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FEMALE HEROINES IN JANE AUSTEN'S WORLD
Diplomová práce

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Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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ABSTRACT

This diploma thesis is focused on the character study and analyses of female heroines from the six major novels written by Jane Austen.

It includes also the further division of the female characters according to their common features and it deals with possible similarities between the heroines and the authoress.

The initial part introduces all important information needed for better understanding of the whole analysis. It consists of a brief description of the world of Jane Austen, concerning the historical background, characteristics of 18th and 19th centuries and also basic knowledge about the social life, including its customs, level of education, marriage conventions and usual ways of spending free time. The thesis provides also the descriptions of a life, a family and a career of Jane Austen, mainly to illustrate all of the parallels between Austen's real life and stories of her heroines.

The diploma thesis then provides deep characteristics of the major heroines completed with ideas of Austen's biographers and division of the minor heroines with regard to their features and behaviour.

The final part of the thesis summarises the whole analysis and the significance of Jane Austen as a novelist, who brilliantly depicted women of her time.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this thesis is to analyse and deeply characterise the female heroines of Jane Austen and to divide them according to their features into groups, each representing a different kind of women of Austen's time and social rank.

It depicts the social manners and customs of Regency and Georgian era applied in the behaviour of young ladies. It follows the fates of different heroines, with various needs and hopes, from which the most frequent ones are marriage and love.

The thesis also focuses on the possible similarities between Jane Austen's life and her major heroines.

The initial part of this thesis presents the basic information, including the historical background and a life and a career of the authoress, which are essential for further understanding of the analysis, which deals only with the heroines. It is based mainly on collecting and comparing data of Austen's major biographers.

Jane Austen was one of the most famous novelists of the 19th century. Although she lived in the very narrow circle created by her family, she was a brilliant observer and managed to display different types of women from her society.

Austen, as a novelist was not concerned with the world events, mainly because they did not influence her heroines at all. Nevertheless, in her stories there appear soldiers and navy officers, who illustrate the fact, that Austen was aware of the political situation and although not affected by it, she was meeting people who were involved in it, which she also included in her novels. For this particular reason the initial part presents a short overview of historical and political events of England in the 18th and the 19th century.

Jane Austen was also a very keen reader, and her literary taste was one of her greatest inspiration. The historical background chapter is therefore completed with the notes about the basic trends in the world, which influenced literature of Austen's period as well.

From Austen's novels it is obvious, that she focused mainly on everyday life of the people, which was organised according to the social status and strict following of good manners and etiquette.

However, some of the customs and punishments for not obeying them can appear quite strange or unbelievable to the readers of the 21st century, that is why the introductory part of the thesis includes also the brief description of life in the turn of the 18th and the 19th century, which helps to realise how innovative and brave or how silly and easy-going the behaviour of some Austen's heroines was.

As far as her heroines are concerned, Austen focused mainly on women of the same position as was her or the closest relatives, especially because she knew them best so she was able to describe them

properly. She took her inspiration also from her own family that is why it is necessary to introduce them as well.

When analysing Austen's heroines it is almost impossible not to mention the life of the authoress, mainly because most of the female characters resemble her.

The heroines express Austen's opinions about snobbery, society restrictions, literary taste and especially her ideas about marriage and status of women. Some of them resemble her in the appearance and other qualities, and majority of them love reading similarly like Austen. The readers can follow also some parallels between real Austen's life and the performances of her heroines in love affairs, marriage rejections or steadiness of feelings.

The analysis of Austen's female heroines is based on the detailed study of six major novels written by Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Emma*, *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion*. It includes also the ideas of Austen's biographers and my own interpretations.

It focuses mainly on the major female heroines created by Jane Austen, who are further divided according to their depiction into groups such as "Sister Heroines", inspired by Austen's relationship with her sister Cassandra and "Individual Heroines", including both "Spinsters" and "Young ladies entering the society".

The minor heroines are included as well, but their analyses are shortened especially because they do not represent any extraordinary features. They are primarily good representatives of their groups.

The final part of the thesis summarises the major outcomes of the analysis and the overall significance of Austen's heroines.

1. THE WORLD OF JANE AUSTEN

Bailey in his Introduction to Jane Austen remarks: “Her material for the novels lay in what she saw going on all round her rather than in her own personal experiences”(Bailey, 1931, p. 17), therefore it is essential to begin the thesis with the description of the time when Austen lived, because it is also reflected in the manners and actions of the heroines of her novels so the basic knowledge about the life of society in that period is crucial for entirely understanding of Jane Austen’s work.

1.1. Historical Background

As Hannon mentions, Austen’s youth witnessed two of the most significant events in the history: the American and French Revolutions. Although England managed to avoid a revolution, it felt the effects of the revolutionary tide such as “riots and other expressions of discontent with the status quo and of sympathy with the radical sentiments” (Hannon, 2007, p. 5). The French revolution and England’s war with France in the 1790s also influenced the life of Austen family, because Jane’s brothers Frank and Charles were members of the Royal Navy and Henry was in the Oxford Militia. For Cassandra’s fiancé this war meant death.

In spite of this all, as Austen-Leigh wrote: “The politics of the day occupied very little of my aunt’s attention” (Austen-Leigh, 2006). All these elements of the era, including war as well, are reflected in Austen’s novels only slightly, when featuring soldiers and sailors as some of the characters.

This period of English history is also connected with the king George III, who ruled from 1760 until his death in 1820. Accordingly, we call these times as “Georgian”. During George’s later years, as Brown (1966, p. 11) mentions, he suffered from the attacks of insanity. Therefore his eldest son George IV was established as Prince Regent in his place. Thanks to this act, the time became known as “Regency”. These two periods are reflected in Austen’s novels as well, especially in the manners, costumes, interests or taste of the heroines.

1.2. Characteristics of the 18th and 19th century

The main theme of Jane Austen was actually the ordinary daily life and the world of women of her age and class. So it was more the life of the people than the huge actions that were writing the history of world that affected Jane Austen, therefore the thesis contains also the description of society life, traditions, attitudes and opinions.

It is important to emphasize that there was a huge difference between the life in the country and life in the big cities. In every age the country life tends to trail behind the town life and is usually more conservative. This was really true in the case of the turn of the 18th and the 19th century.

Schuurkes (2010) wrote that in the early 19th century there was a crossroads between two periods - the Age of Reason, when a calm balanced judgement not hindered by personal emotions was highly valued ended and the romantic period full of ideas of freedom, equality and the abolition of all class distinctions began. So this is a time where “the age of common sense and wisdom is becoming overruled by living for your emotions and escaping out of the city and into nature” (Schuurkes , 2010).

Anyway, the writing style and the overall atmosphere of Jane Austen’s novels are closer to the spirit of the 18th century and as Cecil (1978, p. 13) suggests, the authoress, although she lived nearly half her grown-up life after 1800, stayed in the 18th century.

1.3. Social class, customs

In England there was an emphasis on a class structure and Jane Austen was a child of the gentry; she grew up in the world of squires and better-born parsons, of military and naval officers and also the fellows of both Oxford and Cambridge colleges and this kind of society she also displayed and often satirised in her novels. According to Cecil:

The gentry were seldom rich as were the great nobles of the day whose palatial residences were so conspicuous a feature of the rural scene. But for the most part they were comfortable enough; and as much of the nobles, they were members of the ancient established ruling classes of England and treated with the respect and deference due to them as such”(Cecil, 1978, p. 12).

Their way of life could be described as a little monotonous but, peaceful based on rooted traditions and comfortable. Most of them were not anxious about their future; they worried only slightly about the politics and world events; generally they were very self confident and “took for granted that Englishmen and English institutions were unquestionably superior to any others in the world” (ibid., p. 14).

They were also used to the services of their domestic labour very much. As Brown (1966, p. 18) mentions in the novels the authoress does not write about any problems of ladies connected with staff, which had a duty to care of both the children and the household.

What was very important for the good impression in the society were good manners and abundance of etiquette. Cecil (1978, p. 12) describes the 18th century England as firmly moral, valuing the virtues such as benevolence, prudence, honesty or public spirit. For instance, Bush (1978, p. 4) mentions the ways of addressing people. It was usual that men called ladies by their first names when being engaged to them while women could use only their surnames. This custom is displayed in *Sense and Sensibility*, where Willoughby calls Marianne with her first name, so their family and friends suppose they are engaged.

Another example could be the situation when there was a formal party. The order of precedence as well as the esteem of women depended on their rank, marital status and of course age. This custom is well described in *Pride and Prejudice*, where Lydia, after getting married feels superior to her sisters. According to Llewellyn it was also “considered unwise and improper for a lady to walk alone” (Llewellyn, 1977, p. 105).

When describing the relationships between women and men, Llewellyn (ibid., p. 132-135) speaks about the correspondence. When young couple was exchanging letters, it meant that they were engaged. She also notes down, that if a lady was offered a marriage, she was supposed to accept it, no matter what her feelings were. Another custom concerning the human relationships was connected with honeymoon. The bride had to take some of her sisters or friends with her for this occasion. This manner is described in *Mansfield Park*, where Julia Bertram accompanies her sister Mary.

The social relations and sense for realism were more valued than the relations between man and God or man and his soul (Cecil, 1978, p. 15). This meant a good opportunity for the authors to variegate their works with good, high-spirited and cheerful humour.

Despite the social status was so important to the people, they were very good Christians. Cecil describes the average educated citizen as “an orthodox believer and a regular church-goer” (ibid., p. 15). These people understood the term of a good Christian in the means of fulfilling of their duties connected with their lives.

1.4. Education, earning of money

Church was also important for people’s education. With reference to the study of that time by Schuurkes (2010) there was no centrally-organized system of state supported education, except local charity or church-run day schools, which were not usually attended by the children of Jane Austen social rank. These children were educated mostly at home by their parents or by live-in governesses or tutors.

Some of the skills, such as playing the piano, were taught by outside „masters“. There existed also some local grammar schools, teaching the basics of Greek and Latin, but these schools were not available for girls. They were not allowed to attend any public schools such as Eaton or Universities like Oxford and Cambridge.

For the men of the same or higher rank than Jane Austen, it was usual to choose profession such as a lawyer or to dedicate their lives to church as a clergyman. Another option was to join the navy. The lucky ones, who did not have to earn for their living, were either the eldest sons, who inherited the family possessions and father’s title or those who “had a lot of money so they had no need to learn a profession” (Schuurkes, 2010).

Women of that time did not have career as men, they even were not citizens in sense of being involved in politics. The society believed as Schuurkes (2010) mentions that women should receive a

practical and religious training for their domestic role, including also accomplishments such as music, needlework, drawing, dancing and learning of modern languages which were in those times generally French and Italian.

1.5. Marriage

Schuurkes suggests that the possible “purpose of such accomplishments was often only to attract a husband” (Schuurkes, 2010). For young genteel women it was almost impossible to live on their own or be independent. There were only few professions such as a governess which unfortunately were not highly respected. The only way of getting money was as Schuurkes (2010) remarks the marriage or inheriting, but only in case that the woman did not have any brothers.

As Bush (1978, p. 6) remarks, it was also taken for granted that men of high rank would marry someone on the same level, and on the other hand the men with lower income usually married for money or permitted themselves to love only a well-endowed girl.

Although Austen’s heroines usually break the accepted rules, Bush emphasizes that “we should not expect a clear-headed realist to glorify love in a cottage” (ibid., 1978, p. 6). Cecil summarizes his view to Jane Austen heroine’s marriage as “that in Jane Austen’s moral-realistic view it is wrong to marry for money but silly to marry without it” (Cecil, 1978, p. 15).

Unmarried women had to stay with their families or with other family-approved protectors or companion. This practise is displayed especially in the fate of Emma Woodhouse, Anne Eliot and Miss Bates. In general to be an old maid was not a desirable fate at all.

Schuurkes notes down that “when a young woman left her family without their approval, this was always very serious” (Schuurkes, 2010). Any symptom of a radical break, such as running away to marry a disapproved husband, or entering into an illicit relationship could influence the rest of the family very badly. Austen uses these misdemeanours very often to illustrate reckless behaviour of her heroines. For example: Lydia’s leaving with Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice* or the escape of Mary and Julia Bertram in *Mansfield Park*.

Marriage was also a very common solution for women to obtain a financial security or to solve uncongenial family situations. This practise is depicted in behaviour of Charlotte Lucas in *Pride and Prejudice*. As Bush mentions the parents were the “active operators in the marriage market” (Bush, 1978, p. 5) and the freedom of choice was not allowed in many cases. So there is no wonder that the women in Jane Austen’s times usually married without love.

Another interesting point is divorcing in that time. As the web page concerning life of Jane Austen’s period mentions (The Republic of Pemberley, 2010), it was not usual to divorce in that time. The marriage was understood as connection between two people that lasted forever. The only reason why the couple could separate was the sexual infidelity of the wife. This is depicted in the divorce of

Mary Bertram in *Mansfield Park*. In addition, husbands usually had a right over children and all property. What is more, legal process of divorce was very expensive, so this could be another reason, why the people rather stayed together.

1.6. Free time

Another interesting aspect of life which Jane Austen displayed in her novels was the way of spending free time. She focused mainly on the higher society of her rank, where it was typical for women to concern themselves with engravings, carpet work, creating of fringes, netting and knitting and plenty of card games such as cribbage or speculation.

As for the man according to Cornish it was typical that they were „little more occupied than the women” (Cornish, 1913, p. 10) by activities such as shooting, hunting or riding.

They, of course, spent some time together with women. Good opportunities for it were activities such as long country walks, talking by the tea or shopping.

Other widespread leisure time activities were dinner parties, which were “frequent among people who were within dining distance” (ibid., 1913, p. 19), these were usually followed with reading aloud, where the gentlemen could perform their skills and attract the ladies. It was also very important to be good at dancing, because balls or public dances were very frequent and favourite occasions.

This was as well an era of visits, varying from friend to relation visits, or from a brief morning call, which was important especially to keep up with the news and gossips, to a long stay running into months, usually because of some good reason. This was a pleasuring way to entertain themselves by playing cards together, converse or listen to or perform some music. The people also enjoyed their free time by travelling to the sea-side towns such as Brighton, Kent or Lyme.

All these activities, customs and manners are displayed in Jane Austen’s stories, so the readers can think of them as about brilliant illustrations of the life of the turn of the two centuries.

It is also important to emphasize here, that in the case of Jane Austen it was not only a good observing ability, that helped her to produce so successful novels, but it was also the nearest world around her, including her family and closest friends that influenced her.

2. JANE AUSTEN – LIFE

As far as the heroines of Jane Austen are concerned there is a must of at least a basic knowledge about the life of the authoress, because as Llewellyn mentions:

Many features of Austen's own personality appear in her work, including: her commonsense, candour, sense of ridiculous, power of observation, hatred of snobbery; her appreciation of nature, and interest in literature, music and theatre (Llewellyn, 1977, p. 22).

One of the very essential parts of the life of each person is the family. This is true especially for Jane Austen whose life as Cornish claims "passed in a narrow circle" (Cornish, 1913, p. 1), that is why the thesis includes a brief description of the Austen family and also basic information about Jane Austen's life and career.

2.1. Family background

Austen-Leigh mentions in his Memoir of Jane Austen that "her own family were so much, and the rest of the world so little to her" (Austen-Leigh, 2006), therefore it is necessary to briefly describe the members of her family. Most of them inspired the novelist in creating of her characters and influenced her writings as well.

As Austen-Leigh (2006) mentions, Austen was born on 16 December 1775 at Steventon Rectory, as a daughter of Reverend George Austen, who was a scholarly country vicar. Influenced by the father's occupation, Austen frequently chose the profession of vicar or clergyman for her heroes. George Austen married Cassandra Leigh and lived with her in Deane at first; later on they moved to Steventon, which was their residence for about thirty years. Austen's father augmented his income by taking pupils, because the family was not rich. The father was not even able to give his daughters much to marry on (The Republic of Pemberley, 2010), which is very similar to the family situation of the Bennets displayed in *Pride and Prejudice*. However, George Austen was the proud father of two daughters and six sons, whose early education he took upon himself. Malden, writes of him as about a man of "superior intellect and of excellent education" (Malden, 1889, p. 6). He was also very influential and supportive to his children. His love of books was passed on to them and the early Jane's attempts to write were welcomed enthusiastically by him. With regard to this description it is obvious, that the father was a model for a character of Mr. Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*.

His wife Cassandra (maiden name Leigh) was very lively, energetic and always seemed to be over-concerned about her health. In Memoir of Jane Austen, her grandson described her character: „She united strong common sense with a lively imagination, and often expressed herself, both in writing and

in conversation, with epigrammatic force and point” (Austen-Leigh, 2006). According to these characteristics, it is possible to suppose, that the mother of Jane Austen inspired the novelist to create Mrs. Bennet, again a heroine from *Pride and Prejudice*.

Jane Austen was growing up together with six brothers and elder sister Cassandra. The oldest son of Cassandra and George Austen was James who worked as a rector at Steventon after his father’s retirement. He was the most intellectual of Jane’s brothers and was the one who influenced Jane Austen’s taste in literature. His mother wrote of him: “Classical knowledge, Literary Taste and the power of Elegant Composition he possessed in the highest degree” (Llewellyn, 1977, p. 145). His first wife Anne Mathew died three years after their wedding. According to Llewellyn (*ibid.*, p. 145-146) he was then in love with Eliza de Feullide, who refused his proposal because he was destined for the church. The dislike of church is displayed also in one of Austen’s heroines - Mary Crawford from *Mansfield Park*. Later on, in 1797, James married Mary Lloyd, friend of the family. He had three children (one of them was James Edward), who all became important contributors to the knowledge of Jane Austen.

Jane’s second brother George was ill very often. According to Hannon (2007, p. 2) George as a child never returned home from the foster family, because he reputedly suffered from some kind of affliction so he did not develop normally.

