

**INTERTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF JANE AUSTEN'S NOVELS:  
*SENSE AND SENSIBILITY AND PRIDE AND PREJUDICE***

*Mr. Sanjay Khamalatti, Research Scholar, Department of English, Shivaji University, Kolhapur - 416004, Maharashtra*

*Dr. Prabhanjan Mane, Research Guide, Professor, Department of English, Shivaji University, Kolhapur - 416004, Maharashtra*

**Abstract:** *Julia Kristeva, French philosopher, formulated the term 'Intertextuality'. She claims that texts are nothing but permutation of the earlier texts. Reading experience proves Kristeva's opinions true, without referring other books interpreting certain books appears hard nut to crack. So, independent existence of a book is beyond imagination, they are either materially or structurally interrelated. Heinrich Plett opines that intertextual relationship between books depends upon the genre of the books, scientific books form close intertextual relationship than literary texts. In literature books written by the same author, in the same period share many common things and form intertextual relationship. So it would be interesting to analyze Jane Austen's two early novels *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* from intertextual perspective.*

**Key words:** *Intertextuality, plot, gentry, permutation.*

**Intertextuality:**

Julia Kristeva, a French philosopher and theorist, formulated the term 'intertextuality'. She is of the opinion that authors permute the earlier text and recreate the new text. She also asserts that some cultural or social aspects form intertextual relationship among texts. Even while reading the books, in order to interpret some concepts and terms readers have to refer concerned previous texts, so no book can be autonomous, otherwise it will be incommunicable. Texts can be intertextual in three ways: 1) They may share some common material, 2) They may have common structure or 3) They may have both common material and structure.<sup>1</sup> The ratio of intertextuality between texts depends on domain of the text. In this regard Heinrich Plett points out,

It is true that scientific or judicial texts should quote as accurately as possible, i.e. without altering the pretext. Poetic texts, on the contrary, show their specific nature in that they do not integrate prefabricated textual elements without alteration, but rather reshape them and supply them with new meanings.<sup>2</sup>

It means in literary texts intertextual relationship is implicit. Among the fictional works authored by the same writer many common elements are found, so they form intertextual relationship among them. It appears true regarding 19th century novelist Jane Austen who deals with gentry and matrimonial issues and these issues are seen repeated in her novels. So it becomes interesting to explore the intertextual relationship in her novels, especially early two novels: *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

**Intertextual Analysis of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*:**

Jane Austen's first two published novels: *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) and *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) have many common things. Both the novels have been published in three volumes by Thomas Egerton. Further they were published with pseudo names: *Sense and Sensibility* was published as 'by a

Lady' and the author's name mentioned in *Pride and Prejudice* 'by the author of *Sense and Sensibility*' relates both the novels with each other. There is much resemblance regarding the titles of these two novels, they were published with different working titles than their existing titles. *Sense and Sensibility* had a working title as *First Impression*, and *Pride and Prejudice* had *Elinor and Marianne* as its working title, further both the titles have resemblance regarding the use of alliteration and antithesis. Antithetical use of abstract nouns in both the titles indicates the characteristics of the protagonists of the novels. Thus the very titles and publishing details of the novels form intertextual relationship between the two novels.

As both *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* belong to the same genre 'novel' and have been divided into three volumes, they form structural intertextual relationship. Regarding the plots and characters of both the novels also interrelation between them is apparent; both the novels deal with matrimonial issue of the sisters. *Sense and Sensibility* presents three Dashwood sisters: Elinor, Marianne and Margaret. Due to degraded financial condition Elinor has to struggle in her love with Mr. Edward Ferrars and Miss Marianne has to undergo an ordeal due to greedy nature of Willoughby. In *Pride and Prejudice* also Miss Jane has to face humiliation and opposition of Mr. Bingley's sisters due to lower social standard of her family. And Mr. Wickham like Willoughby of *Sense and Sensibility* betrays Elizabeth and elopes with Lydia. Further in both the cases mothers support their daughters in their matrimonial matters. Mrs. Dashwood delays leaving Norland Park in order to avail enough time to Elinor to increase her intimacy with Edward Ferrars, and in *Pride and Prejudice* Mrs. Bennet sends Jane to Netherfield on horseback, so that she would get drenched and catch cold and must stay with the Bingleys for a few days. Thus in both the novels girls have to face many predicaments in the journey of their love. While reading the novels Jane-Elinor, Marianne-Elizabeth, and Mrs. Bennet-Mrs. Dashwood remind the readers either of them.

