violence, passion, the supernatural, heightened emotion and emotional distance, an unusual mix for any novel but particularly at this time. It is a prime example of Gothic Romanticism from a woman's point of view during this period of time, examining class, myth, and gender. Another important writer of the period was George Eliot, a pseudonym which concealed a

woman, Mary Ann Evans, who wished to write novels which would be taken seriously rather than the romances which women of the time were supposed to write.

Victorian novels, influenced as they were by the large sprawling novels of sensibility of the preceding age, tended to be idealized portraits of difficult lives in which hard work, perseverance, love and luck win out in the end; virtue would be rewarded and wrongdoers are suitably punished. They tended to be of an improving nature with a central moral lesson at heart. While this formula was the basis for much of earlier Victorian fiction, the situation became more complex as the century progressed.

In Victorian Society, it could be imagined that if a woman could get married, and could marry a rich man even though the man was not her true love, her marriage could also change her social status. Austen dragged people back to the real world and created a new kind of woman in her fiction. They never took the idea of marrying a man as a life-devoted purpose. They purposed true love, which was based on mutual equality and respect. From women's liberation, feminist consciousness was helpful for women to develop themselves and realized their ideal conscientiously. From the practical society, it provided women with theoretical basis for realizing their life aim. Specifically speaking, feminist consciousness contained the different and complex women's values they're thoughts on the career, the right, the attitude toward happiness, the view of marriage and the value, etc. Jane Austen's novel *Emma* was basically a biography and a mature one.

1.3. Critical Analysis of *Emma*

The novel, *Emma* is a one of courtship and marriage; it begins with a marriage (Miss Taylor and Mr. Weston), and ends with three others, as well as observing in action those of Emma's sister Isabella and John Knightley, and of Mr. and Mrs. Elton,

definitely a negative role model. According to Jane Austen, for marriage to be successful it must be an intrinsic part of, and connected to the fabric of the genuinely ordered society, and thus represent a true moral and ethical reality. We recall her well-known statement in a letter in 1814 to her niece Fanny Knight that “anything is to be preferred or endured rather than marrying without Affection. Nothing can be compared to the misery of being bound without love” (18 November 1814), a point expressing a most basic value of Austen’s view of marriage. It must never occur just to fulfill societal and economic structures, which would be highly unethical as well as lead to personal misery. Instead, there has to be genuine “affection,” or a true “attachment,” as she was so fond of saying, which engenders genuine ethical and moral behavior (Jackson 15).

The marriage theme in the Austen novel is fulfilled by the “good match”; society coalesces around the well-matched couple, and moral integrity, equality of being (though limited by the patriarchal structure of the time), and spiritual insight are the result. The characters become more fulfilled, and the heroine becomes what she should be in moral terms as well as in her personal happiness. The basis for a moral equality is found between the heroine and the hero, and in a sense a new order of society is formed, outside of and counter to the hierarchical, striving, and unethical elements of conventional society. In *Emma* Mrs. Elton represents this position to the extreme. Some who misread Austen may think that she merely endorses and reinforces the conventional structures of society, but such is not the case; the necessity for inner truth and reality is implicit behind the outer social structures. But Emma does not easily reach this stage of being, for she makes many errors of judgment in her journey toward maturity. For example, in her role as social snob, she is condescending and looks down on and inaccurately perceives a character such as

Robert Martin, but hers is a false perception of class structure. She fails to understand and acknowledge the fine qualities that would make him the right mate for Harriet, something Mr. Knightley knows all along. She strives too hard to “make matches” and in the process is mistaken and does wrong – even does “evil,” in her convoluted matchmaking for Harriet: “there was still such an evil hanging over her in the hour of explanation with Harriet, as made it impossible for Emma to be ever perfectly at ease” (139). Her errors involve not only Harriet, but all the other major characters, including Mr. Knightley, and most of all, and most unknowingly, herself. The result is chaos and confusion.

This, then, is the dilemma of Emma: she is a victim of her own illusions and creates a world of her own fancy, but it is not the real world, according to Andrew Wright, who notes Emma’s “supreme self-confidence and serene delusion” (135). Emma is so engrossed in herself that she radically misconceives even her own attachment to Mr. Knightley. Her fancy, her imagination, and her manipulation of people’s lives are all based on a false perception of reality, despite her grandiose trust in her own judgment. She is referred to as an “imaginist,” a word created by Jane Austen in this instance (Tave 7). At the very beginning of the novel we learn that Emma has an exalted and vain view of herself; “the real evils of Emma’s situation were the power of having rather too much her own way and a disposition to think a little too well of herself; these were the disadvantages which threatened alloy to her many enjoyments” (5). This statement suggestively foreshadows her coming tribulations. She must learn that people have an inner life of their own, apart from her perception of what she thinks that inner life should be. “With insufferable vanity had she believed herself in the secret of everybody’s feelings, with unpardonable arrogance proposed to arrange everybody’s destiny” (412-13).

When Emma actually sees her mistakes and the harm they have caused others, as well as herself, she finally begins to attain a new level of insight and maturity. The moral development in the novel suggests the need for the diminishment of Emma in the social sphere, a new position for her, but an appropriate place in the scale of value, rather than one defined by her self-aggrandizing ego. When Emma grows in a moral way as a result of her recognition of objective truth, she evolves into a more integrated person, a better person, and in the process gains what is truly right for her as an individual. The significance of the moral aspects of the novel is addressed by Arnold Kettle; “the prevailing interest in *Emma* is not one of mere ‘aesthetic’ delight but a moral interest,” and Austen’s “ability to involve us intensely in her scene and people is absolutely inseparable from her moral concern. The moral is never spread on top; it is bound up always in the quality of feeling evoked. The delight we find in reading *Emma* has in fact a moral basis” (114).

In addition to understanding the novel as an in-depth study of a single character, its moral aspects can be viewed within a larger context, set within a more comprehensive scope—in relation to classical Greek tragedy; in the context of a Christian spiritual world view; in the comic tradition brought to its height by Shakespeare, and in a psychological perspective, particularly from the point of view of Carl Jung. In all of these approaches moral and ethical issues are implicit, and spiritual evolution is the outcome of the process of internal change.

Classical tragedy embodies the concepts of *hubris*, the excess of self-pride that brings about a tragic fall; *hamartia*, the error or mistake of the tragic hero; and finally *anagnorisis*, the self-recognition of that error by the hero—all concepts named and analyzed by Aristotle in the *Poetics*. The character of Emma manifests these ideas, for she has too much self-pride for her own good. One critic speaks of her

“enchanting hubris” (Harris 169), another of the “distorting power of her egoistic imagination” (Litz 140). She does harm through her mistakes as well as through her misperceptions of others and of herself. Finally, she experiences a true recognition of her own errors after the Box Hill incident when she is soundly rebuked by Mr. Knightley for insulting Miss Bates for being dull. Miss Bates represents, in the words of Darrel Mansell, “the simple unintelligent world that Emma has been disdainful in favour of her own heightened imagination” (169); her disdain and impertinence toward Miss Bates suggest excessive self-pride, a sense of *hubris*. From the Box Hill experience Emma begins to grow morally, but then her understanding of her own feelings is dramatically enhanced when she realizes with horror the possibility of Harriet’s marrying Mr. Knightley. “Such an elevation on her side! Such a debasement on his! (413). . . . It darted through her with the speed of an arrow that Mr. Knightley must marry no one but herself” (408). This realization “breaks the closed narcissistic system in which the world always gives back to her a flattering image of herself, perfection achieved, and she comes to see, as we have seen, the ‘real evils’ of thinking too well of herself and always having her own way. [. . .] Emma displays for us her faults and the serious moral consequences of her misguided actions” (Crosby 90-91).

In Greek tragedy the hero with too much *hubris* perceives the truth, but it is “too little, too late,” as discovered by Oedipus in *Oedipus Rex* and Creon in *Antigone*. Growth through suffering occurs in the tragic hero, but he is destroyed as a result of error. The tragic fall occurs, and unhappiness, disaster, and complete disruption of the social order result. Happily, Emma and her friends are spared this fate, though Emma’s errors do create unhappiness, disunity, disruption, and mismatched couples. But led by Mr. Knightley’s patriarchal guidance, she realizes her errors; the plot is

unscrambled and we have the delightful comic ending, with each person rightfully restored to his or her “true” mate.