The wealthiest of Jane’s brothers Edward was adopted by Thomas Knight of Godmersham in Kent, childless cousin of the Austens. Later on, after Knight’s death Edward inherited all of his properties, so he was able to help his family by providing them a new house in Chawton.

Jane’s fourth and most favourite brother Henry, devoted his life to Militia and business, which finally led to his bankrupt. According to Llewellyn (1977) he was too proud to write begging letters to his family, so he remained poor. As Llewellyn (*ibid.*, p. 149-150) further mentions, Henry was very physically attractive, entertaining, he was reputed to be brilliant in conversation and his intelligence was never in doubt. Probably inspired by his qualities, Austen created many extraordinary intelligent and charming heroes.

Two years after the birth of Henry, the Austens were proud parents of their first daughter. She was named after her mother Cassandra and she was described as a very lively and talkative child with whom you really have a lot of fun.

She was also a very good company for her younger sister Jane. At the age of nine, she was sent to Oxford to obtain some education. Although Jane was too young for such studies she spent some time in Oxford with her, because it was too stressful for her to be separated from the admired sister. In *Memoir of Jane Austen* her nephew remembers Mrs. Austen to say about Jane and her sister that: “if Cassandra were going to have her head cut off, Jane would insist on sharing her fate” (Austen-Leigh, 2006).

During this time Jane addressed many letters to her, mostly asking for advice on dress, money and housekeeping, which illustrates the idea of Llewellyn (1977, p. 151-152), who thinks that Jane Austen considered her sister superior to herself. Austen Leigh writes in his Memoir of Jane Austen:

Cassandra was the colder and calmer disposition; she was always prudent and well judging, but with less outward demonstration of feeling, she had the merit of having her temper always under command (Austen-Leigh, 2006).

She engaged to the Reverend Thomas Fowle, one of her father's ex-pupils. But her happiness was soon ended by the death of her fiancé in the West Indies, where he worked as a chaplain in regiment. Since that time she stayed only with her sister Jane, they lived in the same house, shared the same bedroom. She was her company, nurse and friend until Jane's death. Such a great sister relationship influenced Austen in her writings very much. According to Malden "from beginning to end Jane never wrote a story that was not related first to Cassandra, and discussed with her; she literally shared every thought and feeling with her sister" (Malden, 1889, p. 15). Cassandra died unmarried just as Jane.

Two remaining brothers Francis and Charles were both connected with the naval careers. Jane Austen admired the Navy very much, which reflects in her novels, especially in *Persuasion*, where Anne Eliot similarly as the authoress glorifies the Navy and also in *Mansfield Park*, where Austen brilliantly displayed the relationship of Fanny Price and her brother William who works for the Navy.

As Cornish mentions "family affection was a strong characteristic of the Austens" (Cornish, 1913, p. 8). They had good position as a clerical and noble family with sufficiency of money to live happily, also thanked to their sense of humour and their kind and genial nature.

2.2. Life of Jane Austen

Bailey in his Introduction to Jane Austen goes in the idea that:

Jane's life was very uneventful: as unexciting, and indeed, except for her writings, unimportant, as it was pleasant to herself and her little world. Nothing of interest ever happened to her; and she did nothing of interest except the writing of her books (Bailey, 1931, p. 2).

Regarding to her biography, it is obvious that there is really more in her mind and fantasy than in her personal life. According to available sources about Austen's life, especially those written by her nephew (Austen-Leigh, 2006) we know, that Jane was born on 16 December 1775 in a small rural village called Steventon as the seventh child of Cassandra and George Austen. The rectory where they

were living was as Hannon (2007, p. 1) claims also a working farm, with fields of crops as well as a dairy and of course a poultry yard.

In that times it was typical to send the new-born children to foster mothers or wet nurses to the village so did the Austens. Although it might seem very strange and cold, the Austens did not neglect their children. They were very loving parents. They tried to visit their children as frequently as possible. As the web page concerning the early life of Jane Austen (The Republic of Pemberley, 2010) notes down, there is significant similarity between the childhood of Jane Austen and the main character from *Northanger Abbey* Catherine Morland: "Catherine enjoys "rolling down the green slope at the back of the house" and prefers cricket and baseball to girls' play"(Austen, 1816, p. 2). Mitton (1917, p. 16) supposes that Austen's childhood must have been a happy one. She benefited from the companionship of Cassandra, she enjoyed the liveliness and constant comings and goings of the brothers and also all the romps of a large family having unlimited country as a playground.

Like the rest of her siblings she was educated at home by her father except the time she spent in the boarding school in Oxford and later on in Southampton with her elder sister Cassandra (See 2.1.). They both came back home after an infectious disease broke out in Southampton. Jane and Cassandra were then attending the Abbey boarding school in Reading and according to Hannon (2007, p. 11) Jane learnt there some dancing, piano, French, spelling and needlework. "As for Jane's home education, it was that of a country gentlewomen such as could be picked up in a busy family; on the one side domestic and practical, on the other elegant rather than solid" (Cornish, 1913, p. 12). She was also a keen reader. In a letter of December 18 1798, she declares that she and her family were "great Novel-readers, & not ashamed of being so" (The Republic of Pemberley, 2010). According to her letter of January 21 1801, her father had a library of 500 books so it was good enough for someone who loved both the serious and the popular literature. Her most favourite authors were with reference to diagram of her literary influences on the web (The Republic of Pemberley, 2010) Dr. Johnson, Richardson, Byron, the gothic novelists Walpole and Radcliffe and of course women writers Burney and Edgeworth. Austen's love of reading appears also in her novels, especially in *Northanger Abbey*.

Thanked to Jane's early letters, which are full of experiences from dances, plays and parties she attended, we know that she enjoyed social events. Jane Austen was also supposed to have a mutual flirtation with Thomas Lefroy, an Irish relative of Jane Austen's close older friend Mrs. Anne Lefroy. But the society and fortune was not very keen on their love. Lefroy could not effort to marry Jane and that meant the end of their short affair. Probably this was the reason, why Austen in her novels very often criticised the society restrictions and marriages for money.

Bailey (1931, p. 3) mentions that in 1801 Jane lost her beloved birthplace when the Austen family left Stevenson because George Austen decided to retire and went to live at Bath. Brown notes down the probable feelings of Jane about this decision: "Jane did not care for town life although there

was plenty of human character and comedy for so perceptive a novelist to watch in the fashionable spa” (Brown, 1966, p. 6). However, she frequently displayed Bath in her novels, especially in *Northanger Abbey* and in *Persuasion*.

It became the family habit to spend the summer by the sea. There as Bailey (1931, p. 17) mentions, about 1801 Jane is supposed to have had another love-affair with a young clergyman called Mr. Blackall. Although she was writing mainly about love there are no accounts of her personal life. As Bailey (*ibid.*, p. 8) supposes, the majority of the letters between Jane and her sister Cassandra concerning the questions of love were destroyed by Cassandra to protect her sister’s privacy. However, thanks to the account given by Cassandra to her niece Caroline which is mentioned in *Introduction to Jane Austen* we know that Jane had one serious feeling of that sort connected with a man, whom she only saw during some kind of sea-side visit. “He was much attracted by her and she by him, and further meetings were planned; but he died very soon afterwards” (*ibid.*, p. 17). There is a kind of similarity with the crucial scene of Austen’s novel *Persuasion* and also the feelings of the main heroine Anne Eliot can be reflections of those of Jane.

According to the Jane Austen’s biography on the web we know, that one year after this experience she was offered a marriage. It happened while she and her sister Cassandra were staying with the Bigg family near Steventon. “Harris Bigg-Wither, who was six years younger than herself, proposed to Jane, and she accepted, though she did not love him” ” (The Republic of Pemberley, 2010). But Jane changed her decision the next day. She wrote about it in a letter from November 1814: “Anything is to be preferred or endured rather than marrying without affection” (Chapman, 1985, p. 172-176). This rejection inspired the authoress to create heroines such as Elizabeth Bennet or Fanny Price who dare to disagree with a marriage without love.

In the end Jane Austen never married. Brown supposes that the reason why she never got married was the apprehension that “a husband and children might have absorbed all her time and devotion” (Brown, 1966, p. 8). She could give her love at least to her favourite nephews and nieces.

Concerning the appearance of Jane Austen, Mitton, according to the only preserved portrait of Jane Austen painted by her sister, assumes that her face was “bright, intelligent, but not very prepossessing” (Mitton, 1917, p. 35), her eyes were large and her nose was straight. Austen-Leigh (2006) describes her as not as handsome as her sister Cassandra. Although there are only few sources mentioning Austen’s outward, it is possible to observe a parallel between some of her heroines and herself. Most of the major protagonists of the stories are usually not very attractive, especially in comparison with their sisters. For instance: Elizabeth and Jane Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*, Anne and Elizabeth Eliot from *Persuasion* or Fanny and her beautiful cousins from *Mansfield Park*.

As far as the character of Jane Austen is concerned Bailey (1931, p. 6) mentions that she was not in the habit of giving herself away, she was strictly obeying the conception of a well-bred woman, which

she also attributed to some of her heroines such as Anne Eliot from *Persuasion* or Elinor Dashwood from *Sense and Sensibility* and from the point of view of the reader of her books Bailey (ibid., p. 6) believes that she was a very tender lady with a brilliant wit and that she could deeply enter into sorrow and feel for it, which is brilliantly illustrated in a character of Marianne Dashwood from *Sense and Sensibility*.

He also describes Austen as a young woman of no special qualities or gifts and as a brilliant talker in the family circle but not one who was inclined to make herself conspicuous elsewhere. She liked walking, nature, she was a great enthusiast about music and a lover and reader of novels and poetry. Her nephew James (Austen-Leigh, 2006) remembers her as being always kind, sympathising, and amusing.

In 1804 she visited Lyme, which is, after Bath, the place readers of her novels have most cause to remember and year after her father died, which meant great reduction of the family income, the family left Bath and, after some wanderings, settled in Chawton, where Jane's brother Edward had offered his mother a house. There Jane successfully continued with her literary attempts.

Later on her health was failing, but she continued working on her new novel. Being almost an invalid, she made her will (leaving everything to Cassandra), and then she moved to Winchester for a better medical advice and to be under the care of well-known doctor. As Llewellyn (1977, p. 24) mentions, by March 1817, she had to spend most of her time resting on sofa. She gradually got weaker till she breathed her last on 18 July 1817 at the age of forty-one. The author of her biography on the web supposes that her death was caused by Addison's disease (The Republic of Pemberley, 2010). She was buried in Winchester Cathedral with the following inscription on her grave:

In memory of JANE AUSTEN,
youngest daughter of the late Revd. GEORGE AUSTEN,
formerly Rector of Steventon in this County.
She departed this Life on the 18th July 1817,
aged 41, after a long illness supported with
the patience and the hopes of a Christian.

The benevolence of her heart,
the sweetness of her temper, and
the extraordinary endowments of her mind
obtained the regard of all who knew her, and
the warmest love of her intimate connections.

Their grief is in proportion to their affection
they know their loss to be irreparable,
but in the deepest affliction they are consoled
by a firm though humble hope that her charity,
devotion, faith and purity have rendered
her soul acceptable in the sight of her
REDEEMER.

2.3. Jane Austen's Career

Jane Austen's brother Henry wrote to the preface to *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*: "She wrote whilst she could hold a pen, and with a pencil when a pen was become too laborious" (Austen, 1988, p. 3-9). From this quote it is obvious, that Jane Austen was a writer not only with her body but also with her soul.

Although the major obligations of a young lady were her household duties and social occupations, Jane Austen found time for her favourite reading and her own literary attempts. She started her writing very early during her childhood at the age of eleven as Poplawski (1998, p. 73) suggests. Brown (1966, p. 6) mentions that she was busy writing short stories, and also charades and little plays for the domestic playhouse in a barn fitted up for the purpose. Jane Austen commemorates: "At Steventon each year we staged a few out in the barn, and the entire neighbourhood thought our performances extremely good" (Corringham, 1971, p. 42). These theatrical experiences the authoress described also in her novel *Mansfield Park*.

Later on, she transcribed her short stories and plays into notebooks which she called Volume the First, Volume the Second and Volume the Third. These were not printed until 1871 when it was published with *Lady Susan* and later fragments by R.W.Chapman and called *Minor Works*. The main themes of her early works were the parody of love and friendship and as Bush writes, also a burlesque of the "high style of sentimental romances of the later 18th century" (Bush, 1978, p. 54). She also took on many other targets for her satires, for example epistolary forms, the Gothic novel, stage comedy, the objectivity of historians or her favourite one – sentimental novels. Jane Austen once wrote about her first literary attempts:

How young I was when I began to write, or where, or why, I cannot now recall. But I filled several copy-books with slight and flimsy stories, which in general were spirited, though quite nonsensical. I exercised my youthful energies on follies, whims and inconsistencies (The Republic of Pemberley, 2010).

At the age of fourteen Jane wrote novel in a form of series of letters called *Love and Friendship*. Jane Austen describes it as: "My first attempt to ridicule the sundry silly novels that are prone exaggerated feelings to enthrone without regard for truth" (Corringham, 1971, p. 42). Two years after she decided to write a social satire, thirteen-page epistolary tale *The Three Sisters*, which was as Bush (1978, p. 19) explains mostly about "mercenary marriage". When Jane was sixteen she wrote also an unfinished story called *Catherine* (also *Kitty* or *Bower*) which was a forty-eight pages long narrative gradually moving closer towards the novels. It is a comedy of characters and their manners complemented with brilliant satire of snobbery and affectation. Another early work by Austen, *Lady*

Susan, was rather more continuing with the writing style of the Three Sisters than that of Catherine. On the other hand as Bush (1978, p. 21) supposes, it was unique in its hardness, when featuring female monster and her victims and with the tone and form which was not typical for social comedy.

By the time she was twenty-one, as Bailey (1931, p. 3) claims, she began to work on *First Impressions*, which was later renamed, using the alliteration of words *Pride and Prejudice*. Unfortunately, the book was rejected, probably as Malden supposes because the publishing house was “overwhelmed with novels in imitation of *Evelina*” (Malden, 1889, p. 39), which was a successful novel written by Frances Burney in 1778. The *Pride and Prejudice* remained unknown to the public for another 16 years, till it was published.

Malden (*ibid.*, p. 50) then finds out that next book, which was written during the time Jane spent in Steventon, was completed three months after *Pride and Prejudice*. Nowadays we know this work as *Sense and Sensibility* but originally this story was written in letters and called after the main heroines: Elinor and Marianne.

The third of the books finished in Steventon was *Northanger Abbey*. Austen tried to publish it six years later, when she was living in Bath. According to Malden she sold it for ten pounds to a local publisher, who later “repented of his bargain, for he never brought it out” (*ibid.*, p. 40). Anyway, *Northanger Abbey* was published thirteen years later, when Jane Austen was a successful authoress.

When the family moved to Bath Jane almost stopped writing. Malden (*ibid.*, p. 40-42) supposes that this was caused either by the declining health of her parents and duties connected with such a situation or by the fact that she was very bored in there. Nevertheless, she wrote one unfinished story of sixty-seven pages without title, which was later published together with *Lady Susan* by Mr. Austen Leigh and called *The Watsons*. After the death of her father, she moved to Chawton, where she again found her home. There she continued writing and in two years, she published *Sense and Sensibility*, her first finished work thanks to which she started her career as a writer. As Malden (*ibid.*, p. 74) supposes, the success of *Sense and Sensibility* encouraged Jane to try the fate of *Pride and Prejudice* once more. This time it was highly praised and established her fame. Sir Walter Scott wrote about her second published work in his *Journal*:

Read again, for the third time at least, Miss Austen’s finely-written novel of *Pride and Prejudice*. That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements and feelings and characters of ordinary life, which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with (Malden, 1889, p. 40).

The following books were written when Jane was over thirty-years old. When describing the major differences between her early works and those written later, Malden speaks about *Mansfield Park*,

Emma and Persuasion as being more matured, “motives and actions are more complex, there is less rapidity in the working out and the satire is little softened” (ibid, p. 101).

Mansfield Park, was written between 1812 and 1814 in Chawton, and published by Thomas Egerton, who published also Sense and Sensibility and Pride and Prejudice.

Malden offers the idea that in Emma Jane Austen „reached the summit of her literary powers “by introducing new brilliant characters and also by displaying of „a portrait of thorough English gentlemen, drawn to the life” (ibid, p. 128). The longest of the stories featuring people who love, hope, fear or fight between themselves, their homes, surroundings, and private lives was originally published in 1815 although Jane Austen did not believe that it would be successful. She remarked: „I am going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like“(Austen Leigh, 2006). This book was the last one which Jane Austen lived to see published.

During the time when her health was rapidly declining she also began a new novel, part of which we may now read as Sandition. She worked on it only for about seven weeks around the year 1817, and because of her illness this book remained unfinished. The remaining books Northanger Abbey and Persuasion were published posthumously. Northanger Abbey, as mentioned hereinbefore, was one of Jane Austen’s earliest works, initially prepared for the press in 1803, finally published in 1817. Malden notifies that the structure of the novel with the main heroine who is inferior to the hero (which is not typical for the rest of Austen’s works) is very similar to “the standard novels of her day that it is impossible not to see in this the unconscious plagiarism of a young author” (Malden, 1889, p. 180).

The last novel published also posthumously in 1817 was called Persuasion. In 1816, before the novel was printed Jane wrote to her niece, Fanny Knight about it: “I have something ready for publication which may, perhaps, appear about a twelvemonth hence...You may, perhaps, like the heroine, as she is almost too good for me” (ibid, p. 182).

The biographer Tomalin characterizes the book as Austen’s „present to herself and to all women who had lost their chance in life and would never enjoy a second spring” (Tomalin, 1997, p. 256). Malden (1889, p. 194-195) speaks of Persuasion as about Jane Austen’s swan-song, which is also the saddest of her works. She finished this book only few months before her death.