One more common aspect between both the novels is close resemblance between two significant characters Col. Brandon and Mr. Darcy, both fall in love with the heroines of the novels, Marianne and Elizabeth, but initially they are ignored, further both are described solemn and serious. Austen describes Col. Brandon like this, "He was silent and grave. His appearance however was not unpleasing."<sup>3</sup> and Mr. Darcy as, "Darcy was clever. He was at the same time haughty, reserved, and fastidious and his manners, though well bred were not inviting."<sup>4</sup> Thus in the beginning Col. Brandon and Mr. Darcy appear imperfect match for Marianne and Elizabeth, but their sincerity and course of time prove their efficiency for their love. One more common aspect between them is they both are betrayed by vagabond like characters, Mr. Willoughby and Mr. Wickham. Mr. Willoughby deceives Col. Brandon's ward Eliza and impregnates her, in the same manner Mr. Wickham tries to elope with Mr. Darcy's minor sister, Georgiana, for dowry. Col. Brandon and Mr. Darcy's helpful nature mutually related them to each other. When Marianne falls ill at Cleveland, Col. Brandon rides to Barton Cottage to fetch Mrs. Dashwood which proves a great moral support to the family, similarly after Lydia's elopement with Mr. Wickham, Mr. Darcy goes to London he finds out them and also pays for Mr. Wickham's debt and dowry. Thus Col. Brandon and Mr. Darcy have many common things, while reading about one character reader feels presence of other, and as a result novels also form intertextual relationship.

As mentioned above Col. Brandon and Mr. Darcy suffer much due to crooked behaviour of their opponents: Mr. Willoughby and Mr. Wickham who share some common vices. Mr. Willoughby tries to dishonour Col. Brandon, and likewise Wickham to Darcy, besides they both have no love in their hearts, but they pretend in such a manner that their beloveds, Marianne and Elizabeth, get lost in their love. They have immoral attitude towards women. Willoughby molests Eliza and gets married with Mrs. Grey only for dowry, and Wickham tries to elope with Georgia only for dowry. Thus for them matrimonial relationship is only the means of mercenary achievement, and love means physical gratification. One more common trait between them is initially they appear so pleasant and charming that they appear appropriate

suitors, even we easily trust in their make believe stories against Col. Brandon and Mr. Darcy, but they show their true colours much later. At the end we experience poetic justice regarding both of them, they do not get matrimonial satisfaction from their spouses. Thus in the portrayal of Mr. Wickham, Austen so closely follows Mr. Willoughby's character that readers constantly compare both the characters.

Eldest sisters' well begun but later disturbed love stories are quite parallel to each other. In *Sense and Sensibility* on Edward Ferrars' arrival at Norland Park Elinor gets involved in him, but smooth flow of her attachment with Edward is disturbed by his sister Fanny Dashwood, in *Pride and Prejudice* also at the very first ball Jane Bennet forms affectionate relationship with Mr. Bingley, their relationship consolidates during Jane's visit and illness at Netherfield, but later that is in chapter XXI their relationship gets stretched. In the present situation also letter about Mr. Bingley's departure for London without intention of coming back is written by Mr. Bingley's sister, Caroline, she further hints about possible attachment between Georgiana Darcy and Mr. Bingley. Then such incidents take place regarding Elinor and Jane that readers feel assured that they will never unite with their lovers, but in the later part of the novel they are proposed by Edward Ferrars and Mr. Bingley, their marriages give pleasant experience to readers. Thus Elinor and Edward's course of love journey seems to be reflected in Jane and Mr. Bingley's case.

Aunts and uncles of Dashwood and Bennet sisters resemble with one another to a great extent. Mr. and Mrs. Palmer, aunt and uncle of Dashwood sisters, right from their visit to Barton Park urge Misses Dashwoods to visit their Cleveland estate, and when Elinor and Marianne visit Cleveland, Marianne falls ill and many favourable incidents take place which bring Marianne and Col. Brandon together. Similarly Bennet sisters' aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Gardiners, take Elizabeth to Northern tour, during which they visit Mr. Darcy's residence, Pemberly, where Darcy's housekeeper Mrs. Reynold praises him. Mrs. Reynold's commendation of Mr. Darcy removes Elizabeth's prejudice about him. Mrs. Gardiner also tries to change Elizabeth's disagreeable opinions about Mr. Darcy. In this way, characters of Mr. and Mrs. Palmers and Mr. and Mrs. Gardiners are akin to one another. They help their nieces to unite with their suitors which appear almost impossible without their help.