Before this natural pairing can occur, however, Emma must experience what could be identified as the Christian cycle of sin, repentance, redemption, and grace. Religion and the church are not present as an overt positive influence in Austen’s novels; indeed, they are notable for their absence. The only representative of the church in *Emma*, Mr. Elton, is distinguished by his secular, decidedly unspiritual demeanor, and by his social climbing and materialistic wife, an absurd caricature of the traditional “minister’s wife.” Austen’s novels lack religious or specific spiritual energy; rather, their power lies in the values, ethics, and moral force present in each of the works. *Emma*, according to Jesse Wolfe, seems “to argue a Christian ethic, but not a personal God” (111); it is a “secular Christian ethic. Such an ethic sees pride as the primal sin, and the human condition as fallen, i.e., inevitably self-centered” (117). Despite the lack of conventional religious aspects, the values and the process of recognition of wrongdoing, and the ultimate insight that results, can be interpreted as traditionally Christian in nature. I believe that Austen was profoundly Christian in her value system, though she never directly calls it that, and that she understood the path of inner enlightenment in terms of Christian principles, though perhaps not in terms of spirituality in its highest mystical sense.

In Emma’s process of inner revelation, she literally undergoes a conversion; she must suffer “the dark night of the soul,” as identified by the sixteenth-century Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross, and she must repent in order to come into a state of grace, harmony, and right relationships. When Mr. Knightley reprimands Emma for her rude treatment of Miss Bates at Box Hill, an incident that has been called “one of the most intense moments in the whole of Jane Austen” (Lerner 145),

he says to her, “I will tell you truths while I can” (375). She was “vexed beyond what could have been expressed,” and then she weeps. “Emma felt the tears running down her cheeks almost all the way home, without being at any trouble to check them, extraordinary as they were” (376). Emma’s tears show her pain—the beginning of her self-recognition, her “*anagnorisis*.” The next day she plans to visit Miss Bates and apologize, and here Austen actually uses the Christian terms of “contrition” and “penitence”: “In the warmth of true contrition she would call upon her the very next morning, and it should be the beginning on her side of a regular, equal kind of intercourse. . . . She would not be ashamed of the appearance of the penitence so justly and truly hers” (377-78). This scene is reminiscent of an earlier one in which Emma must “undergo the necessary penance of communication” (141) and tell Harriet the truth about Mr. Elton. The Christian, moral vocabulary is also evident in this passage with the use of the words “confession,” “shame,” and the expression “to be in charity with herself”: “The confession completely renewed her first shame—and the sight of Harriet’s tears made her think that she should never be in charity with herself again” (141), a phrase implying being morally and spiritually reconciled with what is true, what is right. But at this point Emma has not truly repented her manipulative deeds; shortly thereafter when taking Harriet for a visit to the Martins that turns out to last fourteen minutes, she still maintains her erroneous class bias by lamenting that the Martins were not of a “*little* higher” rank; “as it was, how could she have done otherwise? –Impossible! – She could not repent. They must be separated; but there was a great deal of pain in the process—so much to herself at this time. . . .” (187). At the end of the novel, when Emma has to inform Harriet of yet another confusion, the truth that Mr. Knightley is not available for her, “she felt for Harriet

with pain and with contrition” (431). Fortunately, Harriet is saved any long-lasting pain when shortly thereafter she is reconciled with Robert Martin.

Only when Emma suffers herself and realizes that she might lose Mr. Knightley can she genuinely transform. Her dark mood is reflected in the unsettled weather, just as in the Greek tragedies and Shakespeare’s plays *Stormy Weather* mirrors the disruptive nature of human relationships that are out of sorts: “The evening of this day was very long and melancholy at Hartfield. The weather added what it could of gloom. A cold, stormy rain set in, and nothing of July appeared but in the trees and shrubs, which the wind was despoiling, and the length of the day, which only made such cruel sight no longer visible” (421). When the weather clears, the stage is set for the transformation leading to the resolution of the novel; the secret engagement of Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax is revealed, Mr. Knightley appears, and Emma acknowledges that she ““seem[s] to have been doomed to blindness My blindness to what was going on, led me to act . . . in a way that I must always be ashamed of, and I was very foolishly tempted to say and do many things which may well lay me open to unpleasant conjectures”” (425, 426). Also, the error of Mr. Knightley’s perception that Emma cared for Frank is rectified. In his recognition that he has been jealous of Frank and in love with Emma, “Mr. Knightley undergoes a spiritual discovery that is faintly like Emma’s own” (Mansell 174). Mr. Knightley declares his intentions to Emma, and, within half an hour, all is well and happy: “This one half hour had given to each the same precious certainty of being beloved, had cleared from each the same degree of ignorance, jealousy, or distrust” (432). Truth emerges from concealment; insight and understanding replace blindness and delusion; redemption and a state of grace conquer sin and the darkness of the soul. Happiness, the right social order, and true affection reign. This remind one of comic

ending in the tradition of Shakespeare's comedies such as *Twelfth Night*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, when mismatched couples are restored to their rightful mates. In an insightful analysis documenting the parallels between *Emma* and Shakespeare's great comedy of romantic mischief, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Jocelyn Harris notes that they are alike in several ways: "the hot pursuit of lovers through a midsummer landscape, matching and mismatching of couples, female friendship and its betrayal, and the movement toward tolerance, forbearance and generosity at the end" (174). In the midsummer madness of Shakespeare's play, and in *Emma*, one finds confusion and delusion, the "blunders and blindness of love." The unraveling occurs swiftly, and we have the joyful ending of love and harmony in the now appropriately matched mates. At the end, Emma's mistakes are acknowledged and obstacles overcome including Mr. Woodhouse's opposition to marriage; he has an anti-comic influence in the novel, in terms of being anti-marriage, though he is "comical" or amusing in his opposition. After the forces blocking the three primary relationships are removed, we have a flurry of wedding-marriages that are socially suitable and based on love, on a true "attachment," and therefore meet Jane Austen's criteria for a good match: Jane and Frank, Emma and Mr. Knightley, and Harriet and her first and best suitor, who never flagged in his love, Robert Martin, and whom Mr. Knightley knew all along should marry Harriet.

In terms of individual development, we can view Emma as a character in the context of modern psychoanalytic theory, specifically that of C. G. Jung. We follow the development of Emma's personality, her psyche, and see her "human growth and development" as she progresses slowly, often reluctantly, from her extreme self-absorption toward self-knowledge and integrity. Integrity suggests the integration of the personality, the unifying of the disparate, fragmented parts of the psyche into an

integrated whole, a maturing of the psyche. Of course, Emma is young—“nearly twenty-one years old” (5), and the time span of the novel is very short, but in that period we have a forceful character development that keeps us with Emma through all her trials. Austen reveals her understanding of psychological behavior and principles long before they were named and codified by modern psychoanalysis.

In the following chapters, the text *Emma* will be studied through the angle of feminism and gender issues and the researcher will carve out the picture how feminist issues overwhelmingly dominate the text and simultaneously analyze the text in connection with significant feminist writers such Virginia Woolf, Simon de Beauvoir and others.

Chapter 2. Study of Gender Issues and Feminism

Gender studies is a field of interdisciplinary study which analyzes the phenomenon of gender. It is sometimes related to studies of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality and location. In gender studies, the term "gender" is used to refer to the social and cultural constructions of masculinities and femininities, not to the state of being male or female in its entirety. In *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, Wilfred L. Guerin expresses the same view. He says, "Gender studies examines how gender is less determined by nature than it is by culture" (236). The field emerged from a number of different areas such as the sociology of the 1950s, the later theories of the psychoanalyst Jaques Lacan and the work of feminists such as Judith Butler. Each field came to regard "gender" as a practice, sometimes referred to as something that is performative.

'Gender' is a term used to distinguish social and cultural sexual identity from biological sex. When we talk of gender we discuss the socio-cultural and psychological behavior of people that makes the distinction which is associated with the biology of the individual. Gender studies the roles and behavior of individual that creates a separate identity of man and woman and tries to analyze those situations in detail which otherwise would not have created. According to Joan Scott, "Gender becomes a way of denoting 'cultural construction' – the entirely social creation of ideas about appropriate roles for men and women. Gender is in this definition, a social category imposed on a sexed body" (1056).

