

Feminism in 18 Century

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Abstract: *The 18th century marked a pivotal era for the early stirrings of feminism, laying the groundwork for future movements seeking gender equality. During this period, societal roles were rigidly defined, with women predominantly relegated to domestic spheres. However, the Enlightenment, with its emphasis on reason and individual rights, began to challenge these traditional norms. This intellectual movement inspired a reevaluation of women's roles and their capabilities. Pioneering voices emerged, advocating for women's education and rights. One of the most influential figures was Mary Wollstonecraft, whose seminal work, "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792), argued for women's rationality and the importance of education. Wollstonecraft's treatise challenged the prevailing notion that women were inherently inferior to men, advocating instead for equal opportunities in education as a means to achieve true equality. Other women, such as Catherine Macaulay and Olympe de Gouges, contributed to the discourse, with de Gouges penning the "Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen" in 1791, a bold statement calling for women's rights during the French Revolution. These early feminists laid the intellectual and philosophical foundation for future generations to build upon. Despite their efforts, the impact of 18th-century feminism was limited by cultural and institutional barriers. The movement did not result in immediate societal change; however, it ignited a conversation about gender equality that would gain momentum in the centuries to follow. The ideas and writings from this era inspired later activists in the 19th and 20th centuries, who continued to fight for women's suffrage, legal rights, and social reforms.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The heroine is always successful in the world in which we find her because she has been shaped by the world. In the educated class of Austen's society, the influence of women was particularly powerful because their oppression did not extend to experiences of poverty and illiteracy. Educated women were better able to combat their political insignificance. Although Jane Austen knew what happened to women who were suspected of having minds. A woman at Northanger Abbey specifically says, "If he has the misfortune to know anything, he must conceal it as much as possible".¹ The novel begins with its opening scene "No one who saw Catherine Morland in her childhood would have thought that she was born to be a heroine". Surely there is no foolish reader who expects, on opening a novel, to encounter a world more extraordinary than his own. This gullible reader is an insistent target throughout the novel. It is against the heroines along with their exaggerated imagination that the true proportions of life or reality are initially defined. From beginning to end the reader of the novel is constantly made aware of his tendency to exceed the boundaries of the story by attempting to make characters more or less than they really are. The novel is about the relationship between proper manners and a healthy society. Like them it also works on the young woman through social rituals that test the quality of her submissive performance and once her worthiness is finally proven in the marriage ceremony that grants her a position of authority in the adult world. Symbolizes the notion of. The young woman in this case is Katherine Morland and her job is not so much to improve her performance as to learn to understand the manners of others, always motivated by a deep concern for decency. This is not easy for Katherine because she decides that people trust the claims they make to her rather than trusting what she sees in their actual behavior. While generosity ensures that he is in no danger of undermining excellent people like Henry and Elinor Tilney, it also means that he is easily taken in by villains ranging from the admirable General Tilney to the more or less admirable John and Isabella Thorpe. Is. Growing up for Catherine Morland means learning in a practical way that a distinction must be made between the truly virtuous young Tilney and Thorpe and the General Tilney who merely proclaims his virtues. Jane

Austen takes care to establish the rank of her principal characters and as a result is able to contain within her study of their manners, an argument about the relationship between virtue and social background. The sense of what is due to others, which constantly motivates Catherine's polite behavior and which characterizes Henry Tilney's performance at the ball and as a clergyman, can be traced to his firm roots in the aristocracy. Similarly, the fact that the Thorpes are middle class and General Tilney likes to imagine himself as an aristocrat is associated with their particular deviations from the norms of good manners. For John and Isabella Thorpe courtesans are a blindfold behind which they can pursue their materialistic goals and for the General she is an innocent certainty of self. The conversation between Henry and Katherine introduces him to the end of her lively joke, which shows how people in her situation usually talk and behave.

"Have you been in Bath long, madam? 'About a week, sir,' replied Katherine, trying to avoid laughing.

'Really! Worked as a surprise. "Why should you be surprised, sir?"

'why indeed!' He said in his natural tone - 'But some feelings definitely seem to emerge from your answer.

Surprise is more easily assumed and is no less appropriate than any other - now proceed further. Had you never been here before, madam?"

'Never, sir! 'Indeed!' Have you been honored with the upper chambers?"

'Yes sir, on Wednesday.'

'And are you completely pleased with Bath? ,

'Yes - I like it very much.'

'Now let me give you a smile, and then we can be rational again. Don't know whether she can muster the courage to laugh or not. Here she is simply undecided about what her overt reaction to him should be, because her actual reaction to what he says is neither negative nor undecided. A more complex example of their mutual interest in each other occurs.