George Eliot wrote about Jane Austen as about “the greatest artist that has ever written ...the most perfect master over the means to her end” (Malden, 1889, p. 209).

3. MAJOR HEROINES

This analysis of Austen's female heroines starts with the major ones. The category includes only the most significant heroines, representing different kinds of personalities. These heroines are typically the central protagonists in the stories, who are at the age when the women usually get married and all of them face the same "problem" – love.

The female characters can be divided into two subcategories according to the way of their presentment. In some of the novels the authoress follows the lives of two sisters (See 3.1.) while in some others she simply describes the fate of individuals (See 3.2.).

3.1. Sister Heroines

The main inspirations for Austen's writings were her family and friends (See 2.1.). The greatest bond was between Jane and her sister Cassandra. She displayed their extraordinary relationship in two of her novels – in *Sense and Sensibility* and in *Pride and Prejudice*.

The *Pride and Prejudice*, illustrates very strong connection between sisters: Elizabeth and Jane Bennet, who are sharing their thoughts and beliefs, similarly as Austen with her elder sister (See 2.1.). The novel shows how Austen admired her sister for her purity, beauty and tenderness – which is obviously described in Jane Bennet's features, and how clever, sophisticated and passionate the author was herself in her inner world created for her "autobiographical" heroine Elizabeth.

In *Sense and Sensibility*, the readers can follow the story of two, again very close sisters who share similar fate, but who in order of their contradictory personalities resolve their love problems unlikely. Elinor Dashwood impersonates Austen's elder more responsible and thoughtful sister while Marianne represents the naive one, who learns from her – probably in very similar way how Jane learnt from Cassandra (See 2.2. and Tytler, 1900, p. 58).

3.1.1. Marianne Dashwood

Marianne Dashwood is one of the two major heroines of *Sense and Sensibility*. Owing to her personality she is considered to represent the "sensibility" by majority sources, while her elder sister Elinor mirrors the „sense“. Malden supposes the book shows "how with equally warm tender feelings the one sister could control her sensibility by means of her sense when the other would not attempt it" (Malden, 1889, p. 57).

Marianne is the middle daughter of Dashwoods and she is in her seventeen. Malden (ibid., p. 57) writes of her as about the exact copy of her mother in disposition. Although both respect Elinor for her steady good sense and calm judgement, they have no wish whatever to imitate her.

As for Marianne's appearance, it is well described by the author who writes of her as about more beautiful than Elinor.

Her form, though not so correct as her sister's, in having the advantage of height, was more striking; and her face was so lovely, that when in the common cant of praise, she was called a beautiful girl, truth was less violently outraged than usually happens. Her skin was very brown, but, from its transparency, her complexion was uncommonly brilliant; her features were all good; her smile was sweet and attractive; and in her eyes, which were very dark, there was a life, a spirit, an eagerness, which could hardly be seen without delight (Austen, 1811, p. 39).

In addition to her extraordinary outward, she is a very sensible, generous, amiable and clever girl. What makes Marianne interesting for the readers is her eagerness for everything including not only all of her joys but also her sorrows. Her character personalises all the features of a young passionate girl, sometimes out of reality, who is fantasising about romantic love and about full-value life with no society restrictions, obligations or dissimulations.

Marianne thinks of her light-headed behaviour as about superior to the conventional style of her society (See 1.3.). She feels somehow extraordinary when she is breaking the traditional rules of conversational themes and customs (Austen 1811, p. 39-40). She hates the world of concealment and self-command; she prefers to act unreservedly and not to restrain her feelings no matter what the consequences may be. She openly expresses her true feelings and reprimands Elinor for not doing so. Marianne is convinced that her emotions help her to act correctly and that her heart is her best adviser (ibid., p. 58).

She only rarely acts according to what is practical or proper; she thinks that people should be directed by their feelings only, not by the logic. Tomalin describes her as a young girl following "dictates and desires of her heart into unconventional and even risky behaviour, justifying it with the words 'we always know when we are acting wrong'; like Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park*, she follows an inner voice that tells her what is right and what is wrong" (Tomalin, 1997, p. 158).

At the beginning of the story Marianne is mourning for her decedent father. Her sadness is so strong and little theatrical as well, so there is no wonder that her mother gives away the mood too, although there are many things which have to be managed, such as their removal or send-off with servants. These all obligations lay upon the eldest sister Elinor.

Marianne is very selfish in that part, because she does not realise, that the situation is very painful for the others too. She acts like she is the only one affected by the tragic loss. She is just suffering, not willing to help or accept the conditions as they are. She yields the pain so much that she is not able to see,

that the life must go on, that the rest of the family can have own problems or sorrows. She is the one who wants to be in the centre of attention, no matter if she is the poor one, or the happy one.

She also weeps dramatically when the family leaves their home. Marianne is than very disappointed with her new house in Barton, with the surroundings and with the people around as well. Her inconsideration continues when she meets their neighbours. Although the three ladies should be grateful to be offered a new place to live by the helpful Middletons, Marianne behaves very disparagingly to them, not even trying to act any civility. As Tomalin (*ibid.*, p. 158) notes down Marianne's open criticism of the squires is in fact the real feeling of Jane Austen about them, though never expressed.

The behaviour of Marianne is similar to Elizabeth Bennet in making prejudices about other people. Moreover, in comparison with Elizabeth, Marianne is shallower when she feels contempt for people just because of their age as in case of Colonel Brandon or reading performance or interests, about which she criticizes Edward Ferras. She often behaves very disrespectfully to the people around her just because she does not like their manners or opinions. "Marianne had never much toleration for any thing like impertinence, vulgarity, inferiority of parts, or even difference of taste from herself" (Austen, 1811, p. 109).

On contrary with this, her attitude towards things and people she likes is very positive. She loves nature and country-side landscapes, she is really a keen reader, she admires especially poetry of Cowper and Scott, like other Jane Austen's heroines, such as Catherine Morland or Elizabeth Bennet and also similarly as Jane Austen herself (See 2.2.). Another possible parallel between the author and Marianne is their common love of music, especially proficiency in playing the piano (See 2.2.).

Thanks to the brilliant voice and piano performance Marianne attracts Colonel Brandon. However, she ignores his attention, not only because she thinks he is too old for her but also because she believes in first and passionate love and sparkling between the two lovers which in this case are not present. Marianne is also very unshakable in her opinions about love. She wishes to marry a man, who would agree on all her ideas and convictions and who would be interested in the same music and literature as she is.

Her spontaneity, excessive sensibility, and romantic idealism finally lead her to fall in love with a man of the same easy-going nature – Willoughby. She passionately and very openly shares all of her feelings with him. In this part she behaves very naively. She often fantasises about Willoughby, she idealises him and glorifies all of his features. Everything that he does is right for her, everything he says sounds clever to her. She acts like a silly irresponsible child when she accepts a horse from Willoughby, although the family does not have enough money to keep it.

In Willoughby she finds her "one and only" who has the same views on the life as she has. Marianne in love is very euphoric and radiant, and her happiness is infectious. Blinded with her dreams

about her possible future and extraordinary love she unconsciously hurts people around her. Her undisguised happiness must be very bitter to look at for Elinor, who silently suffers because of her unfortunate secret love. In addition Marianne is so occupied with her own feelings and needs that she does not care about the others, who probably need the attention more.

She does not even care when her sister tries to warn her, about the possible bad consequences of her irresponsible behaviour. She breaks the typical rules of etiquette (See 1.5.) when she travels alone with Willoughby to see the property, which he is going to inherit and also when she allows him to secretly cut off her lock or correspond with her privately, which in that time meant almost the same as being engaged, but without any official announcement, which could bring many gossips about them and endanger her reputation.

However, their relationship finally ends with Marianne's collapse, after Willoughby's unexpected leaving. Here again, Marianne, although truly sad, overacts her sorrow. Her passion for love shifts into passionate suffering, supported by her mother.

She played over every favourite song that she had been used to play to Willoughby, every air in which their voices had been oftenest joined, and sat at the instrument gazing on every line of music that he had written out for her, till her heart was so heavy that no farther sadness could be gained; and this nourishment of grief was every day applied. She spent whole hours at the pianoforte alternately singing and crying; her voice often totally suspended by her tears. In books too, as well as in music, she courted the misery which a contrast between the past and present was certain of giving. She read nothing but what they had been used to read together (Austen, 1811, p. 71).

Her emotions influence the lives of her friends and family almost as much as they influence Marianne herself. Although beloved Willoughby harms her so much, she does not stop to hope for a happy ending. She is still very positive about him and does not allow for his betrayal. When in London Marianne even stoops to make advances to Willoughby, although he does not care at all. As Cornish (1913, p. 81) mentions her unreserve exposes her to all the troubles that come upon her afterwards.

Totally unprepared Marianne reveals Willoughby's real attitude to her and his real character after his derogative letter and also when she listens to the story about him and poor Eliza Williams and finally when she eyewitnesses Willoughby beside another woman. Here, Marianne is displayed as totally open and very vulnerable.

From that moment there is an evident change in Marianne's character. She suffers again, very much, but this time, it is not for being interesting and in the centre of other's attention, this time she

realises how silly and wrong she was and that her way of life is not the best one, not the right one, not the superior one, but the naive one, which ended in disaster.

She is forced to admit that supported with her romantic nature she was just pursuing her “theory of complete confidence in anyone she loved, and gave the most outspoken marks of devotion to a man who had never told her he cared for her” (Malden, 1889, p. 62).

Realising that the life and the people are not always as good as she thought and the bad consequences of her misjudgements, she almost dies. She also admits that her illness was caused mainly by her overindulgence of the grief and her death, as she herself says, would virtually have been suicide. “My illness, I well knew, had been entirely brought on by myself...Had I died – it would have been self-destruction” (Austen, 1811, p. 298).

This part as Cornish supposes is inspired by some kind of share of emotions between the heroine and the author, who “could not have quizzed Marianne’s sensibility so deliciously if she had not had a sympathetic understanding of it” (Cornish, 1913, p. 76). Perhaps it was the short unlucky love-affair with Tom Lefroy which made Jane Austen suffer (See 2.2.), and which finally led her to make one of her heroines suffer as well.

There is no sign of strong heroine in Marianne, she is not willing to find new love, or fight for the lost one. She just accepts the situation and faces up the consequences, probably the same way as Jane Austen, who finally remained unmarried (See 2.2.). Cornish writes about Marianne that she is “a Juliet who has mistaken her Romeo but her character is not strong enough to raise her to the height of a tragic ending” (Cornish, 1913, p. 81). So finally she does not die, but recovers and starts all over again. Suddenly she cares about other people’s feelings and finds out, how selfish she was when she overlooked the sorrow of her sister. She also regrets being so superficial and looks on the bright sides of the things and also people around her. She learns, that older people can be extraordinary good company for her and that people who she mistakenly judged to be boring and dull are in fact charming with admirable qualities.

During the ending part of the book Marianne decides to marry Colonel Brandon. This is a very unexpected decision. The girl, who was in the beginning so passionately committed to fight for real love, for symphony of two souls, finally ends with the man, who has always been just her long-standing admirer, nothing more. Marianne suddenly acts rationally, without feelings; she follows the logic, the customs and the way of ordinary women behaviour (See 1.5.). She learns to love Colonel Brandon and occupies her mind not with passion, fantasies or dreams any more, but with new duties placed in a new home. She is now a wife – mistress of a family, and the patroness of a village (Malden, 1889, p. 73).

She is an example of an extraordinary girl with passionate heart who finally faces the real world, which teaches her that the fantasies and dreams, her free way of life and thinking is not accepted by the society at all. Tomalin suggests that “Austen is considering how far society can tolerate openness, and

what its effect on the individual may be”(Tomalin, 1997, p. 157). Despite the expectations, this heroine surrenders.

Bailey argues that the ending shows Austen’s protest against the romantic fashions of that time. He adds that “Marianne is a silly and rather selfish girl, and the business of the book is to send her through the painful experiences which turn selfishness into kindness and silliness into sense” (Bailey, 1931, p. 31).

From this ending it is obvious that Austen’s intention was not to glorify the sensibility but to maintain that the sense is the only way ho to survive in the world, which was in that time place of money and practical marriages.

Perhaps this is one of the alternative endings of real Jane Austen’s love. Probably she is just displaying the possible solution to her state of being. However, in her life she did not follow the sense as Marianne; she remained with her sensibility, with her broken heart, fantasies and dreams, alone until her death.

3.1.2. Elinor Dashwood

The second heroine displayed in *Sense and Sensibility* is Elinor Dashwood. The main difference between her and Marianne is that Elinor definitely represents the sense. According to Miles the readers see the things in the story through Elinor’s eyes and are “privy to Elinor’s inner conflicts in a way that they are not with Marianne” (Miles, 2003, p. 16).

In these two characters and their frequent battles of wills, Austen displayed her opinions about the new coming romantic ideas and current pragmatic views on life (See 1.2.). According to the story it is obvious that the authoress satirises the new trend in Marianne’s fate and glorifies the traditional one in that of Elinor.

Although described not as beautiful as her younger sister, Elinor has “a delicate complexion, regular features, and a remarkably pretty figure“(Austen, 1811, p. 39). She is the eldest one and after the death of their father she is the prop of the family, who takes the responsibility for the remaining sisters, because the mother’s personality is very similar to Marianne’s, so she rather closes her eyes when she faces some problems instead of trying to solve them.

So thanks to her effectual advice and possession of strong understanding and coolness of judgement Elinor becomes the mother’s counsellor and father’s substitute. Her attitude towards the mother is very good, although the mother slightly overlooks her, because of being preoccupied by Marianne.

Jane Austen also describes Elinor as a nineteenth-year-old girl with an excellent heart and strong feelings, which she has always under control. So when the story opens, it is Elinor, who has to restrain her sorrow for the loss of the father and manages all the things which have to be done.

She searches for their new home, which they are forced to move into, because after the death of their father, John Dashwood - their half-brother inherits all of their properties (See 1.5.); she even has to argue with the mother and Marianne about the level and style of their future housing. She is the rational girl, who admits the fact that they are poor now, reliant only on the goodness and hospitality of their relatives and friends. With her good sense she realises the must of being polite, so she often has to smooth over her sisters offences and bad manners towards some of their relatives, even they sometimes deserve them.

Elinor disagrees with her sister in many aspects. One of them is their opinion about money. While Marianne thinks that material goods are not important for life happiness when she says: "money can only give happiness where there is nothing else to give it" (Austen, 1811, p. 78), Elinor regards them essential. She explains the need of them to make the life more comfortable and to provide enough resources for pleasure.

In comparison with Marianne's manners, Elinor is very reserved; she sometimes decides to lie in the midst of utterance or where she thinks it is appropriate, especially when politeness requires it, but what is important to maintain is that Elinor stays frank. Regarding to Brownstein Elinor is also more circumspect and more aware of how the self interacts with others; "in her view conventions are necessary and even useful" (Brownstein, 1997, p. 43).

She strictly follows the rules of good etiquette and also tries to teach her sisters to do so. She is always distinguished and tries to solve all of her problems alone. Marianne criticizes her for being too cold and ruthless, but not justly, because Elinor is very sensible, but she only commands her feeling very skilfully. According to Tomalin, Jane Austen presents Elinor "as the model of good behaviour" (Tomalin, 1997, p. 157). Sometimes she also inclines to be too moderate, rational, and critical. This behaviour is definitely in contrast with the rest of the family who illustrate their surname – Dashwood, perfectly by their "dash" manners.

Cornish also supposes that "Elinor is in some degree a study for Anne Eliot in *Persuasion*. She resembles Anne in gentle dispositions, upright principles, constancy of feelings, , and patient endurance of suffering" (Cornish, 1913, p. 75).

Elinor's gentle character and cleverness soon attracts Edward Ferras, gentle clergyman. In comparison with Marianne, Elinor loves the man who really deserves it. She obviously does not express her feelings as passionately as her younger sister, perhaps because she is not convinced that love can overcome all troubles and obstacles. She behaves more like an old experienced woman than like teenage girl, who is in love for the first time. Instead of being "on fire" with her love just like Marianne, she is

calmly “smouldering”. She is more careful with the way of expressing her true affection, but she is definitely willing to vow herself to the man she loves.

Anyway, the couple is not fortunate. Although their mutual sympathy, they are separated. Elinor is not very keen on entrusting her true disappointed feelings towards Edward to nobody from the family that is probably why they just simply get over the leaving of Mr. Ferras and leave Elinor without any soliciting.

Her family is as important for her as Edward, and she wants to avoid them from suffering with her, that is why instead of looking for some stand-by amongst them she pretends to be strong enough to get over it alone.”I did not love only him;--and while the comfort of others was dear to me, I was glad to spare them from knowing how much I feel“(Austen, 1811, p. 222).

She also does not allow herself any demonstration of her sorrow, so she does not cry, does not mourn or stay alone; she tries to distract herself by various activities, including household issues, looking after her sisters or any other activities, which were appropriate for lady of her age and social status (See 1.6.). Elinor, although suffering very much, tries to persuade herself that the financial situation of Dashwood family is not acceptable for Edward (See 1.5.), and that he would probably find a better wife. With her gracious heart Elinor wishes him the best and thinks of him still as the most charming and respectable man she ever met. Nevertheless, she believes that Edward truly loves her.

What a painful look must it be for her, to see the happiness of Marianne and Willoughby? Definitely, she must have suffered even more, but her love to Marianne is of course bigger, so there is no need to be jealous about the happy couple.

But Elinor is not so blinded by cheerful behaviour and gorgeous appearance of Mr. Willoughby as her sister, so she realises the possible threats of such open relationship between them. She worries about Marianne’s reputation and tries to prevent her from unpleasant gossips. She loves her sister so much, that she is also secretly afraid that she may undergo such painful experience in love as her. However, these all anxieties hold true, and Elinor is forced to share the heart-breaking mood with her sister and prove that her character is not so cold as it might seem, but that she is also really warm-hearted.