While sex is biological, gender is psychological and cultural term which the individual learns from the society in the process of socialization

and is not the same in every society. It differs from society to society and culture to culture that creates distinct feature and a separate identity of an individual. So it is implied that the sex which we carry from birth and is biological is universal – same all over the world – and cannot be changed whereas gender, socially constructed is not the same throughout the world. This is the reason why we find different cultural practices and different roles of man and women in various societies and cultures. This can be implied that gender is socially or culturally constructed behavior of individual man and woman and can be changed according to the need and desire of the individual and society. History shows that gender roles have been changing over time and as required by the circumstances. The concept of gender is based on stereotypes of male and female behavior that are often associated with female sex. For example, in most of the cases women rear children and do the household chores because they get hardly any time and opportunity to work outside. This has created a big gap between man and woman in terms of areas ranging from household works to office works to other social works. This has led to the discrimination between the two sexes.

2.1. Gender Roles

Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive. These gender roles have been used very successfully to justify such inequities, which still occur today, excluding women from equal access to leadership and decision-making position – in the family as well as in politics, academia and the corporate world – paying men higher wages than women for doing the same job – if women are even able to obtain the job –

and convincing women that they are not fit for careers in such areas as mathematics and engineering. Many people today believe such inequities are a thing of the past because anti-discriminatory laws have been passed, such as the law that guarantees women equal pay for equal work. However, these laws are frequently side-stepped. For example, an employer can pay a woman less for performing the same work as a man simply by giving her a different job title. So, women still are paid poorly in every society in comparison to their male counterparts.

Patriarchy is, thus, by definition sexist, which means it promotes the belief that women are innately inferior to men. This belief in the inborn inferiority of women is called “biological essentialisms” because it is based on biological differences between the sexes that are considered part of our unchanging essence as men and women (84). A striking illustration is the word hysteria, which derives from the Greek word for womb (hystera) and refers to psychological disorders deemed peculiar to women and characterized by over-emotional, extremely irrational behaviour. Feminists do not deny the biological differences between men and women; in fact, many feminists celebrate those differences. But they do not agree that such differences as physical size, shape, and body chemistry make men naturally superior to women; for example, more intelligent, more logical, more courageous, or better leaders. Feminism therefore distinguishes between the word ‘sex,’ which refers to our biological constitution as female or male, and the word gender, which refers to our cultural programming as feminine or masculine, which are categories created by society rather than by nature.

The belief that men are superior to women has been used, feminists have observed, to justify and maintain the male monopoly of positions of economic, political and social power, in other words, to keep women powerless by denying them the educational and occupational means of acquiring economic, political, and social power. That is, the inferior position long occupied by women in patriarchal society has been culturally, not biologically, produced. For example, it is a patriarchal assumption, rather than a fact, that more women than men suffer from hysteria. But because it has been defined as a female problem, hysterical behavior in men won't be diagnosed as such; instead, it will be ignored or given another less damaging name, for example, shortness temper. Of course, not all men accept patriarchal ideology and those who don't – those who don't believe, for example, that because men generally have been endowed by nature with stronger muscles, they have been endowed with any other natural superiority – are often derided, by both patriarchal men and women, as weak and unmanly, as if the only way to be a man were to be patriarchal man.

2.2. Feminism

This gender role created gender discrimination. As a result, feminist movement emerged which seeks equal right and status with men to decide on their careers and life. The patriarchy considers women weaker in every sphere of familial and social life. Because of this biological or physical construction and deep-rooted gender conception, men dominate women. Thus, the main objective of feminism has been to revolt against such ideology and parochial gender construction. Nowadays, the female writers have begun writing advocating for the emancipation of women from the

oppressive patriarchy and have tried to establish women's position in male-dominated society.

Feminine and masculine relation has got predominance over the nature based male and female sexual relation at present. Domination of men over women in every social, economic, cultural and religious milieu of human life has precipitated the hierarchical power relation. This partiality, historically current, sustains itself in the form of male-domination against female subordination through ideological practices. The patriarchy fosters the gender-based inequalities that describe man as superior and women as inferior, man as powerful and the woman as powerless. One of the leading American feminists, Kate Millett, sees patriarchy as “grotesque, increasingly militaristic, increasingly greedy, colonialist, imperialistic, and brutal, with a terrible disregard of civil liberties, of democratic forms” (511).

As time passes, feminine consciousness gradually emerges among women and makes them realize the inhuman treatment of patriarchal system. From antiquity, women have gradually felt a need to launch a united movement against these injustices, inequalities and violence so as to eliminate discrimination and narrow the hierarchy between the two sexes, as Millett believes: “You don’t have any oppressive system without its continuance being assured by members of the oppressed groups, that's true of oppressed people” (511). This led to the birth of feminism.

Feminism is concerned with women's voices, which are silenced in the patriarchal ideology. The feminists try to break the silence of women. So, Feminism is a political movement which has become successful in giving due place to the writing of non-canonical women writers. Feminism has come

into practice as an attack against female marginalization as our society and civilization is pervasively patriarchal, that is, it is male-centered and controlled and is organized and conducted in such a way as to subordinate women to men in all cultural domains: familial, religious, political, economic, social, legal and artistic (Abrams 89). It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature- which is described as feminine. By this cultural process the masculine in our culture has come to be widely defined as active, dominating, adventurous, rational, creative, the feminine by systematic opposition to such traits has come to be identified as passive, acquiescent, timid, emotional and conventional.

Feminism deals with the norms and values that belong to the women's issues. Despite the diversity, feminism is often demonstrated as a single entity and somehow concerned with gender equality and freedom. Chris Beasley defines feminism as a "doctrine suggesting that women are systematically disadvantaged in modern society and as advocating equal opportunities for men and women" (27). The main common theoretical assumption as shared by all branches of the movement is that there has been an historical tradition of male exploitation of woman.

By the time women became conscious of their position and discrimination in society, many feminists raised their voice to end this discrimination between men and women. It shows the consciousness of women who have begun to reject their own passivity. Feminism came into existence for the sake of women rights and human equality. The main aim of the feminist movement was to develop women's personalities. It, therefore, studied women as people who were either oppressed or suppressed or

rejected the freedom of personal expression. All women writers who struggled against patriarchy to contain their womanhood were generally, considered feminist. Men may also be feminists but they cannot be feminists in the real sense of the term because of lack of feminine experience. That's why, unlike ancient women, today feminists are proud of their existence. In this regard, Toril Moi, a feminist has written: “the word feminist or feminism are political labels indicating support for the aim of the new women's movement” (187).

2.3. Leading Feminist Thinkers and Writers

In fact, feminism has probably existed as long as there have been women, even if the word did not really enter the English language. Many people consider that Mary Wollstonecraft, a British political thinker, was the first woman who raised her voice against the patriarchy and for the rights of women. In her essay, “*A Vindication of the Rights of Women*” (1792), she says that “the neglected education of many fellow creatures is the grand source of the misery [. . .]” (Ruth 44). She also argues in the same essay that women are turned into weak and petty creatures by sheer neglect of proper education and by the moral and manners which are setup by the society. The issues for the rights of women had been raised by some of male writers as well as women writers earlier. John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869) and Margaret Fuller's, *Women in Nineteenth Century* (1845) are good examples.

In 1960, with the advent of post modernism and post structuralism feminist study also found a significant place in literary theoretical front. Besides, its political and cultural alignment in several streams emerged to define women's studies and it received a notable form of a theory named “feminism” which is

such an elusive, elaborate and diversified field. Feminist criticism which enunciated as a movement in literary criticism since 1960s emphasizes a different kind of reading to literature breaking the traditional monolithic way of examining literature. Although numerous writers were raising question against patriarchy yet some of the outstanding feminist writers of the twentieth century are Virginia Woolf, Simon de Beauvoir, Elaine Showalter, Marry Ellman, Julliet Mitchell, Helene Cixous, Troil Moi, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar.

Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedman, Kate Millett, Germane Greer, Marry Ellman are the feminists who brought a new consciousness in women's mind generating new ideas in women's moment. They denied the belief, assumption and values defined by patriarchal institution, which validate the vulnerability of male domination and female operation. Kate Millett, in her book *Sexual Politics*, focuses on the idea of ideology in 'sexual politics.' "The unequal relation of domination and subordination is what Millett called sexual politics" (Sheldon 138). Millett opines that sex is biologically determined and gender is cultural concept. She used the term patriarchy to describe the course of women's operation.