Jane Austen's

Jane Austen lived from 1775 to 1817, and it was a period of great political and social activity. The American, Napoleonic, French, and Industrial wars and revolutions occurred during this same period. He was born at Steventon, Hampshire County, on 16 December 1775, spending his childhood and youth there. Steventon is situated in the high country, where the ground is deeply buried and the roads are strewn with chalk and overhanging rocks. She was the seventh of eight children, six boys and two girls. His father George Austin was a gentleman and strongly attached to his family. He busied himself with the care of his parish, his farm, and his pupils, and left a reputation for scholarship and literary taste, which in his time helped prepare his two sons, along with other pupils, for Oxford. And now he is in a strong position. His quick perception of his daughter's gift. Jane Austen's mother, Mrs. Cassandra Leigh, was a country woman and busy gardener who had enough energy to survive long periods of ill health. He is the seventh of Mr Austin's eight children. By modern standards Jane Austen lived a narrow and limited life. She had never been abroad and knew little about the north of England. Hampshire and Kent were his main visited areas, although he occasionally visited Lyme, Dawlish, Teignmouth and Sidmouth. She sometimes spent a week or two with her brother Henry in London. He also visited Bath and Southampton. She was from an average family where there was neither wealth nor financial constraints. She lived a comfortable, peaceful and happy life without any hindrance. Thus, his personal life was quite free from worries and suggested a remarkable sense of stability. However, the sense of decency and stability of his personal life stands in stark contrast to the sense of unrest and turmoil prevalent in European history during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. The French Revolution began in the year 1789. At this time Jane Austen was thirteen years old. Its objective was to bring about radical changes in social and political life in France. The fall of the Bastille occurred due to violence on July 14, 1789. Gradually the Revolution turned into a Reign of Terror and the revolutionaries attempted with grim determination to eliminate what they considered to be the forces of reaction. The Reign of Terror appealed to both middle-class reason and popular sentiment. Men, women and children, nobles and magistrates, priests and bishops – everyone suspected of royal sympathies was executed. Her cousin Eliza had married a French aristocrat and his death on the scaffold in early 1794 made the Revolution real for her. She was eighteen years old when the Terror ended with the execution of Robespierre. Thus his childhood and boyhood years were filled with the horrors of the French Revolution. During this time, Jane was busy with Love and Friendship and some other early

works. When she was twenty-two, Napoleon was causing another upheaval in the history of Europe. England was occupied with fears of a Napoleonic invasion and Nelson was engaging the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile. During this stormy period she was busy composing *Northanger Abbey*. By this time, he had completed his *Elinor and Marianne* and *First Impressions*. In the year of the sale of *Northanger Abbey* to the publisher Crosby, the Irish Rebellion was another cause of grave concern for the people of England. At about the same time Napoleon and Josephine were crowned by the Pope in Paris and Spain declared war on Great Britain. The battles fought at Trafalgar, Austerlitz, Jena, Marengo and Hohenlinden were all very important. In 1806 Napoleon declared a blockade against England. It seemed that there would be no end to the Peninsular War. Decisive battles were fought at Saragosa, Corunna, Badajos and Albuera. She was making all these efforts to get *Northanger Abbey* published.

She again began working as a writer in Choton and accompanied her brother Henry to London for its publication. Moscow was burning as she prepared *Pride and Prejudice* for the press. Napoleon was deposed and exiled to Elba while she was busy with the publication of *Emma* and *Mansfield Park*. The news of Napoleon's escape from Elba before *Emma* was finished caused a worldwide stir, and before it was published the Battle of Waterloo had already been fought and Napoleon had been driven to St. Helena. While all this was happening in France, conditions were quite different in Jane Austen's own country. England had already seen two revolutions. From the accession of Henry VII in 1485 to the death of his granddaughter Elizabeth in 1603, the strong hand of the English monarch was successively felt over the country's commerce, industry, justice, religion and finance. These Tudor sovereigns curbed treason, promoted prosperity, and repelled the Armada. He embodied the spirit of British nationalism and was idolized by the nation as a whole and its middle class in particular. However, despite this monarchical tradition of more than a century, seventeenth-century England saw a long and bitter struggle between monarchical and parliamentary factions. During this conflict in England, one king was beheaded and another was exiled. In the final analysis this meant the rejection of absolute monarchy in England, both in theory and practice. The first event to occur was the Puritan Revolution. The death of Elizabeth, the last of the Tudors, and the accession of her cousin James I to the Stuarts marked the beginning of a serious conflict between the king and Parliament. James I was not content, like his Tudor predecessors, to be an absolute ruler in practice. He insisted on the unreserved recognition of the principle of monarchical absolutism. In Stuart England the Parliament was more or less a representative assembly of the clergy, nobility and common people. The King's autocratic rule inevitably led to conflict between the King and Parliament. Charles-I was also as fanatical about the principle of absolute monarchy as his father. The conflict became complex and the king took a different stance from the parliamentary government despite financial and religious difficulties. Ultimately this conflict turned into civil war. Charles I suffered defeat at the hands of the Republicans and after his execution England was declared Republican under the virtual dictatorship of Cromwell. However, the Puritan Revolution had given rise to a tyrannical military dictatorship that was at odds with the national tradition of England. A parliament representing the emerging middle class was established in power and the Protestant character of the state was ensured. The Glorious Revolution marked the beginning of a period of political stability which continues even today. People generally had no fear of revolution in England during Jane Austen's period, although the country was involved in the Napoleonic Wars. Jane Austen wrote her novels in such an environment of political stability. It is natural that we should not find even the slightest hint of the important political events of his time in his writings. The French Revolutions, with their ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity, filled many contemporary writers with enthusiasm and high hopes. Coleridge, Wordsworth and Southey were full of revolutionary spirit and had great dreams about the future of mankind. They were all skeptical about the stable nature of the existing social order. His politics were imaginary. The major poetry of this period was written under the influence of a new liberal concept of man and his destiny that had its origins in the French Revolution. Because of their disgust with the existing social order, the Romantics wanted a connection with nature. Poets Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge, who found the world harshly hostile and improvable, turned to nature for relief and solace.

II. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, 18th-century feminism was a crucial starting point for the ongoing struggle for women's rights. Its legacy is evident in the continued pursuit of equality, demonstrating that the quest for gender justice is a long journey, built on the courage and vision of its early advocates.

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