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**The Influence of the Eighteenth-Century Sentimental Novel on Jane Austen's
Juvenilia**

(Bakalářská práce)

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PROHLÁŠENÍ

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Introduction

The significance of Jane Austen's oeuvre is not a subject of debate. Her novels undoubtedly belong to the treasures of world literature, being perennial favourites with readers of all generations, as well as a constant challenge for critics. Apart from the well-known novels, Austen's work branches off into a very different universe marked by a sharp humour and lively imagination. These qualities characterize her early writings.

They came to existence in Austen's adolescence as a response to her reading, of which literature of sensibility, particularly the genre of sentimental novel, constituted a considerable portion. The genre, emerging from the eighteenth-century cultural movement of Sentimentalism, used to be at one time immensely popular. Austen gave her *Juvenilia* the shape of burlesque targeting the literature she knew well. Her criticism does not aim at the key ideas of Sentimentalism, which the genre articulated; instead, it concentrates on the conventions and stereotypes of the genre itself. The principal goal of this thesis is to explore the way Austen manipulated typical features of the genre in her *Juvenilia*.

Theoretical Part furnishes a brief presentation of the sentimental novel. My discussion of the genre owes a great deal to Janet Todd's concise treatise on sentimentalism in literature entitled *Sensibility: An Introduction*. A following section concentrates on the sentimental novel as a product of the eighteenth-century vogue of sensibility. Theoretical Part is concluded with an overview of the general characteristics of the *Juvenilia*.

Analytical Part consists of three sections, in which I am trying to evaluate Austen's treatment of three salient elements of the sentimental novel, namely the typical protagonist, the theme of suffering, and the motifs of bodily eloquence. My discussion limits to three stories from the *Juvenilia* which I considered suitable for analysis.

Theoretical Part

1. Literary and Cultural Context

The following pages are to provide brief characteristics of the sentimental novel and introduce the relevant cultural background. In addition, a part of this chapter evaluates the significance of the genre and its contribution to the further development of fiction.

1.1 Sentimental Novel

Sentimentalism was a cultural movement prominent in Britain and the Continent in the mid-eighteenth century. Its ideological essence, established by the Earl of Shaftesbury, David Hume, and Adam Smith, reposed in a preoccupation with feeling, a firm belief in man's innate goodness, and a trust in the redeeming power of sympathy.¹ The spirit of Sentimentalism pervaded all major areas of arts, giving rise, as regards literature, to the sentimental novel, the sentimental comedy, or the so called poetry of the Graveyard.² In the realm of fiction, the mainstay notions of Sentimentalism were most aptly echoed in the genre of sentimental novel, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The prime of the sentimental novel is to be traced in the period from the 1740s to the 1780s. This fiction emerged out of the contemporary social mood, or fashion, laying particular emphasis on the concept of sensibility. Bearing the sense of an ability to experience strong emotions especially in relation to suffering of other people,³ sensibility lay in the centre of attention of moral philosophy and aesthetics; moreover, the influence of the concept extended to the realm of contemporary medical sciences.⁴

¹ Arthur Raleigh Humphreys, *The Augustan World: Society, Thought and Letters in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963), 197–202.

² Andrew Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of the English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 318–20.

³ Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1986), 7.

⁴ Koen Vermeir and Michael Funk Deckard, 'Philosophical Enquiries into the Science of Sensibility: An Introductory Essay,' in *The Science of Sensibility: Reading Burke's Philosophical Enquiry*, ed. Koen Vermeir and Michael Funk Deckard (Houten: Springer, 2011), 6.

Undeniably, the doctrine of sensibility left its mark in the codes of conduct of the concerned period.⁵ In this cultural climate the genre proves to be firmly embedded.

There is a degree of disparity in the critical approach to the genre. The relevant novels are, along with the appellation I decided to employ, sometimes referred to as ‘novels of sentiment’, or ‘novels or sensibility’. Some critics consider these terms to be interchangeable. Others, on the other hand, apply both of them to differentiate what they view as more or less distinct subtypes of the genre, or stages of its development.

According to the latter perspective, novels of sentiment, written in the 1740s and the 1750s, accentuate the merits of sensibility, presenting it as a quality stimulating acts of generosity and goodness.⁶ In contrast, novels of sensibility, emerging in ensuing decades, aim, above all, to affect the readers’ emotions by showing the reactions of susceptible characters, rather than provide them with moral instruction.⁷ For any strict adherence to this scheme might prove misleading, I will base the following discussion on a different approach. The genre will be presented in the light of Janet Todd’s classification based on the typology of protagonists. The scholar treats separately the novels featuring the man of feeling and those with the woman of feeling as main character.