The first blow on patriarchal structure was given by Virginia Woolf in her famous work *A Room of One's Own* (1928). She believed that women had always faced social and economic obstacles to their literary ambition. She was also very conscious of the imposed limitations of her own education. In this book she explores dipper concerns- men's anger to women, misunderstanding between the sexes and above all psychological conditions under which women were brought up.

Looking at the conditions of women writers in the past Woolf portrays very pitiable condition of theirs. She says that to write anything at the time was considered a sin for their attempt was not only criticized and condemned but also at the same time they were disfigured and deformed. Society had prevented a woman writer from writing openly. So, she had to write surreptitiously: “She must have shut herself up in a room in the country to write and been torn asunder by bitterness and scruples perhaps though her husband was of the kindest and their married life – perfection” (819). In the past, a woman writer was not taken positively and provided a separate room for literary creation. Her talent was not counted and valued; so it did not get ground to flourish. As a result, it ultimately turned dull and uncreative.

Simon de Beauvoir, an existentialist feminist critic and writer of France, strongly opposed the tendency of viewing women as ‘second sex’ born to assist their male guardians. She believes that existence always precedes essence. Beauvoir objects to men's attitude of discriminating between sexes as ‘self’ and ‘other’ men being the former and women the latter. Men writers have described women as 'flesh' the one related to 'nature'. In the feminist world, a subtle and radical critical mood was launched by Simon de Beauvoir with her book entitled *The Second Sex* (1949). Through this book, Beauvoir established the principle of modern feminism. She focuses upon pitiable conditions of women in patriarchal society stating that where a woman tries to define herself, she starts by saying “I am a woman; no man would do so . . . man defines the human, not women” (Selden 134). It reveals the fundamental asymmetry between masculine and feminine; she argues that “men defines the human, not women. Woman is riveted into a lopsided relation with man, he is the one, she is the other” (Selden 135).

According to her, all the male writers assume the female as negative. In the book, the problems Beauvoir emphasizes is that women perceive man as self (as subject) and themselves as other. And she explicitly exposes the condition of women so that they could realize their existence. She says:

Women have been essential as the one born. To be a wife or a mother. But she is stripped off motherly rights because motherly rights overpowered by fatherly rights. A wife's duty is to be in the bed to gratify the husband's lust but the husband is not aware whether he is gratifying the lost of his wife. (145)

Therefore, the woman is inessential in the eyes of men who want to accept her as "other". She vociferously refutes the notion of female essence prior to individual existence and attacks the patriarchal myths of women that presume the false essence.

Elaine Showalter, a prominent American feminist and literary critic, has formulated three categories to adjust British women writers in the past and present according to their intensity of female voice in her book, *A Literature of Their Own* (1986). They are feminine, feminist and female phase. The first phase dated 1840 to 1880, includes the major writers like Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot and Bronte sisters imitated and internalized the dominant male aesthetic standards. Their works dealt with the domestic and social background. Women wrote with an effort to equal those intellectual achievements of male culture. They were so curious that they imitated the masculine mode which they tried to perform it in feminine concern. The second phase dated from 1880 to 1920, was a challenging period for women for self demand and to protest upon their cruelty. It includes the writers such as Elizabeth Robins and Olive Schreiner,

who protested against male values. The third phase is dated from 1920 onwards. Rebecca West, Katherine Mansfield and Dorothy Richardson were the feminist writers of this period. In this period, women were more aware of their genders. They realized their importance in society and so, this phase is a phase of self discovery in which women's experiences are their main purpose, they rejected both imitation and protest.

Helene Cixous is modern critic, like Showalter and Beauvoir she also gives importance to women's existence and her participation in society. According to her, "Women's imaginary is inexhaustible and her writing is wonderful like music and painting" (541). Elsewhere, she writes, "I write women, women must write women and man, man". She further expresses her experience of a woman who is a unique being. In her famous essay, "The Laugh of the Medusa", Cixous calls for women to put their bodies into their writing. She says: "A woman's body with its thousand and one threshold of order [. . .] will make the old single grooved mother tongue reverberate with more than one language" (151). Here, Cixous emphasizes the power of women's body.

2.4. Types of Feminism

Feminism is not a simple or unified philosophy. Feminists are plural. Their views, concepts and approaches change from one another in course of time and by the trend of theory. Women's state and their oppression and subordination are variously explained under different types of feminism.

2.5. Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism is characterized by an individualistic emphasis on equality. It was most popular in the 1950's and 1960's when many civil rights movements were taking place. According to this philosophy, society itself

does not need a major transformation, but rather laws need to be changed and opportunities have to be opened up to allow women to become equals in society. To a liberal feminist, evidence of progress is seen largely by the numbers of women in positions previously occupied by men, especially powerful positions. In the United States and much of the Western world, liberal feminism is the most mainstream form of feminism. Rachel Khan-hun further elaborates liberal feminism:

Liberal feminism focuses on the concept of unequal pay for equal work and unequal pay for comparable work and it leads many political and legal efforts to change our system in accordance with these beliefs. It focuses on providing more opportunities for choice for both women and men and points to changes that have occurred through such efforts. (268)

Thus, liberal feminism is responsible for many important acts of legislation that have greatly increased the status of women, including reforms in welfare, education and health.

2.6. Socialist or Marxist Feminism

Socialist feminism – sometimes known as Marxist feminism – is different than liberal feminism because it emphasizes that true equality will not be achieved without major transformation within society – particularly economic transformation. Socialist feminists argue that there are fundamental inequalities built into a capitalist society where power and capital are distributed unevenly. Thus, it's not enough for women to individually work to rise to powerful positions in society; rather, power needs to be redistributed throughout society. Wilfred L. Guerin observes:

Marxist feminists do not separate personal identity from class identity, and they direct attention to the often nameless underpinnings of cultural production, including the conditions of production of texts, such as the economics of the publishing industry. (234)

So, liberal feminists focus on individual empowerment, while socialist feminists focus on collective change and empowerment.

2.7. Radical or Cultural Feminism

Although radical feminism is similar to socialist feminism because it emphasizes the need for dramatic social change in order to achieve genuine equality for women, radical feminists argue that Marxist explanation for women's oppression is inadequate. They usually clash with the ideals of the liberal feminist, because radical feminists believe that "society must be changed at its core in order to dissolve patriarchy, not just through acts of legislation" (Daly 3). Radical feminists believe that society is extremely patriarchal, and until patriarchy is transformed on all levels, the system will remain unjust. A minority of radical feminists are separatist feminists, who believe that men and women need to maintain separate institutions and relationships.

2.8. Third Wave Feminism

Third Wave feminism is popular among younger women, many of whom are children of feminists from the 1970s, who are referred to as Second Wave Feminists. Similar to liberal feminism, Third Wave feminism is very individualistic. Although it does not reject political activism, Third Wave feminism is focused more on personal empowerment as a starting place

for social change. Third Wave feminism celebrates the construction of individual identities in a complex, postmodern world, and invites women to define themselves as they wish to explore multiple possibilities. Collen Mack-Canty observes that third-wave feminism, in particular, refutes “dualistic thinking in general thinking that divides the world into hierarchical dichotomies with one aspect regarded as superior and the "other" regarded inferior, recognizing instead the existence of multiplicities” (158).

2.9. Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism draws from and links together both the women's movement and the environmental movement. Ecofeminism draws parallels between the domination and exploitation of both women and nature. Ecofeminists believe that patriarchy and male domination is harmful to women, as well as the environment. There is a link between a male's desire to dominate unruly women and wilderness. Men feel as though they must tame and conquer both in order to have complete power. Ecofeminists say that it is this desire that destroys both women and the Earth. In this regard, Vandana Shiva writes:

Ecofeminists believe that women have a central role in preserving nature because woman understand and are one with nature. There is a deep connection that men cannot understand between the Earth and women, hence the terms Mother Nature or Mother Earth. Women need to use their superior insight to reveal how humans can live in harmony with each other and with nature. (7)

Thus, ecofeminism regards the oppression of women and nature as interconnected.