Later on Elinor meets Lucy Steel, who tells her about the engagement between her and Edward Ferras. Elinor knows very well how important the concealment, disguise and pretended indifference are in the social stage, so she tries to stay calm, strong and suffers in silence, with her privacy carefully preserved. Her self-control could be also described as contingent, because she just wants to find out truth about the relationship between Lucy and Edward, while convincing Lucy of her perfect serenity and propriety. As Miles suggests “Elinor is so guarded in the presence of Lucy Steele that she seems hardly the same, frank person we had become accustomed to”(Miles, 2003, p. 13).

This kind of hypocrisy reveals another difference between Elinor and Marianne. Marianne is naive and suffers when hurt by other people, Elinor is more self-serving and intriguing. On contrary with

her sister's spontaneous reaction to the meeting with Willoughby's new girlfriend, Elinor reacts in the very similar situation like a professional actress to gather more information which could help her to understand or to deal with her problem.

Elinor is so strong in that scene, that it is very improbable that the character of such nice qualities like her intelligence, patience, insight and gentle sense of love combined with unbelievable morality and emotional strength can exist in the real world. One of the possible ways of explaining this rareness is that Austen simply satirises Elinor as well as Marianne. While in Marianne she creates a heroine which slips very often because of her romantic nature, Elinor is immoderately perfect in her behaviour, strictly following all of the rules and obligations. (See 1.3.).

Elinor is also more thoughtful in making estimations about other people. She is not stating any prejudices, although she is sometimes suspicious, especially in the case of Willoughby. Marianne also accuses her of being sceptic. Elinor thinks highly of Colonel Brandon's qualities regardless of his age. She values his wisdom, cleverness and good manners, while Marianne compliments only people with talent, taste or special temperament, which is obviously very shallow. This makes Elinor more reasonable and humanitarian.

One affliction follows another in Elinor's life. She meets Edward and informs him about the generous offer of help by Colonel Brandon. She has to face up her beloved man and act like his friend only, not like his lover any more. She feels that his feelings for her have not changed and she understands his sorrow and difficult situation which bounded him.

She prefers to believe in bad things which might happen more than in the good ones, so she is rather pessimistic as well. Her view of life is clearly realistic, with no fantasises, dreams or foolish desires presented publicly. But in her heart, somewhere in her inner world she is probably similar to Marianne and she probably still hopes that she and Edward could be together one day.

Elinor evidently does not represent only sense in the story but sensibility as well. While Marianne learns to use her sense in the end of the novel, Elinor reflects her sensibility gradually and reaches her climax when she shares her feelings with others.

The first signs of Elinor's weakness reveal, when she gets wind of the alleged marriage between Lucy Steel and Edward Ferras. It is obvious that she was not so resigned to the loss of Edward as she was pretending. She now loses all of her hopes and secret dreams and has no more strength to wait or again suffer in silence. She shares her sorrow for the first time with others, but certainly not in such a tumultuous way as Marianne. Finally her good heart and clean sense is adequately prized, when she finds out, that her beloved Edward is not married and that he still loves her.

When he proposes she agrees to marry him immediately. As Cornish (1913, p. 91) remarks Elinor is in her acceptance of Edward within a few moments of the announcement too self-hearted. In this scene she acts very spontaneously, without sense, just following her heart similarly as Marianne. She

does not consider the possible consequences of such unequal marriage or reaction of Edward's snobbish family at that moment. Elinor realises the need of reconciliation of Edward and his family later on, and does not hesitate to pocket her pride and ask Edward's arrogant and narrow-minded sister Fanny for help. Her cleverness triumphs again and she lives the happy life which she with no doubt deserves.

3.1.3. Elizabeth Bennet

Elizabeth Bennet is probably the most famous heroine created by Jane Austen and she is seen as atypical to traditional women of that time mainly thanks to her independence and feminist views on the role of women. Chandler is of the opinion that "Elizabeth acts out a traditionally defensive female role" (Chandler, 1986, p. 37).

Austen does not give a sketch of Elizabeth's character; she gets the readers to know her from her speeches and actions and from the descriptions of her by such people as Mr. Darcy, her father or Miss Bingley. Austen expresses her own opinion of her heroine in a letter of January 1813: "I must confess, that I think her (Elizabeth) as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like her at least, I do not know" (Chapman, 1985, p. 131-132).

Elizabeth is the second child of the Bennets, who have together five daughters left without acceptable dowers. Twenty-year-old Elizabeth is a favourite one of her father who often calls her "little Lizzy" (Austen, 1811, p. 4-5), while her mother prefers beautiful eldest Jane and especially Lydia: „Lizzy is not a bit better than the others; and I am sure she is not half so handsome as Jane, nor half so good-humoured as Lydia. But you are always giving her the preference" (Austen, 1811, p. 2). According to the relationship and behaviour of the mother towards Elizabeth, she is the least dear to her of all her children.

Anyway, Elizabeth is a darling for many other people, especially thanks to her lively, playful disposition, which delights in anything ridiculous. She has a very close relationship with her older sister Jane, mainly because they are the only sensible ones in the family. They both respect appropriate manners in the society (See 1.3.) and share as well a desire to marry for love. Malden compares this relationship with the real life of Austen: "Jane and Elizabeth Bennet are as Cassandra and Jane Austen were to one another" (Malden, 1889, p. 80).

Elizabeth proves her love for Jane when she, without any hesitations, walks three miles through the mud to visit her while Jane is ill at Netherfield. She stays by her bedside and cares for her. She also tries to cheer Jane up when she has got broken heart by Bingley.

When the story opens Elizabeth is displayed as a young bright girl, who loves her sisters and family and who enjoys all the things she likes including reading, walking and admiring the picturesque surrounding of the countryside or dancing during the country balls. In these hobbies she parallels the authoress (See 2.2.).

As for her outward, she is described as very pretty and agreeable by Mr. Bingley (Austen, 1811, p. 9) while Mr. Darcy's first impression of her is: "She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me" (ibid., p. 9). Later on, after more detailed evaluation of her appearance, he finds out that she has a beautiful dark eyes, light and pleasing figure and although her manners are not those of the fashionable world, he admires their easy playfulness (ibid., p. 19).

When described by Miss Bingley, who is not so fascinated with her as Darcy, Elizabeth appears more like an ordinary girl without any special charm similarly like Jane Austen herself (See 2.2.). It is obvious that in comparison with her sister Jane, Elizabeth is not so attractive, but on the other hand she is not even ugly and she has more to offer than just the beauty.

Her greatest attribute is intelligence, expressed not only in her behaviour but also in the brilliant dialogues between her and Darcy. "Austen endowed her heroine with four admirable qualities: energy, wit, self-confidence and the ability to think for herself" (Tomalin, 1997, p. 162). She is not afraid to express her opinions although they are very controversial for the lady of that time. She is not the one who just follows the crowd, she has her own will.

Tomalin (ibid., p. 162-163) compares her with Marianne Dashwood (See 3.1.1), whom she definitely resembles in the first two features mentioned hereinbefore, but differs from her as well, thanks to Elizabeth's toughness, courageous temper and a ready tongue as Cornish (1913, p. 100) suggests, which helps her to protect herself. Although Elizabeth is not so awkward during the social events as the rest of her family (excluding the oldest sister Jane), a snobbish person such as Ms. Bingley tends to criticise her for incompetent manners, coarseness and lack of taste (Austen, 1811, p. 30-31). Elizabeth often feels embarrassment when she sees the vulgarity and foolishness of her mother and worries that such behaviour will not allow her to marry an intelligent man. Despite this, she tries not to care about any negative comments concerning herself or her family; she stays very optimistic and cheerful. She is very frank with no signs of dissimulations in her behaviour and no suspicion towards others.

Another very strong side of this heroine is her brilliant sense of humour. Elizabeth confesses that: "Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies, do divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can" (Austen, 1811, p. 52). She uses the humour as both defence and attack, but she never oversteps the society rules. She is also able to make fun of herself when she is humiliated by Darcy's first unkind remarks about her appearance and his refusal to dance with her.

On the other hand, Elizabeth possesses also some of the less admirable qualities. She is very stubborn and proud of it when she says: "There is a stubbornness about me that never can bear to be frightened at the will of others. My courage always rises at every attempt to intimidate me" (ibid., p. 156).

She is a little violent in the way she makes prejudices about other people and expresses her thoughts very bluntly. Fortunately, she blunders in her judgements only twice – with Wickham and, of course with Darcy.

She does not trust anybody except her sister Jane and gets easily disappointed by the people who do not fulfil her expectations, no wonder there are only few people she really loves or of whom she thinks well.

The more I see of the world, the more am I dissatisfied with it; and every day confirms my belief of the inconsistency of all human characters, and of the little dependence that can be placed on the appearance of merit or sense (Austen, 1811, p. 121).

She also admits that she is proud and does not like when anybody injures her vanity (ibid., p. 16). In fact the only person who dares to do so is Darcy that is probably why she dislikes him so much in the beginning of the story.

In contrast with Darcy, there is a man whom she fancies from the first moment – Wickham. He is very charming and friendly, moreover, her father considers him as very agreeable for her. She also shares the hate of the snobbery of Mr. Darcy with him. Finally Wickham appears to be very different from what she thought of him. He turns out to be a liar, whose entanglements with Darcy's sister in the past, and then with Lydia Bennet persuades Elizabeth that her first impression is not always correct.

Another very interesting point is Elizabeth's relationship with Lydia, the youngest sister. There is a kind of tension between these two. The main reason is obviously Wickham. Lydia gets what Elizabeth wanted, although by inappropriate means. Austen shows us that Elizabeth cannot quite forgive her this success and envies that Lydia can enjoy Wickham. Tomalin also supposes that "Lydia is the id to Lizzy's ego" (Tomalin, 1997, p. 167).

Elizabeth's best scenes in the story are definitely her refusals. Firstly with Mr. Collins (probably inspired by Austen's own marriage refusal – See 2.2.), a silly man who expects her to accept his proposal just because she is a poor woman (See 1.5.) and must want a husband and her own home. What a surprise for him is the sincerity of Elizabeth, who does not desire any of his properties or advantages. "You could not make me happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make you so" (Austen, 1811, p. 98). By this rejection Elizabeth shows her bravery, because to refuse a proposal was not considered wise in her times (See 1.5.).

Collins finally finds such a marriage-keen wife in Charlotte Lucas. Here Elizabeth judges Charlotte without much consideration of her reasons. She expresses her opinions about marriage. Both Elizabeth and Jane champion the idea of marriage for love and with a respectable partner. In this case Elizabeth does not consider Mr. Collins being an appropriate partner neither for her nor for Charlotte.

She does not agree with the contemporary practice of women getting married to obtain comfort and hinterlands, which is definitely a sign of her independence. Her romantic ideas of an equal

partnership are greatly encouraged by the fact that her father married a woman he could not respect. She is convinced that marriage does not always bring happiness.

Elizabeth visits Charlotte in her new home; thereby she again breaks the traditional conception of behaviour: "A woman is not usually disposed to like the wife of the man whom she has rejected" (Cornish, 1913, p. 103). Elizabeth behaves there very freely and friendly. She is invited to Lady Catherine de Bourgh, a noble cold lady who makes all of the people around her intimidated. Elizabeth is the exception, with her mind and character strong enough, she is not afraid at all. This proves her great courage again, so Elizabeth bravely defends all of Catherine's scathing remarks about her easy-going family and insufficient education.

The second proposal comes very unexpectedly from Mr. Darcy. Elizabeth appears to rebel against the lot of women and the courtship plot (See 1.5.) when she rejects again. This time, however, she has more serious reasons for doing so. She is convinced that Darcy thanks to his intrigues, caused that her sister is now separated from her beloved Mr. Bingley and moreover she is influenced by the fictitious story told by Wickham. Darcy also asks her to marry him in a very strange way, which seems rather offensive than affectionate. So Elizabeth turns him down with series of biting accusations.

He explains his behaviour and clarifies his character and feelings in a letter, which makes Elizabeth realise how mistaken and blind she was. "Till this moment I never knew myself" (Austen, 1811, p. 188). She suddenly realises all of the virtues of Mr. Darcy and all of the depravities of her own family even of her father. Her ability to realize her unjust opinions of someone and also her determination to try to make amends for it illustrates her uniquely immense courage.

Although "love and pride are still conflicting in Elizabeth's mind" as Cornish (1913, p. 113) notes down, she starts to admire the person she used to hate. She also tries to understand, what made him to fall in love with her, although her inconsiderable dower and earth-bred relatives. She regrets being so rude and disregardful to person whom she should be rather grateful. She does not even dare to dream about their common future, because she thinks of Darcy very high now.

Elizabeth's last refusal – this time of Lady Catherine, finally leads to her marriage with Darcy. When dealing with Catherine Elizabeth illustrates her self-reliance and her own will. In this scene she stands up for herself in a manner which commands respect and praise.

Her exact words leave no doubt in one's mind of her independence: "I am only resolved to act in that manner which will, in my own opinion, constitute my happiness without reference to you or to any person so wholly unconnected with me" (Austen, 1811, p. 323). This statement, which was made to a lady of higher society, proves that Elizabeth definitely has a will of her own. Thanks to Catherine's attack, Elizabeth realizes that Darcy's feelings have not changed, and that he is still willing to marry her. With celebration from her father Elizabeth finally unites her life with a man,

whom she respects and passionately loves, what more can a heroine wish? “I am happier even than Jane; she only smiles, I laugh” (ibid., p. 346).

Mitton writes of Elizabeth: “She is the embodiment of heroine so many authors have tried to draw. Witty without being pert, having a reasonable conceit of herself without vanity, and a natural gaiety of heart that makes her altogether lovable” (Mitton, 1917, p. 131).

To sum up, Elizabeth Bennet is both an inspiration, thanks to her confidence and courage, and a lesson, because of her false judgements and prejudices.

3.1.4. Jane Bennet

Jane is the oldest of Bennet’s daughters and is considered to be the most beautiful of all the sisters and also one of the most attractive young ladies in the countryside. She is admired by Mr. Darcy and attracts Mr. Bingley, who falls in love with her at first sight. As Cornish notes down: “Nobody was jealous of Jane, for Jane could think ill of nobody” (Cornish, 1913, p. 99).

Despite of such brilliant dispositions she stays very modest with no signs of pretentiousness. Tytler writes of her: “Her good understanding is so well balanced by her gentle, tolerant temper that she is able to bear patiently and tenderly with her mother’s foibles, including her vain-glory in Jane’s beauty” (Tytler, 1900, p. 56).

Jane is an innocent heroine, who is in her twenty-two or twenty-three, with sweet temper, good heart and virtuous qualities, so she is universally well-liked. Cornish writes of her: “None of the five sisters was shy, unless it were Jane, if that is the right word to describe her gentle, retiring, and benignant disposition” (Cornish, 1913, p. 124).

She is very patient (Austen, 1811, p. 37) and stable in her thoughts and feelings, but not too adamant to change her opinions when sense requires it. The illustration of this can be seen in her relationship with Ms. Bingley, whom she stops meeting after realising her insincerity.

Her life is perfectly balanced thanks to her own contentment and caring for beloved people (ibid., p.170). As Elizabeth’s confidant, she tries to keep her sister’s tendency to be judgmental by offering positive interpretations of negative situations. Elizabeth says to her: “You wish to think all the world respectable, and are hurt if I speak ill of anybody. I only want to think you perfect, and you set yourself against it. Do not be afraid of my running into any excess, of my encroaching on your privilege of universal good-will” (ibid., p. 121).

Elizabeth also looks up to Jane’s ability to look on the bright sides of things and trusting everyone so blindly, as with Mr. Wickham, about whom she disbelieves that he is a liar.

Jane agrees with Elizabeth on the questions of marriage and equal partnership. When she is in love, she resembles the behaviour of Elinor Dashwood. Although somewhere inside she is passionately

smitten with Mr. Bingley, she does not express her feelings spectacularly and acts rather more as a cold beauty with no feelings. So there is no wonder, that Bingley is persuaded so easily by Darcy that Jane does not return his love.

When he leaves she feels sorrow, of course, but that does not diminish her love for him. Finally her love-story ends happily when Bingley proposes her and she accepts.

The two are very similar in their “angel-like” qualities: “Your tempers are by no means unlike. You are each of you so complying, that nothing will ever be resolved on; so easy, that every servant will cheat you; and so generous, that you will always exceed your income” (ibid, p. 313).

The happy couple finally marries for love, although their relationship is not as passionate, emotional and deep as the one of Elizabeth and Darcy.

Austen created in Jane a kind of character which is almost perfect: in her appearance, manners, qualities and free-heartedness as well. Such a heroine certainly deserves a good fate, which she finally does. Jane is a static character who can be called a model of virtue from the beginning. However, the story follows basically the affinity of Elizabeth and Darcy, so there is no room for Jane to develop in the novel.

3.2. Individual heroines

Jane Austen really honoured family and relationships within it, as the readers can see in the novels such as *Pride and Prejudice* or *Sense and Sensibility*. On the other hand, she was very good at displaying individuals, who are also parts of some families, but who are out on a limb. Individual heroines can be further divided into two groups.

The first one includes ladies who are spinsters of their own accord such as Anne Eliot or Emma Woodhouse, and the second one consisting of Catherine Morland, Harriet Smith and Fanny Price can be characterised as group of young girls entering the social world.

3.2.1. “Spinsters”

Calling this group of heroines “Spinsters” is chosen concisely, because both of the ladies included, are unmarried when the stories start, although they are advanced in age. Such a state in the time of Austen meant that the lady was undesirable for a man to marry, because of her poverty, appearance or unsuitable manners (See 1.5.).