Before laying out the two distinct branches of the sentimental novel, I will present the crucial characteristics valid for the both. The following definition is provided by *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*:

A form of fiction popular in the 18th c. England. It concentrated on the distresses of the virtuous and attempted to show that the sense of honour and moral behaviour were justly awarded. It also attempted to show that effusive emotion was evidence of kindness and goodness. The classic example was Richardson’s *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) [...]. Comparable but more readable novel in this category were Goldsmith’s *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), Henry Brooke’s *The Fool of Quality* (1765–70), Mackenzie’s *The Man of Feeling* (1771),

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Todd, *Sensibility*, 8.

⁷ Ibid.

and Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* (1800). Sentimentality was very apparent in Sterne [...].⁸

The definition stresses and interrelates the elements of virtue, suffering, and emotion. These constitute the theme of 'virtue in distress,'⁹ central to a large number of sentimental novels, most of which feature a particular type of protagonist, the woman of feeling – a beautiful young woman, delicate and morally irreproachable, who is subjected to adversity, coercion, or aggression.¹⁰ Abiding by the path of virtue, either she marries a worthy man or a one formerly deficient in moral, but reformed by her beneficial influence; or dies, leaving the onlookers in pitiful tears and awe of her exemplary innocence and goodness.¹¹

Samuel Richardson, the author of *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady* (1748), and an earlier achievement, *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740), is considered to be of central influence as to the development of this fiction for having inspired a large number of followers and imitators.¹² Among other important representatives count Frances Sheridan's *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph* (1761), Frances Brooke's *The History of Lady Julia Mandeville* (1763), Henry Mackenzie's *Julia de Roubigné* (1777), and Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline* (1788).¹³ Not few of the concerned novels feature rather unsophisticated plot devices. Brian Southam mentions, in particular, heroines stigmatized for their obscure origin, whose happiness is threatened or marred by treacherous confidantes, antagonistic parental figures, and unwanted wooers.¹⁴

The other class of the sentimental novel focuses on the male protagonist, who, instead of being a victim of oppression or adversity, sympathetically pities misfortunes of others. Being too fragile to support the cruelty of life, the man of

⁸ J. A. Cuddon, ed., *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 4th ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 809.

⁹ See Robert Francis Brissenden, *Virtue in Distress: Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade* (London: Macmillan, 1974), 65–95.

¹⁰ Todd, *Sensibility*, 115.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹² *Ibid.*, 66.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 110–26. The works above are discussed in detail in chapter 'Fiction: The Women of Feeling.'

¹⁴ Brian Southam, *Jane Austen's Literary Manuscripts: A Study of the Novelist's Development Through the Surviving Papers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 10–11.

feeling succumbs to his exceptional sensitivity.¹⁵ As regards prominent works that epitomize this current of sentimentalism, it is worth mentioning Henry Mackenzie's famous *The Man of Feeling* (1771), Sarah Fielding's *The Adventures of David Simple* (1744), Henry Brooke's *The Fool of Quality* (1765–1770), as well as Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*.¹⁶

Apart from the archetypal protagonists and the inherent theme of suffering, sentimental novels share the motifs related to the physical expression of emotions,¹⁷ relevant to both of the sentimental novel subtypes. Crying, sighing, fainting or blushes are employed to assert and accentuate the protagonist's meritorious qualities, and above all, his or her sensibility.¹⁸ In other words, the expressive body language is frequently used in order to prove beyond doubt the acuteness of the protagonist's suffering, or the intensity of his or her sympathy for the sufferer. By far, this significant cultural phenomenon is not an invention of the sentimentalists, for the linking of mind and body has its origins in medical theories universally accepted in the eighteenth century.¹⁹

It is worth stressing that throughout the eighteenth century, the relation between one's mental and physical state was believed to be reciprocal. A psychological agitation was assumed to be able to initiate a physical response; at the same time, the body itself was regarded as responsible for a trouble of mind.²⁰ In general, women, the physically weaker, were considered predisposed to suffering from excessive sensibility.²¹ This cultural stereotype might give rise to the sentimentalists' tendency to represent female protagonists as victims, rather than equal counterparts of the compassionate and sympathizing man of feeling.