To sum up, the term "feminism" explores the domination, exploitation, injustice and inequality prevalent in male-dominated society where women's rights are violated in different terms and conditions. It also attempts to end various kinds of oppressions against women for their emancipation. From the short discussion done above, it can be summed up that feminism is not a simple or unified philosophy. Many different women – and even men – call themselves feminists, and the beliefs of these groups of people vary quite a bit.

2.10. Contribution of Feminism to Changing Women's Role in Society

Throughout history, women have always aimed for a recognized place in society. Guided by their own field of knowledge and expertise, women like Marie Curie in science, Mary Wollstonecraft in literary writing, Simone de Beauvoir in philosophical existentialist debate, and Marie Stopes, in medicine, to name a few, have brought about an awareness of the role of women in any walks of life. The Feminist movement has forced the issue of women's rights to come into people's awareness. Many feminist thinkers and writers have helped redefine and consolidate the nature of women's place in society. Today the spread of global women's organizations and the impact of women's contributions to society show that progress has been made.

Today, as a direct result of feminist theory the women's liberation movement of the 1960s—which urged the passage of antidiscrimination laws in the workplace and challenged societal beliefs that “a woman's place was in the home”—the barriers that prevented women from seeking careers have been eliminated. Although many

feminists maintain that women still do not have full equality in the professional world, most people agree that feminism has dramatically expanded women's job opportunities. Over half of the work force is now composed of women, and many women have attained positions of prestige.

Clearly, the advancement of women within the workplace is among feminism's many accomplishments, successes that include voting rights, economic independence and property rights for women, equal opportunities for education, and a greater awareness of rape and domestic violence. However, not everyone agrees that women's entrance into the workplace has been entirely beneficial to women. Some contend that women are now forced to sacrifice their personal lives—either by choosing not to have families or by severely restricting the time spent with their families—in order to survive within a competitive workplace. As columnist Suzanne Fields explains,

Feminists' changes have made it easier for my daughter to have broader choices than women had growing up when feminism was in its insurgency. She knows she has work options if she chooses them, options that the 1950s generation of mothers did not have. But she has no illusions about what it means to be a working mother. A pressured and stressful job can't compete in the quality of life categories with cooking for her husband and son. (11)

Feminism has altered predominant perspectives in a wide range of areas within both Western and Eastern society, ranging from culture to law. This theory has inspired many feminist activists around the world to campaign for women's legal rights – rights of contract, property rights, voting rights, for women's right to bodily integrity and autonomy, for abortion rights, and for reproductive rights, including access to

contraception and quality prenatal care. It has also motivated women to seek protection of them from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape; for workplace rights, including maternity leave and equal pay; against misogyny; and against other forms of gender-specific discrimination against women. For all these things, the credit goes to feminism which has brought about a massive transformation in the role and status women in all kinds of society.

Now to return to the study of Jane Austen, she reappraised and had the esteem for women's value advocating the development of women's liberation. She possessed a keen realistic insight and she ruthlessly exposed and severely criticized some maladies of the society, so her novels are characterized by the unique feminine and keen realistic insight. Her novels are concerned about women's lives and their unfair conditions in society, especially in education, marriage, etc.

This thesis is concerned with equality and independence as the feminist elements reflected through the character of Emma Woodhouse as seen in Jane Austen's *Emma*. It explores how equality and independence are reflected through the character of Emma Woodhouse; it tries to find out the ways equality and independence are reflected through Emma Woodhouse' matchmaking, the role which was generally performed by males, and through her relationship with Mr. Knightley. Her determined matchmaking certainly represents a muted protest against the narrow scope of a wealthy woman's life, especially that of a woman who is single and childless.

Chapter 3. Role Reversal: A Feminist Study of Austen's *Emma*

Women's roles in the nineteenth century were very limited. They were not considered as significant beings; therefore, their status was always dependent upon the males in their families. When they had reached the age of maturity, their fathers were busy with the business of finding the right husbands for them. This condition is the effect of both the general assumption of women's inferiority compared to men, and the deprivation of women in the public areas. Thus, a woman must enter matrimony, either she wanted it or not, because she was told that matrimony was the only honourable thing for a woman to do, and because she cannot support herself independently regarding financial needs. This general opinion is refuted by Emma Woodhouse. By having the financial independence, being the daughter of the richest man in town, and the habit of constantly being the dominant figure in her family, Emma shows her sense of equality between men and women by refusing the notion of marriage as the only thing that a woman can achieve, and proving that a single woman can still have significance as a person. She proves herself a stronger person in terms of her relationship with the men, such as Mr. Knightley. Moreover, Emma involves herself in matchmaking, which shows the reversal of roles generally performed by men. So, her determined role of matchmaking certainly represents a muted protest against the narrow scope of a wealthy woman's life, especially that of a woman who is single and childless. In this way, her role and relationships with others in the society show Emma's sense of equality and independence.

Emma's refusal to the notion of marriage as women's only achievement can be recognized from her choice to be a matchmaker – the role she opts for to achieve equality and independence as men. Traditionally, this role was performed by males. The story of Emma is sometimes considered as the story of matchmaking, but from a

feminist perspective. Although matchmaking itself is not the essence of the novel, it covers almost the entire novel. From the very beginning of the novel, Emma has declared that she has a gift in matchmaking and she plans to perform this role whenever she finds it to be necessary, compatible, and amusing. Actually, Emma's determination to act as a matchmaker is something that is forced, rather than chosen to do. It does not mean that she is literally forced by someone else, but that there are some conditions that make her do it

Physically, Emma reflects the image of the ideal woman in the nineteenth century. She is "handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her" (3). It is obvious that Emma has had most of the qualities, which are considered to be ideal; she is young, beautiful, rich, and amiable. Yet, unlike other women both in the story and in reality, Emma does not want to get married.

Emma's refusal of the ideal of marriage as a necessity for women can also be proven from her opinion about being a single woman. In her argument with Harriet, Emma argues that a single woman still can enjoy all the experiences of a married woman. She can still have activities, and can still receive and give love and attention toward other people. She tells Harriet:

If I know myself, Harriet, mine is an active, busy mind, with a great many independent resources; and I do not perceive why I should be more in want of employment at forty or fifty than one-and-twenty.

Woman's usual occupations of hand and mind will be as open to me then as they are now; or with no important variation. If I draw less, I shall read more; if I give up music, I shall take to carpet-work. And as

for objects of interest, objects for the affections, which is in truth the great point of inferiority, the want of which is really the great evil to be avoided in not marrying, I shall be very well off, with all the children of a sister I love so much, to care about. (78)

This shows that although she is not married Emma can still be a complete person and live a meaningful life.

Moreover, Emma also thinks that being an old maid is a condition that is being exaggerated by most people. Being an old maid does not mean that the woman will be a ridiculous person. The only thing that makes an old maid seem foolish is her poverty. Because an old maid does not have anyone who can support her financially (a husband), she is likely to be ridiculed by other people. In Emma's case this will never happen because she has enough money to support herself throughout her life. Thus Emma blames poverty, and not being single, as the reason behind the poor condition of unmarried women.

‘But still, you will be an old maid! and that’s so dreadful!’

‘Never mind, Harriet, I shall not be a poor old maid; and it is poverty only which makes celibacy contemptible to a generous public! A single woman, with a very narrow income, must be a ridiculous, disagreeable, old maid! The proper sport of boys and girls; but a single woman, of good fortune, is always respectable, and may be as sensible and pleasant as any body else . . .’ (77)

The quotation above shows that Emma thinks that in matrimony there should be equality between husband and wife. This kind of equality is achieved through the reciprocal relationship between them. She demands to be considered as a significant being so that her needs are accommodated by her husband, and the other way around.

This proves that she tries to bring changes in the role of women as their traditional role as wives used to be passive. The quotation also tells the readers that Emma does not think she needs to get married due to her privileged status as a rich young woman, an adored daughter, and a respectable young lady. She feels that all the goodness that matrimony may ever bring to her is ready in her possession; she is already financially secured, socially accepted, and appreciated. Moreover, the quotation impliedly reveals that Emma thinks matrimony will only make her as the subordinate of her husband because she will not always dominate wives, and wives will only be regarded as the second members of a family. Her opinion toward women's subordination in matrimony is validated by the following conversation between Emma and Mr. Knightley.