What is interesting about heroines of novels called *Emma* and *Persuasion* is that none of these reasons causes their old-maidishness. The first case is Emma and it is her own decision, because she does not feel that she in her luxurious life needs any husband. The second case is Anne Eliot and it is again her own will to stay single but only because she is still in love with a man she does not take the liberty of marrying, because of his lower social status.

Nevertheless, they finally re-value the decisions to stay single and get married. The authoress followed their ways to this resolution in so brilliant way, that these two heroines are ones of the most significant.

3.2.1.1. Anne Eliot

Jane Austen considers this heroine almost too good for her in a letter addressed to her niece Fanny in 1816 (Cornish, 1913, p. 216). She is probably inspired by Austen's admired sister Cassandra (See 2.1.), because Anne seems to share with her the reserved nature and faithful feelings towards the lost love.

In spite of this, there are also some significant similarities between Anne and Jane Austen, such as her appearance, or the relationship of Anne to children which obviously resembles Jane's behaviour as an aunt (See 2.2.). Malden tries to illustrate the connection between the heroine and Jane Austen: "Persuasion is in the tone of a woman who looks back upon her own romance with sorrowful tenderness, and permits to her imaginary story the happy finale which she had not experienced herself" (Malden, 1889, p. 182). Malden (ibid., p. 182-183) also suggests the possible parallel between Anne's and Jane's love stories. While the first mentioned retells us the story about coming together of sundered lovers after the difficulties and hindrances of their separation, the love story of Jane Austen, who is separated from her lover because of similar reasons as Anne, does not end happily (See 2.2.).

Anne Eliot is the middle daughter of a vain, extravagant and snobbish baronet. In her twenty-seven years she is still single and what is more there is nobody who seems to expect her to marry. On contrary with other Austen's heroines, Anne is adult, experienced with her mind fully matured. She is not regarded as one of the marriageable young ladies in the society any more, mostly because of her unhappy outward and prudence.

She grows up without mother, who died. Anne resembles her in both appearance and character. However, she is quite isolated from the others who overlook her. Even her own family does not weigh her word, pieces of advice or opinions:

Anne, with an elegance of mind and sweetness of character, which must have placed her high with any people of real understanding, was nobody with either father or sister; her word had no weight, her convenience was always to give way-- she was only Anne (Austen, 1818, p. 3).

Anne is also very often insulted by her father due to her appearance (ibid., p. 3) and overlooked, moreover, the people who are not family members such as Ms. Clay takes precedence over her. Fortunately she is hardened enough to such affronts (ibid., p. 28).

Although having two sisters, Anne lives lonely in her own sad world. Her only real confidante is mother's friend and Anne's godmother Lady Russell, who tries to see Anne through society and helps her to form opinions of the others, which are sometimes quite mistaken, thanks to Russell's overvaluing of Anne's social position.

One of such judgements finally causes heartbreak, from which Anne never fully recovers. Persuaded by Lady Russell, she rejects a man whom she passionately loves – naval officer Frederick Wentworth, only because of his poverty and lower social rank.

Anne's apprehension of Lady Russell is very interesting one. While Anne is able to estimate the real character of majority of people around her, with Lady Russell she definitely fails. The question is, whether such blindness towards her can be caused by the loss of Anne's own mother, who Lady Russell probably tries to substitute or whether it is just the naivety of nineteen-year-old Anne that makes her be persuaded.

She regrets this decision all the time and she is confirmed in her feeling that she will never love another man. "Her attachment and regrets had, for a long time, clouded every enjoyment of youth, and an early loss of bloom and spirits had been their lasting effect (*ibid.*, p. 22).

The readers first meet with Anne eight years after this broken engagement. She is displayed as a very sad heroine and her life seems just to pass her by. Wiltshire (1997, p. 76) points out that Austen introduces this quiet and rather recessive heroine gradually. She is described as very patient and optimistic, although the positive temper is just a mask to her deep sorrow (Austen, 1818, p. 33). Cornish characterises this heroine as:

Too yielding, too unselfish, too willing a helper to be a heroine of a heroic kind; but she has strength as well as sweetness, clearness of vision, knowledge of character, rectitude and honesty, and presence of mind as well as the personal dignity which is often confounded with pride (Cornish, 1913, p. 216).

One of the most typical characteristics of Anne is her modesty. She is described as: "one who is too modest for the world in general to be aware of half her accomplishments and too highly accomplished for modesty to be natural in any other woman" (Austen, 1818, p. 164).

The story begins with the resolution that the family has to move, to allow her father to live in a luxury, which he loves, and to pay all of his debts. They move to Bath to a cheaper house and leave all of their properties to Admiral Croft. Anne is not very keen on the idea of living in Bath, similarly as Jane Austen herself in her life (See 2.2.), but has no other option than accept it, because her family ignores her needs and feelings, and takes the role of "a silent observer" who "gradually comes to take up a more central position" in the story (Wiltshire, 1997, p. 78).

Anne passionately admires everything connected with navy, and likes everyone who serves there. It is obvious, that this Anne's endearment is again inspired by the real attitude of Jane Austen towards the Navy (See 2.1.). The presence of Admiral also reminds Anne of Frederick, which brings her bittersweet memories back to life. In addition to her sorrow, she spends few weeks before the removal with her younger hypochondriac married sister and meets him there, but this time he is rich and in a very good position.

She is forced to get used to his company, which is not very easy for her because he treats her with his cold formality towards her, which proves that he is still angry at her decision. It must be very painful for Anne to watch her beloved man to be courting other women. Despite this, she tries to stay calm and suffers in silence similarly as Elinor Dashwood. She holds back her passionate feelings and as Wiltshire remarks she appears to be "a kind of moral-physiological entity" (Wiltshire, 1997, p. 77). Cornish (1913, p. 209) adds that similarly as other Austen's heroines such as Elizabeth, Fanny or Elinor, Anne forgive much to her lover.

The situation changes when the party goes to visit the seaside resort of Lyme. There Anne finds new friends in fellows of Captain Wentworth, who behave towards her very amiably. She happens to be a sympathetic listener of Captain Benwick, who has recently lost the woman he was engaged to.

Another event which distracts Anne is her meeting with William Elliot, her estranged cousin, who seems to be very attracted by her. The situation when they meet for the first time is very similar to the one that Jane Austen experienced in 1801 (See 2.2.). The visit to Lyme ends very dramatically when one of the present ladies falls down and is concussed. The reactions of the party differ here – Anne's presence of mind is contrasted with the helpless and rather more hysterical behaviour of the others.

There is also another ability in which Anne differs from the rest of the society. It is her behaviour towards childless widow Hamilton. While the others consider the company of an invalid, poor and low-ranked woman unfavourable, Anne is glad to call this lady her friend, mainly because their past close relationship at school, where Hamilton helped her to get over the death of her mother (Austen, 1818, p. 132-136) so Anne tries to return it to her by her support. This devotion is a good proof of Anne's stability in feelings and attitudes and in the strength of first impression, which has persistent validity for Anne.

Later on, when in Bath, Anne feels a kind of new hope for her love, when she sees the jealousy of Frederick, when he meets her beside her cousin. Encouraged by the evidence, that Frederick's love for Anne gradually returns, she manages to speak up for herself, when defending her opinion that love is very constant. According to Wiltshire this climatic scene where Anne is the focus of attention in the room makes her inner life revealed (Wiltshire, 1997, p. 79). "She releases, step by step, the energies of articulation that Anne has been forced to keep bound up, hemmed in" (ibid., p. 79).

Finally the authoress gives her heroine the initiative role. The manifestation of devotion towards the man Anne loves finally persuades Frederick to propose to her once more. This time, his offer is accepted.

Cornish writes of Anne Eliot as about “the most charming character to be found in all the stories-charming, not with the sprightliness of Emma Woodhouse, the genius of Elizabeth Bennet, or the innocent grace of Catherine Morland, but with true individual womanly beauty, and with sensitiveness and penetration all her own” (Cornish, 1913, p. 196).

3.2.1.2. Emma Woodhouse

Emma is a unique heroine, mainly because she does not appear to be a positive character in the story like the other major heroines. Furthermore she is the only one who lives amongst the noblest families of the upper class. Another important fact about Emma is that in comparison with other heroines the only obstacle to her happiness is actually herself.

From the early beginning of the novel she is displayed as a lady who possesses all the advantages including her beauty, exquisite manners, wealth and high social status. She is also respected by the people from the neighbourhood and dear to all members of her family. In her twenty-one she is so blessed that she does not know what a disappointment or sorrow is. No wonder that she has so happy disposition.

Emma lost her mother too long ago to remember her or to miss her and after Emma’s older sister’s marriage, the heroine becomes a mistress of the house. With a help of her governess Miss Taylor she cares for her father and the whole manor. Miss Taylor tries to compensate Emma’s mother, but their relationship is rather like a friendship. Although Emma highly esteems all of her governess’s opinions, she herself relies on her own opinions. This causes that Emma’s self-confidence and independence are too exaggerated.

Moreover her pomposity is advanced by many compliments from her father who thinks that she is being thought perfect by everybody:

Such an eye!--the true hazel eye--and so brilliant regular features, open countenance, with a complexion! Oh! What a bloom of full health, and such a pretty height and size; such a firm and upright figure! There is health, not merely in her bloom, but in her air, her head, her glance. One hears sometimes of a child being ‘the picture of health;’ now, Emma always gives me the idea of being the complete picture of grown-up health. She is loveliness itself (Austen, 1815, p. 32).

Malden calls Emma “the queen of her own circle” (Malden, 1889, p. 129). She is the one who influences the others and who has the power to both enthrone and humiliate people in one sentence or act. The only person who dares to admonish Emma for the particular bad aspects of her behaviour is Mr. Knightley. He knows Emma from the times when she was a very young girl. He saw her growing up and he is always her good adviser and best friend.

Concerning the character of Emma, she is not bad or mean. At first sight, the readers could consider her as a very kind and helpful young lady who worries about her father and about all the people who surround her.

But when analysing her in more details, she does not think of the consequences of her behaviour, she mainly tries to appear to others as an admirable and independent noble lady.

Public opinion is one of the most important things for her, so frequently she does not act according to her feelings, opinions or beliefs, but mainly according to what the others consider being the best (Austen, 1815, p. 18). She is also the smartest member of her family, which maintains her self-assurance and daintiness.

The entire plot of the story is affected by Emma’s actions, from which the first one is her matchmaker’s success. Emma is both very sad and delighted to hear that her beloved Miss Taylor accepted a proposal of one noble gentleman from the neighbourhood. This news flatters her efforts to pair these two, so she considers herself to be a brilliant matchmaker, with an elegance and wit of her judgements of people. She claims that to intrigue in the name of love and marriage is a very good way of spending her free time and she also thinks that her foresight is extraordinary.

On the other hand she is quite disappointed about the fact that her governess will no longer live in their house and will not be available when possible. This illustrates Emma’s selfishness, which she tries to disguise with her charity work. Emma agrees with her father that the marriage is not desirable for her and promises him that she will never get married and that she will stay with him, as his daughter, companion and friend as well (ibid., p. 7). It is only Emma’s own decision to stay single.

Emma’s main interest is not to think of herself but of others, so she tries to be as beneficial as possible. She often visits and helps poor families in the village and she also takes charge of socialization of young Miss Harriet Smith, who is new in the village and who is at the age to get married, which is very challenging for Emma. Subservient Emma is in fact just a mask for bored and vain real Emma, who just wants to be admired. She does not hesitate to involve all of her sense and energy to teach Harriet everything what is essential for a noble lady. Nevertheless her honourable intention changes into searching for an acceptable husband for her.

This again illustrates the real character of Emma. She is not willing to waste her time with studies which would be very helpful for naive Harriet. Emma prefers only what she enjoys, and that is as mentioned hereinbefore pandering. So instead of educating Harriet, Emma spoils her with an example of

supreme behaviour, disregard for low-born (ibid., p. 23) and teaches her to accept compliments from gentlemen.

Emma is not very keen on any activity which requires industry and patience. Her abilities such as playing the piano or painting are really excellent, but she fails to achieve any kind of proficiency in it, mainly because of her lack of patience and diligence. Anyway, she does not protest when her talent and intelligence are overvalued.

She does not even oppose when Harriet confides in her so blindly and influences her as much as possible, although Emma very often pretends not to care of Harriet's problems. Emma's intrigues show, that even she seeks to look innocent and upright she is in fact very scornful to ordinary people and acts like hypocrite.

According to Marsh Emma "uses" Harriet both to fill her free time and to help her "to push her own unhappiness out of her mind" (Marsh, 1998, p. 47).

Emma as many other Austen heroines presents authoress opinions about marriage. She condemns the fact that lady should accept a proposal no matter whether she is in love or not: "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" (Austen, 1815, p. 53). Emma is convinced that without love, there is no need to marry at all, because she has everything she needs in her home.

In contrast with this belief, Emma very often acts like typical ladies of her times (See 1.5.), who just want to find a kind of a hinterland, protection and wealth in their marriage, and with regard to this Emma gives pieces of advice to Harriet.

Emma resembles Jane Austen also in her attitude to motherhood, when she takes up with the idea of being a good aunt (See 2.2.) instead of having her own children.

However, for her friend Harriet, Emma chooses better life. She intends to match her with local handsome vicar, and on this account Emma persuades Harriet to reject the proposal of a farmer, Mr. Martin, whom Emma considers not enough noble for Harriet, although Harriet loves him. In this scene, it is obvious that Emma does very contradictory decisions to her previous beliefs about marriage for love.

She manipulates with Harriet as with her doll, without consideration of her own feelings. Malden claims that "there can be no better picture of a strong, decided nature bearing down a weak vacillating one, yet entirely unconscious of its own tyranny" (Malden, 1889, p. 140).

Encouraged by Emma, Harriet starts to believe that she is attracted by the local vicar, and vice versa. It seems that Emma is facing the question of marriage through Harriet, especially because she chooses for Harriet a man, who is more likely acceptable for Emma as Mr. Knightley remarks in the story.

Emma is also quite insensible to many clues in the relationship between Harriet and the vicar Mr. Elton. Every time something contrasts with her expectations she simply creates explanations in her head which follows her sense of reason.

Indeed such behaviour leads to the failure of Emma's assumed foresight, so she finds out, that the vicar is in fact in love with her. Miles (2003, p. 32) suggests that her poor record in predicting marriages is caused by the fact, that she does not know herself, which changes in the end of the story.

Emma realises that her obsession with making a match for Harriet has blinded her and moreover has hurt Harriet very much. This unpleasant mistake is also criticised by Mr. Knightley, who as a good friend warns Emma about the possible bad eventualities of her meddling and as Marsh (1998, p. 43) adds also of the misuse of Emma's intelligence to rationalise and justify her wrong actions.

Emma is anxious to please Harriet as much as possible but as it is typical of Emma, none of her efforts lasts too long, so later on Emma prefers to think about another new visitor more than about her sad friend. Her new entertainment comes with arrival of Mr. Churchill.

Emma loves to be in the centre of attention so she is very delighted when she finds out that her friends think about her and Churchill as about two lovers. She behaves like a coquette when she accepts all of his compliments and flirts with him. As Malden (1889, p. 142) claims Emma also tries to persuade herself that she is in love with Churchill, and blinded with this idea, she does not reveal that he is in fact secretly engaged with Jane.

To defame her only possible rival Jane Fairfax, Emma tells gossips about her to Mr. Churchill, who develops the fake love affair and tries to humiliate Miss Fairfax during one of his games.

Jane Fairfax is another lady in Emma's age who is glorified by the society similarly as Emma. The main reason why Emma hates her so much is that she is jealous about her. Emma envies her musical talent, modesty and beauty and mainly the fact that she is highly valued by Mr. Knightley. Emma also resents the idea that she and Jane resemble each other and should be friends and reproves Jane for being too reserved in contrast with her being open-hearted and frank.

Emma tries to attract Mr. Churchill not only by pointing out her good features and admonishing of the bad qualities of Jane Fairfax but also by imitating Churchill's easy-going behaviour, which makes her painfully hurt one of her friends - Miss Bates.

Despite Emma's unforgivable acts, she possesses a very good heart, so she realises her mistakes later and regrets them all bitterly. Mr. Knightley's pieces of advice and remarks about her behaviour are like reflections of her own conscience. She respects all of the criticism from Mr. Knightley as a lady, which proves, that she is an extraordinary strong heroine as well. Emma's bond with Mr. Knightley is according to Wiltshire very similar to "the pupil/tutor pattern that is discernible in Catherine Morland and Henry Tilney, Fanny and Edmund and even in Elizabeth and Darcy" (Wiltshire, 1997, p. 72). In the same manner with Elizabeth and Darcy, Emma often argues with Knightley, but with the one major

difference. As Wiltshire mentions Emma “learns in the novel not to think like Mr. Knightley, but that she has always, in fact, thought like him” (ibid, p. 75).

The courting between Emma and Mr. Churchill ends when he leaves the town and she realises that in fact she is not in love with him and that she is not sad because of his departure and does not miss him at all. Magnanimously she decides not to give him any further encouragement, and begins to consider if he could be induced to fall in love with Harriet Smith. Emma’s real feelings actually belong to the person who is with her from the beginning, but whom she overlooks, mainly because she is sure of his favour – Mr. Knightley.

The relationship with Knightly is displayed like the one of an older brother and a young naive sister, who needs his help, but later on in the story, it is significant, that Knightley is in love with Emma, while she does not pay attention to the signs of it.

The plot changes rapidly, when Harriet opens heart to Emma and tells her that she is in love again, this time, against all Emma’s odds, with Mr. Knightley. Here Emma finds out again that her wit and foresight are not as unerring as she thought.

She realises her true feelings towards Knightley. This self-revelation is both surprising and pleasuring for Emma. Wiltshire (ibid, p. 74-75) points out the possible parallel between the story of Elizabeth Bennet and Emma. They both, although Emma unconsciously, start to imagine their lives as married women, when they visit houses of their future husbands. But none of them is sure about the happy ending of their dreams, mainly because of their past behaviour.