Having briefly discussed the themes and motifs commonly associated with the sentimental novel, I will now attempt to generalize its formal facets. The fact that it focuses on characters' psyche and emotions favours the usage of certain

¹⁵ Todd, *Sensibility*, 4.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁷ Paul Goring, *The Rhetoric of Sensibility in Eighteenth Century Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 143.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Raymond Stephanson, 'Richardson's "Nerves": The Physiology of Sensibility in *Clarissa*,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 49, no. 2 (April – June 1988): 268

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, 275.

narrative modes. One of the most popular was the epistolary style. Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady*, and *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753), Fanny Burney's *Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778), and numerous works of lesser achievement, all share this formal specificity. Women writers often resorted to the epistolary technique, for it was considered particularly appropriate for them.²²

The popularity of the epistolary form derives from the sentimentalists' tendency to achieve the impression of authenticity that partly veiled the fictional nature of a text.²³ Another desirable effect that the epistolary form easily conveyed was the 'momentariness' of a correspondent's feeling.²⁴ It would be unjustified, however, to suppose that any sentimental novel was necessarily an epistolary one. To complete the discussion, one should not omit fragmentariness as a trait typical of the novels treating men of feeling. The sentimentalists revelled in accentuating the moments in which the protagonist's sensibility reached climax and accordingly used this device.²⁵

To summarize the defining elements of sentimental novels, one may observe that these writings commonly employ delicate, virtuous protagonists who prove their sensibility and goodness either by being experiencers of suffering or its witnesses. In a general tendency deriving from the gender stereotypes, the role of sufferer is attributed to the female protagonists, while the one of sympathizing observer is destined to the other sex. Concerning the formal characteristics of the sentimental novel, one may remark that the epistolary style was highly popular with the authors. Regardless of the narrative mode, they often had recourse to the fragmentary structure of narration in the view of enhancing the impressiveness of particularly touching scenes.

²² Julia E. Epstein, 'Jane Austen's Juvenilia and Female Epistolary Tradition,' *Papers on Language and Literature* 21, no. 4 (Autumn 1985): 400.

²³ *Ibid.*, 402.

²⁴ John Mullan, 'Sentimental Novels,' in *The Cambridge Introduction to the Eighteenth Century Novel*, ed. John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 241.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

1.2 Culture of Sensibility

This section of the thesis comments on the cultural background relating to the emergence and development of the sentimental novel. The embeddedness of the genre in this culture manifests itself in the parallels underlying its reception and the continually changing public attitude towards sensibility. As concerns a general political and social context, the once fashionable concept of sensibility arose at a period marked by the economic growth of the middle class, the increased literacy, and the stabilization of the political scene at the beginning of the eighteenth century; the vogue of sensibility faded away with the universal upheaval launched by the French Revolution.²⁶

Sensibility, initially a subject of extensive study of moral philosophy, achieved the prominence of a cult in the second half of the eighteenth century,²⁷ a period marked by specific tendencies in the understanding of emotions in general. The contemporary society viewed feelings as autonomous elements, ‘impersonal, and contagious, as viruses, visiting the breasts of men and women the way diseases visit the body.’²⁸ At the summit of its popularity, sensibility became almost synonymous with virtue.²⁹ Its position deteriorated, though, a few decades later, when an attitude of mockery and disdain substituted for that of reverence.³⁰ The popularity of the sentimental novel closely follows the same pattern.

At the time of glory of sensibility, sentimental novels were reputed for instructing morals and manners of the readers.³¹ The belief in a formative power of reading manifests itself in the fact that the eighteenth century critics supported the notion of reshaping fiction into a tool of public instruction.³²

The work of Samuel Richardson, the forefather of the genre, can be considered, to some extent, to be in compliance with the prescribed direction.³³

²⁶ Todd, *Sensibility*, 10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

²⁸ Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotions, Hume to Austen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 8.

²⁹ Mullan, ‘Novels,’ 248.

³⁰ Todd, *Sensibility*, 129.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

³² Ernest Baker, *The History of the English Novel: The Novel of Sentiment and the Gothic Romance* (London: Barnes and Noble, 1967), 20.

³³ Mullan, ‘Novels,’ 246.