‘You are a very warm friend to Mr. Martin; but, as I said before, are unjust to Harriet. Harriet's claims to marry well are not so contemptible as you represent them. She is not a clever girl, but she has better sense than you are aware of, and does not deserve to have her understanding spoken of so slightly [. . .] let me tell you, that in the degree she possesses them, they are not trivial recommendations to the world in general, for she is, in fact, a beautiful girl, and must be thought so by ninety-nine people out of an hundred . . . ’

‘Upon my word, Emma, to hear you abusing the reason you have, is almost enough to make me think so too. Better be without sense, than misapply it as you do.’ (56-57)

This conversation reveals that a woman who was beautiful and submissive was an ideal wife in the nineteenth century. Men did not want to have intelligent wives because they wanted to dominate them. A clever wife would argue to her husband's

decision if she thought it to be wrong. The husband's domination over the wife is one example of the inequality between men and women. Emma tries to make an irony over this unequal position. She asserts the general understanding that men prefer beautiful women to clever women to give an excuse for Harriet's rejection towards Mr. Martin's proposal. Even Mr. Knightley admits that he also thinks it is possibly the strongest reason for Emma's refusal to marry, because she knows that she is not a submissive woman. She thinks for herself and she wants to be heard. At that time, Emma realizes that in a marriage she will not be heard.

The fact that a single woman, with Emma's superiority both in looks and manner, should not wish to marry was not acceptable in the nineteenth century. Even Mr. Knightly and Mr. Weston who have known her since childhood and who admire her intelligence doubt Emma's resolution and claim that "means just nothing at all"(36). For the nineteenth century people, matrimony validated one's social status in one's community. A married woman or man in the case always gets the best treatment, the first attention. I can see this from the way everyone in Highbury responds to Mr. Elton's marriage. Austen writes:

Every body in and about Highbury who had ever visited Mr. Elton, was disposed to pay him attention on his marriage. Dinner-parties and evening-parties were made for him and his lady; and invitations flowed in so fast that she had soon the pleasure of apprehending they were never to have a disengaged day. (260)

A married woman, in particular, receives a more special treatment because unlike men, women highest accomplishment in the nineteenth century ways marriage. The following conversation between Emma and her father will show the traditional

opinion of married women represented by Mr. Woodhouse, and the more liberal point of view of Emma:

‘But, my dear papa, you are no friend to matrimony; and therefore why should you be so anxious to pay your respects to a bride?’

‘No, my dear, I never encouraged any body to marry, but I would always wish to pay every proper attention to a lady.’

‘. . . A bride, you know, my dear, is always the first in company, let the others be who they may.’

‘Well, papa, if this is not encouragement to marry, I do not know what is.’

‘My dear, you do not understand me. This is a matter of mere common politeness and good-breeding.’ (251-52)

Therefore, deducting from this conversation I can say that by refusing matrimony, Emma is jeopardizing her position as the prominent female figure in the town. A single man may have the liberty to travel, to have a job, and there is not any pressure from the society that forces him to get marry as soon as possible. A single woman, however, must face not only the danger of poverty, but also the danger of social degradation. That Emma is against this kind of inequality proves that she reflects an element of feminism in her character. To maintain and strengthen her role in the community, she then chooses to be a matchmaker, which indicates the reversal of traditionally performed roles of male and female.

Matchmaking gives Emma the chance to deal with matrimony without having to yield into the institution herself. It also gives her the means to exercise her power as a community leader in a way that is considered as appropriate for a woman. She is able to maintain her role as the community leader, a role which usually becomes the

privilege of men. By doing so, she asserts her sense of equality between men and women. Finally, matchmaking shifts people's attention her as an object of matrimony to other women. Emma shows that equal to men, a woman can also become a subject, in matrimony. Therefore, she could freely communicate her (at that time, controversial) ideas of matrimony that otherwise will be condemned if they were for her own and not other woman's sake.

One of Emma's ideas about matrimony is that an ideal marriage is the one in which there are love, money, and validation of one's social status. This view of marriage is probably a little bit too snobbish for the modern readers because it seems that Emma is very class-conscious. However, according to the time the novel was written, this view of marriage was very much in the benefit of women. A woman who had the power to choose a husband with consideration of his love, his money, and his status was considered as a very lucky one because in general, women did not have such privilege. Most of the women in nineteenth century were told by their parents with whom they had to marry, usually without the consideration of love. Emma challenges this point of view in her effort to find the right husband for Harriet. In this regard, Emma tells Harriet:

This is an alliance which, whoever—whatever your friends may be, must be agreeable to them, provided at least they have common sense; and we are not to be addressing our conduct to fools. If they are anxious to see you happily married, here is a man whose amiable character gives every assurance of it;—if they wish to have you settled in the same country and circle which they have chosen to place you in, here it will be accomplished; and if their only object is that you should, in the common phrase, be well married, here is the comfortable

fortune, the respectable establishment, the rise in the world which must satisfy them. (68-69)

Here, Emma makes distinction between the phrase the 'happily' married and 'well' married. According to her, the ideal marriage should be the blend of the two, thus, a married woman must find happiness personally, socially, and financially.

One of Emma's ideas about equality between men and women is that a woman must be given the power to choose and to decide what is best for her. In the following conversation between Emma and Mr. Knightley, they are arguing about Harriet's refusal of Robert Martin's proposal. Mr. Knightley accuses Harriet for being foolish, while Emma defends her conduct as she says:

'Then she is a greater simpleton than I ever believed her. What is the foolish girl about?'

'Oh! to be sure,' cried Emma, 'it is always incomprehensible to a man that a woman should ever refuse an offer of marriage. A man always imagines a woman to be ready for anybody who asks her.' (54)

In her role as a matchmaker to Harriet, Emma wants to make sure that Harriet gets the best for her life. She wants Harriet not to yield merely to the temptation of passion (in the case of Robert Martin) and to really look around her so that she can find someone who will make her happy (in the case of Mr. Elton). At the end of the novel, Emma is proven to be wrong because she has mistakenly judged Mr. Martin and Harriet and the sincerity of their feelings. Nevertheless, Emma's intention is pure, because she tries to make Harriet equal to men by giving Harriet what most nineteenth century women did not have the power to choose. Therefore, by being a matchmaker, Emma wants to show that in matrimony, a woman is not merely an object, but also a subject.

By setting herself as a matchmaker, thus proving that a single woman can still have significance in her life, Emma denies the need of women to get married, while at the same time she reverses the traditional role of matchmaking which has been done by males only. Even though Emma has superiority in both look and manner, she does not use them to attract the attention of men. She realizes that a woman who does it will only be dominated by her husband. As Emma does not want to be dominated, it is proved that Emma reflects an element of feminist attitude in her character that is the demand for equality. In the end of the novel, Emma does get married. This shows that she has got her demand and that it is not the institution of marriage, but the idea of the necessity of women to get married that she rejects. Emma proves that marriage is an equal choice for both men and women.

Emma challenges dependency even in the way she thinks by refusing to readily accept Mr. Knightley's judgment and by preferring to experience and to learn from her own experience. Emma's determination to think independently despite Mr. Knightley's advice is the proof of her independence. Mr. Knightley is a gentleman by birth and by manner, and it is described throughout the novel that he is almost always right. It is important to emphasize he is not always right because, as it turns up in the end, he is wrong in some important matters. However, from the very chapter, Emma, at least until Mr. Knightley's severe comment on her impolite behaviour towards Miss Bates in the novel, never listens to Mr. Knightley's advice, nor approves his judgment. This fact is validated by the following conversation between Emma and Mr. George Knightley:

'. . . our discordancies must always arise from my being in the wrong.'

‘Yes,’ said he, smiling—‘and reason good. I was sixteen years old when you were born.’

‘A material difference then," she replied—"and no doubt you were much my superior in judgment at that period of our lives’

‘I have still the advantage of you by sixteen years’ experience, and by not being a pretty young woman and a spoiled child. Tell your aunt, little Emma, that she ought to set you a better example’

‘That’s true,’ she cried—‘very true. Little Emma, grow up a better woman than your aunt.’

‘A man cannot be more so,’ was his short, full answer.’ (89-90)

This above quotation proves that Emma dares to challenge Mr. Knightley. She has her own thinking, which means she is independent in her thinking. Emma believes herself to be right because she never means to harm anybody. When she finds out that her decision has not produced any negative consequence toward other people, she thinks that her decision must have been right.

