

A THEMATIC STUDY OF *EMMA* BY JANE AUSTEN

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ABSTRACT

The development of the English novel took place from the eighteenth century onwards. This period is considered to be the golden period for novel writing. Among the pioneer women novelists of this period, the name of Jane Austen comes at the forefront. Jane Austen has presented a vivid picture of the contemporary English gentry in her novels and has become a celebrated author. She had a great observation power and presents her characters and situations in a realistic manner as if they have been a part of her experience. The principal themes in her novels are matrimony and social life and therefore her novels are also known as domestic novels. She is more successful in delineating the women characters rather than the male characters in her works. Though Austen presents the comic side of life rather than presenting the darker aspects but, she is never harsh or bitter in her expressions. Austen is a humorist and irony is her forte. Most of her works were published posthumously. The novel, Emma, was her last novel that she could see in print form. The heroine in this novel is a favorite of Austen. The main theme of this novel is marriage. The heroine, Emma, is the match maker in the novel who continuously thinks about bringing matrimonial alliance between others. She is a strong woman whose happiness doesn't depend on her marriage. Though she herself is young but doesn't think about her own marriage. She has many flaws in herself but learns from her experiences and with the passage of time, becomes more composed and mature. The novel ends happily with the marriage union of the heroine, Emma and Mr. Knightley.

KEYWORDS: *Marriage, Irony, Woman, Realism, Social Structure, Experience.*