'Letters' play a vital role in smooth flow of both the novels' plots. In *Sense and Sensibility* Sir John Middleton's letter to Mrs. Dashwood shows them opportunity of new house, in London Marianne writes many letters to Willoughby with anticipation, but his returning letters along with her lock of hair brings frustration to her. Elinor writes letters to her mother to narrate their pathetic situation in London. In *Pride and Prejudice* also mail correspondence has significance. Mr. Bennet's announcement about Mr. Collins' letter which contains information about his arrival, Caroline Bingley's letter conveys the news of Mr. Bingley's leaving for London, Mr. Darcy's letter to Elizabeth which reveals his honesty and falsehood of Mr. Wickham and removes Elizabeth's prejudice about him, a letter about Lydia and Mr. Wickham's elopement brings the twist in the plot, and Mrs. Gardiner's letter addressed to Elizabeth discloses Mr. Darcy's help in Lydia and Mr. Wickham's marriage. Thus use of mails and their significance in bringing logical sequence and twist in the plot causes interrelationship between the novels, and as a result the novels form intertextual relation.

Some common themes like marriage, class, wealth and inheritance in *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* bind them together. As in *Sense and Sensibility* Henry Dashwood dies at the beginning, marriages of three daughters becomes the responsibility of Mrs. Dashwood. Again the bigamy of Henry Dashwood creates much complication in the plot. 'Class' causes major hindrance in the marriage of Elinor and Marianne. Due to diminished financial condition of Elinor, Edward Ferrar's sister, Fanny Dashwood, tries to detach their attachment. Similarly in *Pride and Prejudice* Mr. Bingley's sisters try to create breach between Jane and Mr. Bingley. On the contrary in both the novels there are some characters who are ready to marry only for dowry or protection, in a *Sense and Sensibility* Mr. Willoughby and Lucy Steele marry only for mercenary purpose, in *Pride and Prejudice* Mr. Wickham tries to elope with

Georgiana Darcy for dowry, and later he marries Lydia Dashwood only after taking dowry from Mr. Darcy. Even a female character, Charlotte Lucas, marries Mr. William Collins only for financial security and age factor. The theme of 'inheritance' is also common between both the novels. In *Sense and Sensibility* as Mrs. Dashwood has no son, her daughters lose their share of estate. Similarly in *Pride and Prejudice* Mr. and Mrs. Bennet have no male heir, so it becomes imperative that one of the sisters should marry before Mr. Bennet's death. Further in both the novels disinheritance cases for marriages have been described. In *Sense and Sensibility* Mrs. Ferrars disinherits Edward Ferrars on his insistence to marry Lucy Steele, and in *Pride and Prejudice* Lady Catherine de Bourgh threatens to disinherit Mr. Darcy if he marries Elizabeth. Thus the common themes of these novels help to propel the plots parallel to each other.

19th century culture has been reflected in both the novels. Many social and religious aspects have been described in *Sense and sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* accordance to the Victorian age. Prevalent leisure time activities of 19th century like reading and ball dances have been described in both the novels. In *Sense and Sensibility* Marianne and Mr. Willoughby have common interest in reading and both prefer Shakespeare's sonnets, in *Pride and Prejudice* Mr. Bennet is often described in the library and there is reference to Mr. Darcy's delightful library at Pemberly. Balls are the common events in both the novels which relate them to the 19th century as well as to each other. It is at balls, major characters meet one another and significant incidents take place. In *Sense and Sensibility* at a ball in London final breakup between Marianne and Willoughby takes place. Further many parties at Barton Park, at Conduit Street, Harley Street (London) have been described. In *Pride and Prejudice* at Netherfield ball Jane and Mr. Bingley develop interest in each other and seed of pride against Mr. Darcy has been sown in the mind of Elizabeth, and at the second ball at Netherfield many incidents like discussion about Mr. Darcy's unforgivable behaviour, Collin's meeting Mr. Darcy and Mary's singing etc. take place.

One more common aspect that connect both the novels is depiction of 'gentry class', in *Sense and Sensibility* Dashwood and Ferrars families, and in *Pride and Prejudice* Bingley and Darcy households belong to gentry class. Thus plots of both the novels concentrate on anxieties of gentry class like marriage, inheritance and class nobility.

### **Conclusion:**

Regarding the plot, setting, publication details, structure and themes novels *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* have much resemblance between them. While reading one novel some characters and incidents remind resembling characters and incidents from the other novel. Setting of 19th century and portrayal of gentry class correlate both the novels. Thus both the novel *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* form intertextual relationship.

### **Notes:**

1. Heinrich Plett, "Intertextualities," *Intertextuality: Research in Text Theory*, vol. 15. ed., Heinrich Plett (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991)7.
2. Ibid. 9.
3. Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*, Ed. Claudia Johnson (New York: Norton, 2002) 27.
4. Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, ed., Donald Gray, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: W. W. Norton and company, 2001) 12.