However, Emma has to learn that she is still very immature at that time. Throughout the novel Emma learns that she makes a lot of mistakes. Her mistakes actually help Emma to be a mature person, because although Emma is a determined person, she is not stubborn. When it is proven that she is wrong, Emma readily admits her mistakes and learns to be a better person. This kind of self-development is in line with the feminist’s idea of independence.

Emma’s self-development is proven from her changing judgment about Mr. Elton. In the beginning of the novel, Emma highly appreciates Mr. Elton. She even thinks of him, except for Mr. Knightley, as the most gentlemanly bachelor in the town. Emma thinks that Mr. Elton is a good man because his manners towards the

ladies are always obliging, his status in the society, being the vicar of Highbury, is honourable, and that he is well beloved by everybody. Those are the reasons why she chooses him to be the match for Harriet. Mr. Knightley, however, thinks differently about Mr. Elton. He argues that actually beneath his good looks and his amiable manners, Mr. Elton is not the perfect man Emma imagines him to be. Mr. Knightley opposes to Emma's idea of matchmaking Harriet and Mr. Elton, because he knows that Mr. Elton will not marry a woman without consequence that is without respectable family, or without money; and Harriet happens to be exactly that kind of woman. (60).

Upon hearing Mr. Knightley's study of Mr. Elton's character, Emma is a little disturbed. She always regards Mr. Knightley as a good friend of the family, and she knows that he never means to harm or to give false ideas to her family and herself in particular. However, she firmly believes that her opinion towards Mr. Elton is right:

He had frightened her a little about Mr. Elton; but when she considered that Mr. Knightley could not have observed him as she had done, neither with the interest, nor (she must be allowed to tell herself, in spite of Mr. Knightley's pretensions) with the skill of such an observer on such a question as herself, that he had spoken it hastily and in anger, she was able to believe, that he had rather said what he wished resentfully to be true, than what he knew any thing about. (60)

That Emma reflects the feminist element of independence can be proven from her refusal to submit readily to Mr. Knightley's judgment about Mr. Elton. She thinks that Mr. Knightley's negative opinion toward Mr. Elton is grounded on his disapproval of her matchmaking in the first place. Emma thinks that because Mr. Knightley does not approve her matchmaking, anyone whom she matches is not a

good choice. However, Emma has to learn the bitter truth that, contrary to her plan, Mr. Elton does not fall in love with Harriet, but with Emma instead. She dares to subvert the role of men though she does not become successful. When Mr. Elton professes his love to her, Emma immediately realizes that her former opinions about him are wrong:

Contrary to the usual course of things, Mr. Elton's wanting to pay his addresses to her had sunk him in her opinion. His professions and his proposals did him no service. She thought nothing of his attachment, and was insulted by his hopes. He wanted to marry well, pretended to be in love; but she was perfectly easy as to his not suffering any disappointment that need be cared for. She need not trouble herself to pity him. He only wanted to aggrandise and enrich himself; and if Miss Woodhouse of Hartfield, the heiress of thirty thousand pounds, were not quite so easily obtained as he had fancied, he would soon try for Miss Somebody else with twenty, or with ten. (122-23)

Emma's suspicion on Mr. Elton's being a fortune seeker is confirmed when Mr. Elton, after only approximately four weeks following his profession of love to Emma, comes back from his journey out of town with a fiancé, Augusta Hawkins, who is not as rich as Emma, but is definitely richer than Harriet. Thus, from her own observation towards Mr. Elton's conduct, Emma learns Mr. Elton is not the perfect gentleman imagined by Emma.

Emma's preference to learn from her own experience about Mr. Elton rather than submits easily to Mr. Knightley's opinion is a proof of her independence in making judgment. Although it is proven in the end that Mr. Knightley's opinion is the right one, Emma's ability to perceive Mr. Elton's real character shows that she

chooses to experience things on her own, with the consequence of making mistake, than to be submissive to all Mr. Knightley's opinions.

Emma's independence in making the judgment can be seen from the comparison between her argument with Mrs. Weston and her argument with Mr. Knightley. The subject of both arguments is about Frank Churchill's delay in coming to Highbury to visit his father, Mr. Weston, and to pay his respect towards his stepmother, Mrs. Weston, Emma questions Frank Churchill's characters, while Mrs. Weston defends him. Emma says:

'He ought to come. If he could stay only a couple of days, he ought to come; and one can hardly conceive a young man's not having it in his power to do as much as that. A young woman, if she fall into bad hands, may be teased, and kept at a distance from those she wants to be with'

'One ought to be at Enscombe, and know the ways of the family, before one decides upon what he can do,' replied Mrs. Weston. 'One ought to use the same caution, perhaps, I believe, certainly must not be judged by general rules: she is so very unreasonable; and every thing gives way to her.' (111-112)

It is obvious that Emma appears to be dissatisfied with Frank Churchill's manners. She thinks that a man with his youth and his resources should have made the visit to his own father even before he is asked to. Emma assumes that his absence is a proof of his negligence towards his father, and it shows that he is basically not a good character. Thus, it is surprising to see that when the same subject arises in her conversation with Mr. Knightley, Emma chooses exactly the opposite argument to what she really believes to be true. Emma finds herself directly involved in a

disagreement with Mr. Knightley; and, to her great amusement, perceives that she is taking the other side of the question from her real opinion, and making use of Mrs. Weston's arguments against herself. She argues:

‘The Churchills are very likely in fault,’ said Mr. Knightley, coolly; ‘but I dare say he might come if he would.’

‘I cannot believe that he has not the power of coming, if he made a point of it. It is too unlikely, for me to believe it without proof.’

‘How odd you are!’ [. . .] ‘If Frank Churchill had wanted to see his father, he would have contrived it between September and January. A man at his age—what is he?—three or four-and-twenty—cannot be without the means of doing as much as that. It is impossible.’ (130 -31)

From both arguments between Emma and Mrs. Weston and Emma with Mr. Knightley, it seems that Emma is inconsistent. At first, she takes the arguments opposing Mrs. Weston, but when she argues with Mr. Knightley, she uses Mrs. Weston’s arguments. This inconsistency can actually be perceived as Emma’s way to show Mr. Knightley that his opinion is not always right. When Emma is arguing with Mrs. Weston, she becomes an objective bystander, that is she has nothing to lose in showing her real opinion to Mrs. Weston; but when she is arguing with Mr. Knightley, she is influenced by her will to be his equal match in making observation. Moreover, Emma also wants to show that there can always be another point of view in making judgment. Mr. Knightley’s judgment may be true, especially considering the fact that she also shares the same opinion, but Mrs. Weston’s opinion may be true as well. Until it is proven that either one is right, Emma does not want to depend her judgment on Mr. Knightley’s.

When Frank Churchill himself appears in Highbury, Emma's doubt is immediately erased. Frank Churchill seems to be the perfect gentleman. He is physically attractive, and his manners please her. Austen writes:

The Frank Churchill so long talked of, so high in interest, was actually before her—he was presented to her, and she did not think too much had been said in his praise; he was a very good looking young man; height, air, address, all were unexceptionable, and his countenance had a great deal of the spirit and liveliness of his father's; he looked quick and sensible. She felt immediately that she should like him; and there was a well-bred ease of manner, and a readiness to talk, which convinced her that he came intending to be acquainted with her, and that acquainted they soon must be. (170)

However, Emma's good impression of Frank Churchill does not last long. She begins to feel that Frank Churchill's appearance may be the only thing that matters to him. Austen comments: "Emma's very good opinion of Frank Churchill was a little shaken the following day, by hearing that he was gone off to London, merely to have his hair cut" (184). Emma begins to see that he only cares about pleasing himself and that he does not seem to care about other's feelings.