In addition, Emma worries that Knightley loves Harriet, whom she considers as unable to make Knightley happy. She feels desperate, so finally it is very hard for her to believe that Knightley is attracted to her.

Eventually, she marries a man whom she loves and breaks her decision to stay single. Always surrounded with that luxury, favour and entertainment, she finds out, that the only thing which she really missed was the love. She tried to hide her need with the anxiety to find love and pleasure for the others, including her father, her governess and Harriet, which agrees with Marsh’s idea (1998, p. 45) that Jane Austen depicts in Emma the repressed emotion, similarly as in *Pride and Prejudice*.

In the end Emma successfully redresses slanders towards Miss Bates and Miss Fairfax as well, but the shadow of her match-making mistake impersonated in Harriet is still in her mind. Fortunately Harriet finds her heart’s content and nothing obstructs Emma to enjoy her own happiness with Mr. Knightley. The story ends with a brilliant change of Emma’s character. From a selfish spoiled lady she develops into a mature self-possessed doting wife, who knows herself and also the power of love. Bailey adds: “Emma Woodhouse does what none of the other heroines do: she learns and changes and grows” (Bailey, 1931, p. 68).

3.2.2. Young ladies entering the society

Jane Austen lived at the turn of the two centuries for which the society rank and rules were extraordinary important (See 1.2.). Her heroines experienced the expected manners and etiquette which were necessary to know and to follow by each young lady as well (See 1.3.). In three of her novels she wrote about journeys of young ladies entering the world of adults. This world, however, is not always according to their expectations and their behaviour does not always fit the standards.

This category includes the heroine of *Northanger Abbey*, in which Austen brilliantly depicted the story of young passionate reader with too active imagination - Catherine Morland; the heroine of *Emma* – Harriet Smith, whose frightability and overcredulity bring her many troubles, and finally Fanny Price, the main protagonist of *Mansfield Park*, who is transferred from a poor family into the a noble one and compares these two different settings. The first two heroines and the situations which they experience are described satirically, which manifests Austen's own criticism of society of her time. She also burlesques the popular themes of novels and usual structure of gothic novels as well, while the story of Fanny Price is more serious and deep-felt.

3.2.2.1. Catherine Morland

The story of Catherine Morland is drawn from her early childhood. The readers can follow her life from the time when she is ten years old and neither pretty nor desirable. "She had a thin awkward figure, a sallow skin without colour, dark lank hair and strong features"(Austen, 1816, p. 2). Her characteristics are rather acceptable for a boy than for a girl. She is not interested in any of the typical young lady's merriments, such as keeping pets or gardening.

Her ingenuity is not remarkable as well. "She never could learn or understand anything before she was taught; and sometimes not even then, for she was often inattentive and occasionally stupid"(ibid., p. 2). Fortunately her mother does not insist on her proper education so Catherine infliction during piano lessons, French or painting lectures is soon over.

She is a kind of ungovernable child, very noisy with a great passion for everything, including adventure. She does not care for her outward at all. Despite her bad features she has a warm heart and kind nature. She is not stubborn and she behaves very well to her siblings. Her childhood is very similar to Austen's (See 2.2.). Her brother James speaks of her as about the most hilarious and kindest of all his sisters (Austen, 1816, p. 78).

The authoress claims many times in the novel that Catherine is rather a more unheroic heroine with her plain dispositions. Tomalin adds that it is a good joke by the authoress when "the heroine is not a heroine by any of the usual rules of fiction, neither clever nor beautiful ad without accomplishments or admirers – an ordinary girl, one of ten children of a plain country clergyman" (Tomalin, 1997, p. 167).

According to Miles (2003, p. 66) Catherine impersonates the real opposite to the traditional female novel characters.

However, when this heroine grows older, she changes noticeably, especially in her outward. She starts to mind her appearance and finery as well. She changes gradually into “quite good-looking girl” (Austen, 1816, p. 3). Catherine appreciates hearing about her glamorous change from her parents and desires to visit some social occasions to hear what other people think about her.

Another significant change of this heroine is her attitude towards reading. She tries to catch up on all the novels she rejected to read before and realises that reading can be a good source of adventure as well. So Catherine Morland becomes Austen’s most passionate reader, who patiently learns quotes by Pope, Gray, Thomson or Shakespeare by heart or who with determinate effort defends all of her favourite novels and authors.

Catherine’s peaceful country life is interrupted by Allen’s offer to take her with them to Bath. This makes a great opportunity for this seventeen-year-old young heroine to experience some new adventure so she accepts it with a great enthusiasm.

According to Brownstein: “In Bath, ignorant Catherine sets about to learn what the manners of good society are and what they mean and mask, and how to behave herself and judge others” (Brownstein, 1997, p. 36). She visits social events such as balls or theatre performances for the first time, but she feels quite disappointed that these occasions are boring and tiresome instead of exciting as she expects. In addition, her disillusion grows bigger when she realises, that there is no man attracted by her beauty and no friend willing to share her feelings.

She returns to her reading, which is obviously more thrilling for her than the real world around her (Austen, 1816, p. 35). She takes to her fantasies, dreams and threats in the story so much that she seems to be secretly waiting for some kind of adventure in her life too. Miles (2003, p. 65) claims that the mind of the heroine is so addled by novel reading that she often fails to distinguish the boundaries between real life and fiction.

Luckily for her, the boring days in Bath end when she meets Mr. Tilney and falls in love with him at first sight. Here Austen again proves her sense of humour when she lets her naive heroine be attracted by the “first young man, who dances with her” (Tomalin, 1997, p. 168).

She also finds a friend with whom she can speak about her fancy – Miss Isabella Thorpe. Catherine is so grateful to spend time with her, that she even does not realise her real character. Catherine follows her everywhere and trusts her with no suspicions or doubts. Miles supposes that: “Catherine is revealed to us as being without an independent subjectivity, at least to the extent that she borrows her language, and her sense of self, from Isabella” (Miles, 2003, p. 69). There is no wonder that Isabella becomes Catherine’s conductor to society life.

Catherine in her naivety supposes that everyone is as warm-hearted and without any secondary aims as she is. She is not even able to lie or intrigue to her own advantage. In her youth she is not used to relying upon only her discretion and she also does not have any fixed idea of what men ought to be (Austen, 1816, p. 49).

When Catherine gets together with noble Tilney family, she suddenly realises that there are serious shortfalls in her education. She considers her abilities and taste as very inferior and regrets her former lack of interest in skills such as painting or art in general. On the other hand she feels also graced with the fact that she can spend time with so honourable people and tries to learn from them as much as possible. She thinks that she is blessed with good friends and fate as well. "Her feelings, her preferences, had each known the happiness of a return. Wherever she felt attachment, she had been able to create it"(ibid., p. 113).

Her story continues by invitation to Northanger Abbey. She is very excited by the idea of spending time on such an old place. As an admirer of gothic novels and everything ancient she fantasises about this place so much, that the people around her make fun of her. Despite this she continues with fantasizing about some frightening stories connected with the place and she is very anxious to go there.

But as it is universally acknowledged, when people are looking forward to something too much, they are usually disappointed by it. The same happens to Catherine, when she finally enters Northanger abbey.

Moreover she feels very embarrassed when she finds out, that all of her threats and fantasies connected with the place, her room and furniture in it or the assumed murdered wife of her inviter, are just her pipe dreams, influenced by the books she reads and her wild imagination (ibid., p. 163).

She becomes completely awoken after her dialog with Tilney, who opens her eyes and reveals how foolish she is. She decides to stop with her past behaviour and: "her resolution formed, of always judging and acting in future with the greatest good sense"(ibid., p. 164). As Miles (2003, p. 66) notes down, the readers follow the progress of Catherine Morland in her education as well as in her socialization.

Her relationship with Mr. Tilney is a very interesting point in the story. While most of Austen's heroines are equal to their partners, Catherine is obviously inferior to him. In comparison with her desirable man, she is not as clever as him, she even does not have such a good taste and sense of humour, but she is aware of it. Nevertheless she continues with her desires to marry him, which are supported by his gentle behaviour towards her and also by encouraging and compliments from Tilney's father. Catherine is quite unsure of the way of excepting of such attention. "She felt utterly unworthy of such respect, and knew not how to reply to it"(Austen, 1816, p. 125).

When in Northanger she also finds out the truth about her admired friend Lady Thorpe. Catherine's reaction to such a change in Isabella's behaviour is of course a great surprise, but she is also

quite cold and aquanimous about it. There is no great anger or passionate judgements of Isabella. Catherine simply confesses that she was mistaken about her and imputes it to her youth.

Such sense is, on the other hand, quite abnormal for a young lady. The readers would probably expect a kind of tragic suffering and deep sorrow for the lost friendship, which do not come through the story.

To say the truth, though I am hurt and grieved, that I cannot still love her, that I am never to hear from her, perhaps never to see her again, I do not feel so very, very much afflicted as one would have thought“ (ibid., p. 170).

Catherine gradually extricates from Isabella’s bad influence. Catherine develops her independent views and becomes a personality and as Miles writes “grows out of burlesque” (Miles, 2003, p. 71).

Coup the theatre appears when Catherine is suddenly asked to drop away, without any serious reasons for it and without any explanations. In that part her feelings varies from anger and embarrassment to deep disillusion from her promisingly developing love story which is so surprisingly interrupted. When she returns home, her personality is totally changed. She does not care for her books and favourite fantasies, she is not so cheerful anymore and it all because of the unhappy love and that exceeds all of her previous feelings. “In her silence and sadness she was the very reverse of all that she had been before“(Austen, 1816, p. 197).

Finally she meets Mr. Tilney once more and receives explanation to the unpleasant situation in Northanger. She finds out, that Tilney’s father erroneously considered her as very rich and noble, which in fact she is not, and that is why he behaved so badly and inappropriately towards her. Fortunately her beloved Henry Tilney does not desire to marry for money, so he proposes to her.

What is again quite extraordinary in their relationship is that Tilney does not love her from the first moment when they meet, but starts to be attracted by her after he realises that she is in love with him. As the authoress acknowledges: “It is a new circumstance in romance and dreadfully derogatory of a heroine's dignity“(ibid., p. 199).

Thanks to her heroine, Austen illustrates the general truth of that time that for a man, it is more acceptable to marry young, naive girl without any further knowledge of the world than a clever, experienced girl with her own opinions and will. “A woman especially if she has the misfortune of knowing any thing, should conceal it as well as she can” (ibid., p. 89).

Regarding to this, the novel is not primarily a love-story but a narrative about the young heroine who lives in her own world of fantasies and gothic novels and who is experiencing the real world.

This heroine emancipates from the major influences in her life – firstly from her insincere friend Isabella Thorpe, whom she imitates, secondly from her eager reading habit, which sometimes disables

her to distinguish between reality and wild imagination and which tempts her to think about her life two romantically and lastly she has to free herself from the didactic influences of Mr. Tilney, to allow her to become a full person.

3.2.2.2. Harriet Smith

The second heroine entering the social life, who is displayed in the satirical form, is Harriet Smith from the novel *Emma*. Bailey claims that she is “the silliest and most insignificant of all the amiable, “good” young women in Jane Austen” (Bailey, 1931, p. 71). Harriet is a seventeen-year-old girl with very obscure parentage. From her history there are only a few clear events: “somebody had placed her, several years back, at Mrs. Goddard's school, and somebody had lately raised her from the condition of scholar to that of parlour-boarder” (Austen, 1815, p. 17). From this information it is obvious that Harriet in fact does not belong to the higher society which she enters and that she is as Miles calls her “class cuckoo” (Miles, 2003, p. 102).

On the subject of her appearance, she is well described by the author as a lady with regular features and a look of a great sweetness (Austen, 1815, p. 17), especially admired by Emma. Moreover Harriet finds a very good companion in Emma, thanks to her likeable qualities such as willingness to chat, not exaggerated modesty and expression of respect which delights Emma very much. Harriet is also not that kind of girl who likes to attract attention or vaunts of her abilities.

Harriet unreservedly admires Emma and everything connected with her and desires to acquire Emma's spirit. Unfortunately, Harriet is not as smart as her role-model, mainly because of her insufficient education and unsophisticated manners.

She is not a sensible girl, nor a girl of any information. She has been taught nothing useful, and is too young and too simple to have acquired any thing herself. At her age she can have no experience, and with her little wit, is not very likely ever to have any that can avail her” (ibid., p. 54).

Meek Harriet feels very grateful to Emma for the time which these two can spend together, especially because Harriet tries to learn as much as possible from her, which proves that although Harriet does not have any knowledge of good manners, etiquette or good taste, she is able to appreciate a woman who embodies all of the mentioned virtues. So Emma becomes Harriet's guide to the life in higher society.

In her naivety, Harriet blindly follows Emma, without any doubts or suspicions. She tells her about all of her secrets with a good grace, and believes to everything Emma says, lacking any kind of

curiousness or need of further explanations (ibid., p. 20). Mr. Knightley speaks of Harriet as about a girl who ‘knows nothing herself, and looks upon Emma as knowing every thing’ (ibid., p. 31). Harriet even allows Emma to organise her life and interfere whenever she wants to.

She tells Emma about her affection for local landholder Mr. Martin, whom she evidently loves, but lets herself be persuaded by Emma that he is not enough noble for her, and that she can find a better husband.

Malden claims that ‘Harriet herself has never aspired higher than Mr. Robert Martin, and, but for Emma’s interference, his course of true love would have run exceedingly smooth’ (Malden, 1889, p. 131), but influenced by Emma she even rejects his proposal, which is very unwise for a girl of her social rank and unknown family disposition.

Without any own considerations, Harriet encouraged by Emma starts to think of herself as about noble lady of the same social status as her advisor. In this position Harriet acts more like a silly marionette, with no feelings, needs or opinions. She simply obeys Emma, despite the fact that her own will and desires are different.

Harriet seems quite incapable in her behaviour, which is in contrast with the fact, that she has some education from Mrs. Goddard’s school. She needs Emma’s help in everything, including writing letters, solving out the riddles and even finishing her thoughts when speaking. Her simplicity is sometimes so emphasized, that it seems very improbable that so smart lady as Emma would abide her.

However, Emma chooses a very sophisticated wooer for Harriet – a handsome village vicar, supposing that she can attract him by her beauty. So, instead of education Harriet learns the way of attracting a man to gain a good social position and wealth. She falls in love with him very quickly and easily after Emma’s conviction.

Concerning the matters of their courting, Harriet behaves very ungainly and proves that she has no experience with man, love and making her own judgements. She feels so embarrassed that she is grateful for every help from Emma and she is also blinded by her friend’s explanations that she cannot see the real situation and her part in it. She is very childish when she glorifies all the things the vicar touches or uses and keeps them as her treasures.

When she finds out the truth about the feelings of her beloved man, she suffers very much, but in her dupability, she is not even jealous or angry with Emma. She tries to imitate her when declaring that she will never get married as Emma (Austen, 1815, p. 309), although her previous opinions about marriage were very positive and rather conventional (See 1.5.).

The interesting and unexpected point about Harriet’s love is that her attraction to the vicar starts too easily but it is very difficult to fall out of it for her. ‘Harriet did think him all perfection, and maintained the non-existence of any body equal to him in person or goodness—and did, in truth, prove herself more resolutely in love than Emma had foreseen’ (Austen, 1815, p. 129).

This proves that Harriet is very stable in her feelings, which in the end of the story seems to be her most important quality to reach the happiness.

Harriet's sorrow deepens, when the vicar marries and she is forced to meet his wife and him and also to face her rude remarks and his unforgivable behaviour towards her during the ball. In this occasion she finally realises the real bad character of the vicar and decides to end her vexation and with her warm-heart wishes him the best.

One of the most typical features of Harriet is her ability to see only the good sides of things. So when she is humiliated by her vicar at the ball, she is also blessed with gentle saviour Mr. Knightley, who appears to be new subject of her attention. From a total misery her feelings changes to total happiness. Emma's previous influence makes her to dare to think about Mr. Knightley as an equal partner to her and to dream about their possible future.

She finds again her lost self-confidence and starts to act like an independent woman, without any advices or interferences from Emma. This moment is crucial for Harriet's character. Her socialization is completed, and as her own conductor in this process realises: "Harriet was less humble, had fewer scruples than formerly. Her inferiority, whether of mind or situation, seemed little felt" (Austen, 1815, p. 376).

Harriet proves her maturity also by the way of going through her unlucky love to Knightley and other victory of Emma over her. She admits being foolish and regrets her indecision of feelings.

Finally she realises her real position in the society and is very happy to accept the second proposal of the landholder, whom she in fact loves from the beginning of the story.

3.2.2.3. Fanny Price

The last heroine, belonging to the group of young ladies entering the society is Fanny Price. In comparison with Catherine and Harriet, Fanny comes to know the principles and rules of social life from her early childhood. As a ten-year-old girl from a poor family, she is chosen to be brought up by her uncle and two aunts. Suddenly she finds herself amongst the noblest families, surrounded by luxury and comfort. But as a child she is not amused by this all, and feels very homesick instead (Austen, 1814, p. 9-12).

She longs for warm feelings, a tender and sympathy, which she unfortunately does not find. On the contrary with her real needs, Fanny is treated emotionally very much. She is afraid of her rather strict than loving uncle and she also undergoes series of humiliation from her aunt Mrs. Norris. To her relationship with the second aunt Mrs. Bertram, Fanny is like her own servant, always available and willing to do her good turn. Malden (1889, p. 108) adds that despite the fact that no one is unkind to her,

there is not any person who understands or shares her feelings, so her new family have no idea that she silently suffers.

