

## **THE PSYCHOLOGISM OF FEMALE CHARACTERS IN JANE AUSTEN'S NOVEL "PRIDE AND PREJUDICE"**

Jane Austen is a British writer who was active during the Regency era. In those times it was hard to be a woman, especially a woman writer. Women's style of writing was considered to be inferior to men's writing style. In Austen's time women thought that they could do nothing but what was expected from them; they were dominated by men. Marriages were arranged, mostly within the same social class. Even middle-class parents wanted their daughters well situated. Love was not important when it came to choosing a husband. In her novels Jane Austen describes women's life and position in the Regency England. Women's life revolved around getting married, preferably to a rich man, to secure their social position. "Pride and Prejudice" (1813) is probably her most famous novel. It deals with the life of Elizabeth Bennet, who is the second of five daughters in the Bennet family.

Psychologism is a philosophical position, according to which psychology plays a central role in grounding or explaining some other, non-psychological type of fact or law. The topic of psychologism in literature was studied by many researchers. It is worth mentioning the works of R. Ingarden, I. Livytska, M. Kusch and N. Honcharova.

The aim of our study is to identify the specifics of the analysis of women psychology in the work of Jane Austen on the material of the novel "Pride and prejudice".

The novel "Pride and Prejudice" deals with the life of the sisters from the Bennet family. It focuses on the life of Elizabeth, the main protagonist of the story. The Bennet family belongs to the middle class. In our study we would like to draw your attention to the detailed analysis of female characters from Jane Austen's novel.

Mr. Bennet does not have a male heir so his wife fears that her daughters will be left with nothing after their father's death. Mrs. Bennet, devotes her life to finding husbands for her daughters: "The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news" [3, p. 5]. Mrs. Bennet is a very loud person who states her opinion even when it is inappropriate. She does not understand that her behaviour influences her daughter's destiny and that because of this conversation with Lady Lucas Mr. Bingley will be separated from Jane. Mr. Bingley's friend, Mr. Darcy, and his sisters state that "with such a father and mother, and such low connections" [3, p. 40], the Bennet daughters have no chance of marrying rich.

Elizabeth "Lizzy" Bennet is the second daughter of the Bennets. She is twenty years old and is described as having "a lively, playful disposition which delighted in anything ridiculous" [3, p. 12]. Elizabeth states her opinion directly and has a sharp tongue, which often shocks those who believe that ladies cannot be allowed such freedom. During her conversation with Lady Catherine, who is a very powerful woman, she answers a lot of questions but with some reservation and asserts her opinion on the social norms:

"But really, Ma'am, I think it would be very hard upon younger sisters, that they should not have their share of society and amusement because the elder may not have the means or inclination to marry early. The last born has as good a right to the pleasures of youth as the first. And to be kept back on such a motive! I think it would not be very likely to promote sisterly affection or delicacy of mind." [3, p. 187].

Elizabeth understands the true purpose of marriage, something that neither her mother nor her sisters do. She wants to marry out of love, not just so that she would be financially secured. When she rejects Mr. Collins, her mother is furious because "society recommends that all women accept the marriage proposal they receive" [3, p. 129]. She even rejects Mr. Darcy's first proposal because she believes him to be an immoral and evil man. Elizabeth's judgments are sometimes irrational and blinded by her pride but, when this is the case, she is willing to admit that she is wrong. She tries to be fair towards everyone and that is why she feels that she has done wrong to Darcy. Later on, when Lady Catherine confronts her because she believes that Elizabeth and Darcy will get married, Elizabeth shows that she is not afraid of her. Lady Catherine states that their marriage would be the most unsuitable match; yet, Elizabeth does not share that opinion. Elizabeth is not a woman whom someone could easily scare and she fights for what she wants and believes in – and that is Mr. Darcy and her love for him. Again, Elizabeth proves to be an intelligent and independent woman who does not care about the opinion of others; she does what she thinks to be the best for her.

Jane Bennet is the eldest daughter in the family. She is 23 and is aware "that she has reached the age where it is beyond proper, rather necessary, for her to marry" [3, p. 128]. She is the prettiest girl in the county; even Mr. Bingley states that. She is kindhearted and always thinks the best of people, which makes her naive in certain cases. Jane is the same as Elizabeth when it comes to love; she prefers love over financial security and, unlike her mother and other women, does not care about money.

Charlotte Lucas is worth mentioning because she represents traditional women who are not interested in marrying out of love. She is 27 years old and considered to be a spinster, that is why she accepts Mr. Collins's proposal. It is obvious that she does not like him but she thinks that she cannot do better than him. She only thinks about the position that she will acquire once she is a married woman.

Lydia and Kitty are the youngest sisters in the Bennet family. Kitty is 17 and Lydia is 15. They are not so intelligent and behave like most of the teenagers. They behave inappropriately and are not interested in anything except the soldiers. Lydia is much worse than Kitty and her free spirits leads to the most shameful act of all. She runs away with Mr. Wickham, thus endangering the position of her sisters on the marriage market since no one would marry them if the news of her escape became public. Yet, Lydia does not care about that; she is happy to be a married woman. Her reckless behaviour shows how social norms regarding marriage make young women do foolish things and enter a marriage they will one day certainly regret.

To conclude, this paper demonstrates the role of women during the Regency era. Most women wanted to get married to feel financially secure, while others, as Elizabeth Bennet, married out of love. The topic of psychologism in literature was studied by many researchers, is studied and will always be studied and actual in the human society.

## REFERENCES

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