Emma's suspicion about Frank Churchill's selfishness is finally proven when his secret engagement to Jane Fairfax is exposed. Frank and Jane have been concealing their engagement because the rich and noble Mrs. Churchill, Frank's aunt, does not approve Frank's relationship with Jane Fairfax, who is poor. What causes Emma to think of Frank as a low character is not his secret engagement, but his manners towards her, which make her and everybody, think as if he is attracted to her. While he is engaged to Jane Fairfax, Frank teases Emma and always makes her his

first interest. He always sits beside her in the part; he secures her promise to dance the first two dances with him in a dance party, and he never misses seeing her ever since his arrival in Highbury. Mr. and Mrs. Weston also think that their son admires Emma, and quite often they make hints suggesting this idea. Even Mr. Knightley's resentment toward Frank is caused, unconsciously, by his jealousy toward Frank and Emma's intimacy. This is the reason why Emma thinks Frank Churchill is not a good man. He has given false ideas about his intimacy to Emma only to disguise his secret engagement to Jane Fairfax, and he also hurts Miss Fairfax by doing so. Emma's resentment is announced to Mrs. Weston in the following remark:

Impropriety! Oh! Mrs. Weston—it is too calm a censure. Much, much beyond impropriety!—It has sunk him, I cannot say how it has sunk him in my opinion. So unlike what a man should be!—None of that upright integrity, that strict adherence to truth and principle, that disdain of trick and littleness, which a man should display in every transaction of his life. (360)

From her own observation and experience, Emma decides that Frank Churchill is not a good man. Emma's judgment is based on her own dealings with the person, not from prejudice or from other people's opinions. Therefore, Emma proves that she is capable of making judgments independently from other people's suggestion. Emma makes false judgments towards Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill in the beginning, but when she realizes that she has made mistakes, she admires her mistakes. By making those false judgments, she learns about her true feelings and the weight of her responsibility.

Emma's independency in making judgment has caused her to make mistakes, but as a result, her mistakes actually bring a better understanding of her feelings.

Emma used to think that Frank Churchill is the perfect gentleman for her. When Frank finally comes to Highbury, she thinks that this is the ideal man for her, and if she were to marry, this was the one she ought to marry. Actually, what makes Emma think that Frank is the right man for her is because he is like her in many respects. They are both physically good looking; they share the same age, they have many similarities in character. More importantly, they share the same position in the society; they are both socially respectable and rich. With these reasons, Emma believes that Frank and she will be an ideal couple.

However, again Emma is wrong. She learns that Frank is not as good as she thinks. She starts to see the real Frank Churchill. Moreover, she starts to learn that she does not have sincere feelings for him. She only imagines her feeling to him because he seems to be her ideal partner. When she realizes this, she understands completely her true feelings for Mr. Knightly that she really likes him, which can be understood through Austin's statement that "her affection for Mr. Knightley" (374). Therefore, Emma's mistakes have made her more acquainted with herself and her feelings. It becomes evident that the feminist element of independence will lead to something positive. In Emma's case, it has helped her to fully understand who she is.

Besides, Emma's independency develops her sense of responsibility. When Emma decides to be a matchmaker for Harriet, actually Emma becomes a mentor for her too. She teaches Harriet how to behave like a lady, she advises her to read more, and she urges her to accept nothing less than the best for herself. In her relationship with Harriet, Emma is center. She directs, makes decisions and advises, while Harriet listens, follows and regards her as her superior. Therefore, Emma becomes a responsible person because she is used to have people dependent on her. One example of Emma's sense of responsibility towards Harriet and her father is seen from what

runs through Emma's head after Mr. Knightly's profession of love to her. Austen writes:

As long as Mr. Knightley remained with them, Emma's fever continued; but when he was gone, she began to be a little tranquillized and subdued—and in the course of the sleepless night, which was the tax for such an evening, she found one or two such very serious points to consider, as made her feel, that even her happiness must have some alloy. She hardly knew yet what Mr. She even wept over the idea of it, as a sin of thought. While he lived, it must be only an engagement; but she flattered herself, that if divested of the danger of drawing her away, it might become an increase of comfort to him every bitter reproach and sorrowful regret that had ever surrounded it. (394)

Emma knows that her father is completely dependent on her, and that her marriage will be devastating thought for him because it may remove her away from him. In Harriet's case, Emma's concern is in the way Harriet will have to cope with another rejection. By that time, Emma has learned that Harriet admires Mr. Knightly and hope that there is a chance that he may be in love with her. Mr. Knightley's profession to Emma proves exactly the opposite, that he loves Emma instead. This discovery is , ironically, a repetition of Emma's blunder with Mr. Elton. Before, it was Mr. Elton who prefers Emma to Harriet, and now, it is Mr. knightly. Thus, Emma feels that she must have hurt Harriet twice. Emma's sense of responsibility towards Harriet is an effect of her being the more superior one in the relationships. The habit of always making decisions always advising Harriet gives Emma more responsibility than she ought to have at her age. A young and single woman like Emma must take a motherly responsibility towards Harriet.

Emma's sense of independence has helped her to develop self-awareness and responsibility. Therefore, by having the sense of independence, not only does Emma become a better person, but also she influences others, especially Harriet to be better. In the beginning of the novel, Harriet is portrayed as a pretty and well-behaved girl and that is all there is. She is not a clever girl, but her innocence, and her admiration to Emma in particular is enough reason for Emma to build friendship with her. The difference between Emma and Harriet in character is so striking that when they meet Harriet could not but feel only admiration towards Emma. The admiration makes her always dependent on Emma's judgment. However, throughout the novel, Harriet has changed. The point where Harriet changes drastically from an innocent girl to a mature woman is when she, without Emma's knowledge, let alone consent, accepts Mr. Martin's second proposal of marriage. Harriet no longer waits for Emma's advice, and this is a proof that she is influenced by Emma's independence in making judgment. Therefore, Emma's independence in making rational judgment brings good effect to Harriet because it makes her realize that she too can make the same independence rational judgment.

In this way, the character of Emma Woodhouse reflects some feminist elements: equality and independence. Equality as the element of feminist is reflected in Emma's opinion about marriage and in her decision to be a matchmaker that gives Harriet the power to choose; while independence as the feminist elements is reflected in Emma's determination in making judgments on her own. The feminist elements of independence have helped not only Emma herself to be mature and responsible person, but the independence will make her a better person eventually.

Chapter 4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis done in the preceding chapters, we can conclude that the character of Emma Woodhouse indeed reflects some elements of feminism, which are explored through her search for equality and independence. She does this by challenging the traditional male norms and values. She dares to question these values and follows her own decision. In the first place, the feminist elements of equality between men and women are reflected through her role as a matchmaker, which is the reversal of role traditionally performed by the males. Secondly, Emma's asserts her independence through her ability to make independence judgment.

In Emma's role as a matchmaker there are two important things. The feminist elements of equality are reflected through her effort to show her significance as a single woman, and her effort to empower Harriet to take control of her own life. Emma's significance as a person is proven by her choice to be a matchmaker instead of getting married. In this case she takes control not only for her action, but also for Harriet's. Thus, by being a matchmaker, Emma takes full responsibility for Harriet's life. This kind of responsibility shows that Emma is confident that she is able to improve Harriet the power to choose, the power which belongs to men Emma proves that her character reflects the feminist elements of equality between men and women.

The feminist elements of independence are reflected through Emma's character in her relationship with another important character, Mr. George Knightly. Although Mr. Knightly is an older, respectable gentleman, Emma does not just follow his judgments, which proves that she reflects the feminist elements of independence. She dares to challenge Mr. Knightly and has different opinions about Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill. Although in the end she is proven wrong, Emma has the courage to

admit her mistakes and, more importantly, to learn from her mistakes to understand her own feelings and the sense of responsibility of her action.

Equality and independence as the feminist elements, which are reflected through the character of Emma Woodhouse, opposes the stereotypical characteristics of men and women in the eighteenth century. When sex stereotypes are gone, it is easier for individuals to express and to develop themselves without the pressure to conform to the expectations of their society.

Emma denies the stereotype of women as the subordinate of men, and she proves that she independently makes decisions of her own and takes responsibilities of those decisions. She decides not to marry, she gives judgments to other people, which women of her time never did. She is not exempt from making mistakes, and causing several people such as Mr. Elton, Harriet, Jane Fairfax and herself, to be hurt, but that is unimportant. The important thing is that she dares to be equal with men and to be independent in her thinking, behaviour and activities. In this way, she learns about herself, about others, and grows to be a better woman. In addition, she is also able to persuade Harriet to be independent in making decisions, and to help her become a better person.

In this way, we can say that feminism contributes something positive to women in particular and the world in general. For women, feminism helps them to become aware of their significance, that they are also as worthy men as human beings. When women realize their worth, they are able to contribute something positive to their society. Therefore, feminism not only helps women, but also the world as a whole.

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