Fanny is not the only child in the family. She grows up with her two slightly older cousins Mary and Juliet and with two almost adult boys Edmund and Tom Bertram. Surprisingly instead of friendship with the girls, Fanny later on finds her best friend and protector in the younger son of Bertram – Edmund. He helps her to settle in Mansfield and to put up with the meanness and maliciousness of her new “sisters”. Fanny as a young girl, appears to be extraordinary strong and patient. She tries to acquire some education, although her abilities are underestimated.

Fanny could read, work, and write, but she had been taught nothing more; and as her cousins found her ignorant of many things with which they had been long familiar, they thought her prodigiously stupid (Austen, 1814, p. 13).

Supported by their aunt Mrs. Norris, both purse-proud cousins ridicule Fanny for her lack of knowledge and refinement. But thanks to Fanny’s low self-esteem she is not hurt by such treatments. Mr. Edmund Bertram, in contrast with his sisters’ opinions of Fanny’s abilities, considers Fanny “far more intellectual in her tastes than his accomplished sisters” (Malden, 1889, p. 110). He decides to educate Fanny, so he directs her tastes in reading, trains her in horse riding and preaches her at social manners.

She regarded her cousin as an example of everything good and great, as possessing worth which no one but herself could ever appreciate, and as entitled to such gratitude from her as no feelings could be strong enough to pay. Her sentiments towards him were compounded of all that was respectful, grateful, confiding, and tender (Austen, 1814, p. 41).

Thanks to Edmund, Fanny is gradually prepared for entering the real social world, but because of her low origin and timidity she even does not dare to dream about it. She resigns to being her aunt’s companion for the rest of her life. Fanny carefully follows all of the customs of her new family and accepts everything no matter whether it is good or bad as her faith. According to Tomalin (1997, p. 227-228) the manners of the Bertrams illustrate a typical behaviour of Regency times.

Fanny is very grateful for the opportunity to be fostered up in so noble family, so she does not even dare to complain or demand something more. That is why she lives in the worst room of the house without any heating and she does not visit any of the social occasions such as theatre performances, balls or dinner parties (Austen, 1814, p. 29) as her cousins do. She is fully aware of the fact, so many times

reminded by her aunt Mr. Norris, that she is not equal to the rest of the family. In her inferiority she stays silent, uncommunicative and very modest.

Despite the fact, that Fanny is supposed to be the main protagonist of the novel called *Mansfield Park*, she is rather more like a silent observer of the people around her and their performances, than the major heroine who determines the plot of the story. This state is a logical consequence of being so overlooked for most of Fanny's life. Firstly, it is her own mother, who leaves her without any love or interest, than it is the cruel reminding of her real ancestry by her aunt Mrs. Norris and finally it is Fanny's own feeling of subordination and dependence, which makes her so imperceptible and ordinary.

Fanny is silently observing the courting of Julia, Mary and also of Mr. Edmund Bertram, who falls in love with Maria Crawford. Fanny gradually realises that her feelings for Edmund exceed the boundaries of friendship or sibling love. Fanny's passionate secret affection to Edmund is particularly similar to Harriet Smith in the way both make treasures from all objects their beloved men touches (Austen, 1814, p. 239). Edmund makes Fanny his confidant, which of course is not an easy task for her, because she does not consider Maria good enough for him. Fanny realises Maria's bad character, but she is not so confident to tell about her suspicions to Edmund.

Had her confidence in her own judgment been equal to her exercise of it in every other respect, had she been sure that she was seeing clearly, and judging candidly, she would probably have made some important communications to her usual confidant. As it was, however, she only hazarded a hint, and the hint was lost (ibid., p. 105).

Fanny suffers very much with the idea, that "she is no longer his first object" (Malden, 1889, p. 116). This is brilliantly described in the scene, where Lady Crawford uses a horse which was given to Fanny by Edmund and also during their trip, when Edmund leaves Fanny alone, in order to shine up to Lady Crawford. When Fanny reveals the real self-serving character of Lady Crawford, she starts to worry about Edmund, who is blinded with his love so much, that he lowers his high unswerving standard of right and wrong.

Fanny is also anxious about the inappropriate behaviour of Mary, who although being engaged to Mr. Rushworth, evidently flirts with attractive Mr. Crawford. This all makes Juliet very jealous, because she dreams about affiliation with Mr. Crawford.

The obvious contrast between the modest manners of Fanny and pretentious acting of her cousins is brilliantly illustrated in the scenes of private theatricals, which are similar to the performances of Austens (See 2.2.). While Fanny decides not to join the preparations of the play, Maria and Juliet enjoys it, although they know that this behaviour is not tolerable for ladies of their social position and would not be accepted by their father, who is supposed to get back soon from his travels in West Indies.

After his arrival, the meetings of the actors suddenly end, to Fanny's delight too, because she, forced to watch her beloved Edmund in a role of lover with Lady Crawford, suffered very much. Mary agrees to marry Mr. Rushworth, as it was planned, and with companion of her sister leaves Mansfield for honeymoon.

As Malden notes down, "Fanny than becomes more than ever the daughter of the house, and treated with real kindness by everyone, but Mrs. Norris, who never can bear to see her established there as an equal" (Malden, 1889, p. 120). During this time, Fanny starts to visit social occasions. For the first time, she is invited to dinner and she also takes part in one of the trips, which is very exciting for her. Moreover, her uncle holds a ball in honour of her. The neighbourhood, and especially her uncle, gradually notices her beauty and exquisite manners, which are emphasized with her modesty and moderation.

Young, pretty, and gentle, however, she had no awkwardness that were not as good as graces, and there were few persons present that were not disposed to praise her. She was attractive, she was modest, and she was Sir Thomas's niece (Austen, 1814, p. 249).

Fanny, despite of the fact that she is not used to such publicity and prefers to sit silent and unattended to, she behaves like a real lady and stays herself – still modest and shy. Lady Crawford speaks of her: "She seemed almost as fearful of notice and praise as other women were of neglect" (ibid, p. 177).

The dramatic change of Fanny's position in society causes, that she attracts Mr. Crawford. What started as an intention to flirt with her and fill his free time, suddenly changes into warm feelings towards Fanny. However, she is very stable in her secret admiration and attachment to Edmund. She resents all of Crawford's compliments and attention, paid to her. She also repeatedly rejects his proposal, in which she parallels Elizabeth Bennet.

The following events are the most painful in Fanny's life. Her rejection of so profitable marriage makes her uncle and aunts very angry. They impute her of being selfish and ungrateful. In addition they do not understand why she rejected him and try to persuade her to change the decision. Even Edmund believes as the rest of the family that Fanny's refusal is only from her timidity. But Fanny is adamant on her view of Mr. Crawford's character, which she finds very opposite to her and unacceptable to spend her life with. She is so cautious in her vindication that "no one suspects her of having already given her heart elsewhere" (Malden, 1889, p. 122).

The family go so far in their efforts to convince Fanny of her mistake that they send her back home for two months, in order to force her to realise, how poor she in fact is, and how different would

her life be as a wife of Mr. Crawford. The wooer thinks that no lady can stand up to his charm for too long that is why he remains optimistic about Fanny's aversive behaviour towards him.

The brilliant intrigue of the family, seems to work, when Fanny desperate from the ill-mannered siblings and ignorant parents, and influenced by honourable behaviour of Mr. Crawford to her dearest brother William and possibility that with her marriage she could help to her poor family, she starts to think well of her tireless admirer.

Fanny's attitude towards William and the navy is very similar to Jane Austen herself (See 2.2.), so it again illustrates the idea, that Austen's own personal life, opinions and feelings, are displayed in her heroines. Fanny resembles Jane also in her passion for nature, although the heroine is little indisposed by her fragile health to explore the beauties of the surroundings of Mansfield Park.

The enforced attraction by Mr. Crawford is interrupted by his setting off to London, where he refreshes his flirting with Maria. Although being married, Maria runs away with him, which inspires her sister to copy her example and secretly engage to one low-born actor.

Fanny returns back to Mansfield, happy to see all of her friends and family again and curious about the way, how the previous incidents affect the family and the relationship of Edmund and Lady Crawford as well. To Fanny's satisfaction, Edmund gets to know the real insincere and low-principled nature of Lady Crawford and stops loving her. Also the uncle realises that only Fanny is well-bred as he always wanted his daughters to be, and regrets all of the harms and disadvantages, which she was experiencing in her life, so he tries to retrieve all of his misconducts.

Juliet finally returns back to Mansfield and her marriage is celebrated by her father, but Mary is not allowed to live in Mansfield any more. Fanny becomes uncle's favourite companion and gradually supersedes her cousins.

As far as Fanny's relationship to Edmund is concerned, she does not have the strength to admit her true feelings and she is also not good at expressing of her feelings, but fortunately wins Edmund's heart with her moral purity and true-heartedness.

4. MINOR HEROINES

Jane Austen lived in the world where dealing with people was one of the essential parts of daily life, so it was almost impossible to stay in isolation from the society.

The same it is with her major heroines. None of them is alone; they all are surrounded by numerous minor heroines. These heroines, although not as deeply characterized, are important, because they represent different natures of women of Austen's times.

After analyses of Austen's novels, it is possible to distinguish five groups of minor heroines, including "Mothers and Chaperons" (See 4.1.), "Marriage Seekers" (See 4.2.), "Snobbish Genteel" (See 4.3.), "Unblessed and Plain" (See 4.4.) and "Dewy-eyed innocent girls" (See 4.5.).

Most of these heroines were inspired by family and friends of Jane Austen (See 2.).

4.1. Mothers and Chaperons

Family is in Austen's novels one of the most essential institutions, because the family usually supports the heroines, both financially and psychically. Although the central position belonged to fathers, mothers are displayed in more details, perhaps because they were in charge of taking care of their daughters. When the mothers could not companion their daughters, their role was undertaken by chaperons. These were usually some relatives, wealthy friends or governesses.

4.1.1. Mrs. Dashwood, Mrs. Jennings (Sense and Sensibility)

In *Sense and Sensibility* the mother is displayed as a copy of her daughter Marianne. She is very sensible and loves to yield to her feelings, both happiness and sorrow, so she understands Marianne and supports her in everything. Thanks to her older daughter Elinor she does not have to care for money or any other obligations connected with run of their household, which makes her be rather easy-going than responsible. Like Marianne, she is very amiable and warm-hearted. She wishes the best to both her daughters and learns to like and honour, what they love. "I have never yet known what it was to separate esteem and love" (Austen, 1811, p. 12). She tries to educate her daughters as young ladies, who know how to behave in society. She wants them to avoid being marriage-seekers. She usually does not go with them to any social occasions. This obligation the mother leaves to her friend Mrs. Jennings.

The character of this cheerful chaperon of Dashwood sisters is brilliantly described by Austen as a "good-humoured, merry, fat, elderly woman, who talked a great deal, seemed very happy, and rather vulgar" (ibid., p. 28). Malden (1889, p. 73) adds that Mrs. Jennings is too vulgar, which illustrates Austen's turn for caricatures of people from the higher societies. Jennings loves to laugh and make jokes, especially about courting and marriage.

She is a widow and both of her daughters are married, so she tries to match the other single ladies she knows. She has a brilliant wit and judgement of people and she is sometimes rather annoying than helpful with her remarks and gossips about possible wooers or weddings. Cornish (1913, p. 77) suggests that Mrs. Jennings is similar to Emma Woodhouse, because her flair is as often at fault as Emma's. On the other hand she is very thoughtful and does her best to make Dashwood sisters happy.

4.1.2. Mrs. Bennet (Pride and Prejudice)

Mrs. Bennet, mother of Jane and Elizabeth - the main protagonists of *Pride and Prejudice*, is with no doubts the most ridiculous of Austen's minor female heroines. Bailey writes about her: "She never once speaks, but to expose her own folly" (Bailey, 1913, p. 40). She also resembles Austen's own mother in many details. Austen describes the character of Mrs. Bennet through the words of Elizabeth about the unequal marriage of her father:

Her father, captivated by youth and beauty, and that appearance of good humour which youth and beauty generally give, had married a woman whose weak understanding and illiberal mind had very early in their marriage put an end to all real affection for her. Respect, esteem, and confidence had vanished for ever; and all his views of domestic happiness were overthrown (Austen, 1811, p. 213).

As a mother she is over-concerned with the idea to match her daughters to some wealthy noble gentlemen. In her efforts to secure her daughters financially, she collects gossips about single men in the neighbourhood, runs up all of the perfections of the daughters and takes part in every social occasion. Cornish suggests that women of Mrs. Bennet's type (including also Mrs. Jennings), who are "loud, busy and commonplace, have certain attraction to Austen, especially because they are interested in other people, and do not keep their selfishness entirely for themselves" (Cornish, 1913, p. 97).

However, her public manners and social climbing sometimes do more harm than good, so her daughters often feel embarrassed because of her. Moreover, her frivolity causes that her most favourite daughter Lydia almost gets into troubles and rumours about her reputation. Mrs. Bennet is also concerned with her health too much, similarly like Austen's mother. Although always complaining, both are very energetic and lively women.

4.1.3. Mrs. Morland, Mrs. Allen (Northanger Abbey)

The role of the mother in *Northanger Abbey* – Mrs. Morland, displayed as sensible, kind and vital, is outclassed by the role of the female protector, who guides the major heroine through noble society – Mrs. Allen.

However, it is important to mention the main characteristics of Mrs. Morland, especially because her behaviour influenced the nature of her daughter – Catherine.

Mrs. Morland as a mother is very benevolent, probably because she does not have enough time to concern with all of her numerous children.

Mrs. Morland was a very good woman, and wished to see her children everything they ought to be; but her time was so much occupied in lying-in and teaching the little ones, that her elder daughters were inevitably left to shift for themselves (Austen, 1816, p. 3).

She even does not insist on her daughters being accomplished in spite of incapacity or distaste, which later on causes, that Catherine regrets being so uneducated and without any admirable tastes.

Even the Catherine's chaperon during stay in Bath Mrs. Allen is not a good person to educate her or to be a good role-model for her. Mrs. Allen is over-concerned with her appearance. She cares only about the latest fashion and entertainment and is worries more about the safety of her hairstyle than about the comfort of her protégée. Concerning her outward and characteristics Austen writes of her:

Mrs. Allen was one of that numerous class of females, whose society can raise no other emotion than surprise at there being any men in the world who could like them well enough to marry them. She had neither beauty, genius, accomplishment, nor manner. The air of a gentlewoman, a great deal of quiet, inactive good temper, and a trifling turn of mind were all that could account for her being the choice of a sensible, intelligent man like Mr. Allen (ibid. , p. 10-11).

4.1.4. Lady Russell (Persuasion)

Lady Russel is a family friend and Anne's godmother, who performs as compensation of Anne's decedent mother and advisor as well. Their relationship is very similar to that of Emma and Miss Taylor, with one major difference.

While Emma acts according to her own will, Anne is more influenced by her companion so she lets herself being persuaded by her, especially in questions of getting married. Concerning her characteristics, Austen writes about her:

She was a benevolent, charitable, good woman, and capable of strong attachments, most correct in her conduct, strict in her notions of decorum, and with manners that were held a standard of good-breeding. She had a cultivated mind, and was, generally speaking, rational and consistent; but she had prejudices on the side of ancestry; she had a value for rank and consequence, which blinded her a little to the faults of those who possessed them (Austen, 1818, p. 9).

Despite her good intentions and kind behaviour, according to her judgements of people she can be described as little futile and prejudiced about people of low origins. Cornish adds that although being described as sensible and deserving woman, Lady Russel does “nothing very sensible or deserving from beginning to end” (Cornish, 1913, p. 196).

4.1.5. Mrs. Anne Weston - formerly Miss Taylor (Emma)

This young lady used to be Emma’s governess. After her marriage, she remains her friend and good advisor. She is characterised as a very wise intelligent, educated and sensible woman. She is so lucky to marry well, although she is very poor. She submissively admires and obeys her husband. She is an illustration of ideal wife.

4.1.6. Lady Bertram, Mrs. Norris, Mrs. Price (Mansfield Park)

These two aunts of Fanny Price take care of her instead of her own mother. However, their devotion is rather selfish than mother-like. Lady Bertram, who married well because of her beauty (similarly like Mrs. Bennet) is very sybarite and lazy, so she encroaches Fanny’s kindness, when she behaves to her as to a servant. Malden calls her “a woman of very tranquil feelings and a temper remarkably easy and indolent” (Malden, 1889, p. 103-104).

The second aunt Mrs. Norris behaves even worse. She is very greedy and loves to economize in her life, so although she pretends to be very unselfish and generous, she rejects to take care of Fanny. Her behaviour towards her niece is very offensive. She often humiliates her and likes to remind her the poor settings from which Fanny comes from and the fact, that she is not equal to any of her relatives in Mansfield Park. According to her actions it is possible to describe Mrs. Norris as envious, grousy, unscrupulous widow with lack of understanding, and good will. “There is no one in Jane Austen whom the readers so much enjoy disliking” (Bailey, 1913, p. 63).

In the novel Mansfield Park the real mother of Fanny is not important for the plot of the story that is why she is depicted only briefly, especially through Fanny’s own impressions. She is a woman,

who marries a very poor man and accepts her miserable life with him. She tolerates his drinking and bad manners and gradually assimilates to him. She has many children and very low income, so she accepts the idea of making away with her daughter very enthusiastically. She likes her sons more than her daughters and behaves to them with regard to it. According to her cold invitation and behaviour to Fanny, it is obvious, that the mother is neither sensible nor warm-hearted, so Fanny feels grateful that she had the opportunity to live without her.

4.2. Marriage Seekers

One of the most typical heroine type, which occurs in every Austen's novel is a lady whose main interest is to find a wealthy man and marry him. Such a heroine is usually very clever and foxy to attract her future husband. She is aware of the advantages which marriage can bring (See 1.5.) and she is able to devote her reputation, friendships and even her purity to get married.

4.2.1. Steel sisters (Sense and Sensibility)

Good representatives of marriage seekers are Steel sisters, with their pandering and capitulation described in *Sense and Sensibility*. Nancy the older one is interested only in sparks and without any dissimulation speaks about them all the time, which illustrates her feeble-mindedness and calculative intentions. Her younger sister Lucy is on contrary more sophisticated in her intrigues, Cornish even calls her "the evil genius of the story" (Cornish, 1913, p. 78). She is considered to be very beautiful, but without any further significant accomplishments. Being aware of her entire lack of education, Lucy tries to compensate it with immoderate kindness and ostensible submission.

Both the sisters are without any dower and come from reduced circumstances, so they both do their best to marry well.

4.2.2. Kitty and Lydia Bennet, Charlotte Lucas (Pride and Prejudice)

Two sisters, who are obviously very keen on meeting and flirting with young gentlemen are Kitty and Lydia Bennet. Both are very enthusiastic with the news that the regiment will stay in the city. The sisters excitedly welcome the officers and wait to attract some of them. Supported by their mother, the youngest of the daughters Lydia and slightly older Kitty flirt without engagement and behave like silly coquettes. Both being very narrow-minded have no other interests than visiting balls and fantasising about their future husbands. "They were ignorant, idle, and vain" (Austen, 1811, p. 192).

Fifteen-year-old Lydia, the most favourite daughter of Mrs. Bennet, is brought into public at an early age that is why she is very self-confident and loves to be in the centre of attention. She is also

described as reckless, impertinent and careless with her own will. Her tameless temperament and easy-going nature finally leads Lydia to serious social defiance when she runs away with Mr. Wickham. Finally she returns home as a married woman and in her impudence, she even feels superior to her sisters.

Catherine, two years older than Lydia, mostly addressed as Kitty in the story, is weak-spirited, irritable, and completely under Lydia's guidance (ibid., p. 192). However, she is not allowed to follow her everywhere, so she avoids Lydia's troubles. Finally she envies Lydia her husband and hopes to experience what her sister has.

Charlotte Lucas, twenty-seven-year old Elizabeth's best friend, is designated to be "Marriage Seeker" not because of any inappropriate behaviour towards men, but mostly because of her decision to marry Mr. Collins. As a wise girl she realises her poor situation of an old maid, which has no other solution than to find a husband, no matter whether she is in love with him, or whether the partners are equal. Charlotte simply wants her own home and social position, so she accepts the proposal of Mr. Collins, although she knows, that this causes Elizabeth's contemptuousness.

4.2.3. Isabella Thorpe (Northanger Abbey)

Isabella being four years older than her friend Catherine Morland and obviously more experienced feels superior to her. She tries to amuse naive Catherine with her brilliant judgement of people and perfunctory knowledge of literature. She ensures Catherine of her own stable opinions and honourable character, although her actions are completely in contrast with her self-esteem. Isabella pretends not to be interested in young gentlemen, but in fact, according to her behaviour she seeks to attract a wealthy man, marry him and gain all advantages of a married woman.

To reach her intentions Isabella behaves very inconsiderately. After she accepts one proposal, she does not dare to flirt with another man of higher rank, although such behaviour is very rude and unacceptable for a lady. When rejected by this man she tries to reclaim her relationship with the first wooer, which illustrates her spinelessness. Cornish describes Isabella as "one of those females not unfrequently met with in Jane Austen's novels, who combine an empty head and agreeable manners with a clear view of personal advantage" (Cornish, 1913, p. 179).

4.2.4. Mrs. Clay (Persuasion)

Mrs. Clay is a close friend of Elizabeth Elliot, who seeks to attract her father. With regard to her intention to marry him, she flatters him very often and visits their house as frequently as possible.

Her fate is not very happy one. After “an unprosperous marriage, she returns to her father’s house, with the additional burden of two children” (Austen, 1818, p. 13). Her only possible way how to reach higher social position again is to marry well. Although she is not said to be beautiful, she attracts people with her tireless compliments, obedience and also thanks to her sophisticated hypocrisy and intrigues.

4.2.5. Bertram sisters, Mary Crawford (Mansfield Park)

Although Juliet and Maria come from a noble and wealthy family, they both behave like typical marriage seekers. They try to attract the men in their neighbourhood to satisfy their vanity and self-flattery. Mary the older, flirts with Mr. Crawford although being engaged to another man, mainly to prevail her sister and to attract the man, who is generally considered as very handsome and charming, which is very challenging for her. Cornish describes Mary as a “bad woman, proud, self-willed and pleasure-loving, with capacities of strength, but spoiled by indulgence” (Cornish, 1913, p. 139). Cornish (ibid, p. 139) also adds that Mary is not capable of a wise choice of good things by want of discipline.

The sister rivalry reveals their real characters. Both Juliet and Maria are very selfish, vain, spoiled coquettes, who apart from their good education, beauty and high dowers, have nothing to offer to their future husbands.

Their lack of respect and ignorance of good social manners finally lead them to very undesirable fates. Mary, who runs away with Mr. Crawford soon after her marriage with another gentleman, is after her divorce disinherited from Mansfield Park and Juliet, who imitates her by secret engagement with an actor has to bend the knee to her father to take her back again.

Another marriage seeker displayed in Mansfield Park is Mary Crawford. On contrary with other heroines included in this group, Mary tries to marry well and if possible connect this intention with love.

This, however, appears to be impossible target for her. She uses both her sense and attractiveness to attract Edmund Bertram and to persuade him to choose another career than being a vicar, because she is aware of the low-income of vicars, which are not acceptable for her. She does her best to influence Edmund, because she is evidently in love with him, although she realises that the marriage to Edmund’s older brother would be more profitable for her.

She even hopes that the older son of Bertrams would die of his illness, which could bring Edmund more money and which would make him an acceptable husband for her.

Nevertheless, her impertinent behaviour, lack of shame and calculative intentions finally cause, that Edmund realises her real character and stops admiring her.

4.3. Snobbish Genteel

Snobbish genteel usually appear in the novels as some obstacle to happiness of the major heroines. They, as representatives of high social rank, are usually superior, proud, envious and cruel in the way of following their own intentions.

4.3.1. Fanny Dashwood (Sense and Sensibility)

Fanny can be described as very grabby and selfish, especially in the scene, where she persuades her husband not to give his sisters any money from his inheritance (Austen, 1811, p. 8-10). She is also very reserved and thinks highly about herself and her family, so she is against the marriage of Elinor and Edward and later on against Lucy's hopes to marry Edward as well.

Fanny's mother, Mrs. Ferras is designated as a noble lady who behaves very violently to those who she dislikes. She is also very proud and severe and she manifests her snobbery so openly, that majority of people around her is afraid of her or secretly hates her. She embodies another obstacle to the love of Elinor and Edward, but finally, after her cruel disherison of her son Edward, she finds a good will to restore his favour.

4.3.2. Lady Catherine de Bourgh (Pride and Prejudice)

Lady Catherine de Bourgh is one of the most unpleasant heroines displayed in novels by Jane Austen. Malden claims that: "there could not be a better picture of a second-rate great lady's behaviour towards people whom she considers as her inferiors" (Malden, 1889, p. 95) as that of Lady Catherine de Brough. She is very proud, arrogant and selfish. Although she is sad to be extraordinary clever and talented her imperious behaviour and lack of discretion causes that many people dislikes her. However, her dominancy, by which she tries to forestall the engagement of Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy is defeated by Elizabeth's own will.

4.4. Unblessed and Plain

Although Jane Austen lived in a society full of successful and powerful people, not all of them were extraordinary and happy. For instance some of her minor heroines who are neither wealthy, nor beautiful and have no chance to marry, because of their low origins and dullness, can be called "Unblessed and Plain". These heroines are depicted as flat and rather annoying for the people around them.

4.4.1. Mary Bennet (Pride and Prejudice)

Mary is supposed to be the most plain of the Bennet's daughters. Austen writes of her: "Mary had neither genius nor taste; and though vanity had given her application, it had given her likewise a pedantic air and conceited manner, which would have injured a higher degree of excellence than she had reached" (Austen, 1811, p. 20).

Mary is aware of her lack of sightlines that is why she tries to excel at music and other accomplishments. Unfortunately, she is not successful because her singing performance embarrasses whole family and her exhaustive moralising disturbs everybody round her.

She is not likely to marry also because she prefers reading, instead of joining her family in its activities and visits. Her situation changes in the end of the novel, when she stops comparing herself with her sisters and tries to act like a lady more than like a tutor. Bailey (1913, p. 36) claims, that Mary as a character is useless, and that Austen also failed in her caricature.

4.4.2. Miss Bates (Emma)

"One of the most notable creations of Jane Austen is the gossiping, benevolent, inconsequent, everlastingly talkative Miss Bates" (Cornish, 1913, p. 163). She is neither young, nor beautiful. She is a spinster, who lives with her widowed mother in very poor conditions.

Miss Bates stood in the very worst predicament in the world for having much of the public favour; and she had no intellectual superiority to make atonement to herself, or frighten those who might hate her into outward respect. She had never boasted either beauty or cleverness (Austen, 1815, p. 16).

Miss Bates spends most of her life by caring of her mother. She is described as too talkative and sometimes also little annoying creature.

However, she is not supposed to be unpopular amongst her friends, especially thanks to her good will, grateful spirit and the fact that she loves everybody and wishes all the happiness to them. Bailey claims that "among all the attempts to put incessant and inconsequent garrulity upon the stage of the novel, this one of Jane Austen stands out alone in solitary certainty of success" (Bailey, 1931, p. 72).

4.5. Dewy-eyed innocent girls

Some Austen's stories features also sketches of episodes displaying the tragic fates of innocent young girls, who thoughtlessly fall in love. Their relationships, unfortunately, do not last long, because some bad qualities or intentions of their beloved men appear. Finally the girls are left alone, usually under protection of their families, siblings or patrons (except Jane Fairfax).

In their short stories, there is a reflection of thoughts of society about premarital relationships or illegitimate children.

4.5.1. Eliza Williams (Sense and Sensibility)

Eliza is a ward of Colonel Brandon and a daughter of his old love Elizabeth Williams, who died after her profligate life. Her daughter from that time stays with Brandon till her fifteen, when she, being debauched by Willoughby, bores him an illegitimate son.

After this, she stays with Brandon still as his ward, with no chance of respectable life in society, because Willoughby refuses to marry her.

4.5.2. Georgiana Darcy (Pride and Prejudice)

Georgina Darcy is a younger sister of Mrs. Darcy and lives under his protection. As far as her appearance is concerned, there is nobody who would be equal to her in her beauty, elegance and accomplishments (Austen, 1811, p. 108).

Georgiana is also very shy and naive. She is in love with Mr. Wickham, who in fact wants to marry her only because of money. His cruel intention is revealed by Mr. Darcy, who ends their relationship and continues with protection of his sister.

4.5.3. Jane Fairfax (Emma)

Jane Fairfax is an orphan, who lives with her father's friend as his ward. Growing up in a higher society provides Jane with very good education and admirable manners. In this fate she resembles Fanny Price. Jane is a very talented musician, and thanks to her beauty and innocence she attracts Mr. Churchill. Unfortunately, their relationship would not be blessed by Churchill's wealthy aunt that is why Jane agrees on secret engagement with Churchill.

When she comes to live with her aunt Miss Bates, she suddenly appears in a very difficult position. She is forced to pretend, that she does not know Mr. Churchill and moreover she has to watch

him flirting with Emma. Such humiliation finally leads to an idea to work as a governess and live independently, so she repeals her engagement.

Anyway, her sorrow is so deep, that she falls ill. When Mr. Churchill realises how badly he treated her and that after the death of his aunt there is no other obstacle to their marriage, he returns to Jane, and declares their engagement officially.

Jane is the only heroine from the group of “dewy-eyed innocent girls” who finally finds her happiness.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the thesis was to provide a character study of Austen's female heroines. When analysing them in detail, it is obvious that the authoress created very trustworthy portraits of women from her society. Moreover, Jane Austen achieved to create her own original characters, who differ from the usual women standards. For instance Marianne Dashwood represents a young lady of an extraordinary life spirit. She dreams about the world with no social restrictions or hypocrisy. In her painful experience which makes her change the previous opinions Austen shows, that society is not ready for a step forward to a better world. Another example can be Elizabeth Bennet, who revolts against the usual marriage customs and inequality of women and men. Her dream to marry for love, although presented as impossible, finally comes true. Emma Woodhouse, also an unusual heroine, represents an intelligent and independent lady who prefers other possible life goals than marriage, which was very controversial in Austen's time.

Apart from these rather extrovert characters Austen created heroines which could be described as suffer-in-silence types. In their features and fates Austen depicted the inner worlds of unusually strong women, who are respecting all of the rules set by the society, despite the fact, that it hurts them very painfully. Good examples of such heroines can be Anne Eliot, Jane Bennet or Elinor Dashwood, who all lose their love because of social differences and regret it bitterly for all their lives. Fortunately, their emotional strength and patience lead to happy endings. Fanny Price also belongs to this group, because her life journey is filled with silent sorrow, when she observes the happiness and love of others, while being in love with a man, whom she does equals, because of her low-origin.

Jane Austen was also a brilliant satirist. Her main aim was to ridicule the typical women behaviour, so she describes enthusiastic marriage seekers, noble genteel or hypochondriac mothers concerned only with the idea to see their daughters married. She also burlesques young innocent ladies, who naively follow all of the society rules and are badly influenced by their friend or misguided by money-grubbing men.

All of these characteristics provide very good information about the real features of 19th century women, their needs, thoughts, opinions and life spirits. In addition thanks to Austen's heroines the readers can better understand the life of the authoress, because majority of them possess some autobiographical features.

Concerning the appearance, Jane Austen was not described as very attractive, similarly as most of her heroines, containing Anne Eliot, Elinor Dashwood or Elizabeth Bennet, who all are hidden in the shadow of the beauty of their sisters, which parallels the real features of Jane Austen compared with her sister Cassandra.

Another very important resemblance is the author's view of life. Jane Austen expresses her opinions about many aspects of social life thanks to her heroines. She agreed with her heroines on questions of marriage for love and partner equality, which she expresses by Elizabeth Bennet. Austen similarly like Marianne Dashwood dreamt about a better world with no pain, lies or pretence and just as Emma Woodhouse believed that women had a right to choose their husbands or to stay single without any disadvantages.

Austen also made her heroines experience the same events in life as her, so both Elizabeth and Fanny reject proposal, Anne Eliot experiences short attraction to a man, whom she meets in the coast area and also long-lasting regret of unfulfilled love. The readers can follow a heart-breaking description of sorrow, pain and loneliness, in the stories of Marianne, Anne, Jane, Elinor and Fanny as well, which were probably inspired by real author's feelings, because in spite of some love affairs in her life, she never married.

Anyway, her novels are full of brilliant heroines, who make the readers both laugh and cry and whose uneasy journey to their happiness shows us, that women were not always equal partners to men and masters of their own fates, although they wished to. Fortunately, there was such an authoress as Jane Austen, who depicted them to commemorate their efforts. Such heroines with no doubts deserve our attention.

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RÉSUMÉ

Diplomová práce pojednává o ženských hrdinkách zobrazených v románech Jane Austenové.

Na základě důkladné četby primární literatury, vlastní interpretace a studia dostupných sekundárních zdrojů k tématu, práce předkládá možné dělení ženských hrdinek zobrazených v románech *Rozum a cit*, *Pýcha a předsudek*, *Opatství Northanger*, *Emma*, *Mansfieldské panství* a *Pýcha a Přemlouvání*.

Hlavním kritériem pro dělení ženských postav je jejich srovnání s dobovými tradicemi, konvencemi a mravy. Z tohoto důvodu je úvodní část věnována stručnému nástinu období, v němž autorka žila. Práce tedy zahrnuje charakteristiku 18. a 19. století, doplněnou o základní poznatky z oblasti společenského života této éry.

Práce rovněž předkládá možné podobnosti hrdinek se samotnou autorkou. Obsahuje kratší pojednání o rodině, osobním životě a kariéře Jane Austenové.

Závěr práce pak shrnuje celou analýzu ženských hrdinek a jejich význam, jakožto bravurně vykreslených postav, které jsou dokladem výjimečnosti samotné autorky a jejích názorů na společnost, manželství a postavení ženy v 19. století.

ANNOTATION

Jméno a příjmení:	Zdeňka Ocetková
Katedra:	Katedra anglického jazyka
Vedoucí práce:	PhDr. Milena Vodičková, Ph.D.
Rok obhajoby:	2010

Název práce:	Ženské hrdinky v díle Jane Austenové
Název v angličtině:	Female heroines in Jane Austen's work
Anotace práce:	Diplomová práce pojednává o ženských hrdinkách zobrazených v románech Jane Austenové: Rozum a cit, Pýcha a předsudek, Opatství Northanger, Emma, Mansfieldké panství, Pýcha a přemlouvání. Práce rovněž předkládá dělení hrdinek na základě jejich srovnání s dobovými konvencemi a životem samotné autorky.
Klíčová slova:	tradice a zvyky devatenáctého století, Jane Austenová, Mariana Dashwoodová, Elinor Dashwoodová, Elizabeth Bennetová, Jane Bennetová, Anna Elliotová, Catherine Morlandová, Emma Woodhouseová, Harriet Smithová, Fanny Priceová
Anotace v angličtině:	Diploma thesis deals with the female heroines of Jane Austen displayed in her novels: Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, Northanger Abbey, Emma, Mansfield Park, Persuasion. It also presents the division of the characters according to their comparison with contemporary conventions and with the life of the authoress as well.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	traditions and customs of 19th century, Jane Austen, Marianne Dashwood, Elinor Dashwood, Elizabeth Bennet, Jane Bennet, Anne Elliot, Catherine Morland, Emma Woodhouse, Harriet Smith, Fanny Price
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