His followers formally adopted the moralist aims, but rarely echoed them with an ample resonance in practice.³⁴ Although sentimental novels proved ineffective in the respect of moral instruction, their influence acted on a different ground immensely. In fact, they promoted certain models of somatic expression of emotions at the time when the body was particularly invested with the capacity of reflecting the mind.³⁵ Goring notes that the genre was marked by a ‘tendency to encourage emotional responses in readers and to prescribe the manner in which such responses should be made manifest.’³⁶ In other words, sentimental novels, displaying situations calling for proper reactions from anyone who aspired to gain the reputation of possessing the admired and desired sensibility, featured patterns according to which they could be articulated in an acceptable way.

The contemporary belief in the interrelationship between life and literature relates to the fact that sentimental novels became subject to harsh criticism and suspicion. The adversaries of sensibility detected a potential danger to which especially gullible female readers exposed themselves when fervently adhering to the ideology displayed in the novels featuring weak women falling ill or dying due to emotional excesses.³⁷ This was not, by far, the sole reproach.

By the end of the century, sensibility degenerated into a state of disfavour. Not only the associations of sensibility with virtue and moral purity weakened, the actual benefits of sensibility were constantly being put under question due to connections with physical and mental illness.³⁸ Sensibility being no more in vogue, the sentimental novel lost its appeal and gradually sank into oblivion.

1.3 The Aftermath of Sensibility

Although it might seem so, the sentimental novel is not a dead branch of English literature. In the first place, it occupies an important position in the genesis of novel as a genre.³⁹ In particular, critics accentuate the contribution of Samuel

³⁴ Baker, *English Novel*, 91.

³⁵ Goring, *Rhetoric*, 142.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 143.

³⁷ Todd, *Sensibility*, 134.

³⁸ Mullan, ‘Novels,’ 250.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 237.

Richardson, appreciating his preference of a plot based on a single action over the episodic one.⁴⁰ Richardson's artful depiction of inner lives of his characters has been recognized as highly influential for the future generations of fiction writers.⁴¹ In addition, the genre of Gothic novel is known to have drawn much inspiration from sentimental fiction.⁴² Some of its elements were likewise adopted by individual authors of the following centuries, namely Harriet Beecher Stowe, Walter Scott, George Eliot, Charles Dickens, and David Herbert Lawrence.⁴³ More importantly, it was Jane Austen who profited from the legacy of sensibility in both her Juvenilia and mature fiction.

The foregoing paragraphs provided an outline of the public stance towards sensibility and the sentimental novel, introducing the general suppositions, which influenced the genre's reputation. The last section dealt with the legacy of the sentimental novel, which proved to be of a great significance for the further development of fiction.

2. Jane Austen and Her Juvenilia

The aim of the following paragraphs is to briefly introduce Jane Austen and her Juvenilia. The discussion on Austen limits to the key events of her personal and artistic life and to a presentation of several critical approaches to her work. Concerning the Juvenilia, the following paragraphs relate them to the context of Austen's oeuvre. Furthermore, a short chapter introduces the Juvenilia which are going to be used in the analysis in Analytical Part.

2.1 The Author

Jane Austen (1775–1817) was born 16th December 1775 in Steventon, a small village in Hampshire, as the seventh and youngest child of the reverend George Austen. Information concerning her personality and life is available from her surviving letters, and family sources, including her nephew Edward Austen-Leigh's *Memoir*, first published in 1871. For a long time, Jane Austen's works has

⁴⁰ Ian Watts, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), 135.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁴² Todd, *Sensibility*, 9.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 150.

continued to attract attention of readers, critics, and filmmakers. A renowned scholar ascribes Austen's lasting appeal to 'her ability to create the illusion of psychologically believable and self-reflecting characters.'⁴⁴ As to Austen's work, she comments: 'Her novels are investigations of selfhood, particularly female, the oscillating relationship of feeling and reason, the interaction of present and memory, and the constant negotiation between desire and society.'⁴⁵ I believe that this claim captures the essence of Austen's lasting appeal.

It is likely that the author's life did not much deviate from what one might imagine for a nineteenth century unmarried daughter of an impecunious country clergyman. Austen spent her days in the milieu of her large family, devoting herself to activities typical for her social position. It is probably needless to point out that writing was not considered to be a standard form of womanly leisure. Although women engaged actively in literature, their efforts rarely met with general approval and respect. The instability entailed in the status of women writers may stand behind Austen's reluctance to publish the novels under her name.

As many scholars nowadays argue, what gave the major impetus for Austen's involvement in literature was reading. Studying Austen's reading experience, one encounters works of the prominent figures, as well as numerous pieces written by nowadays obliterated writers.⁴⁶ The earliest literary responses to reading came under the form of burlesque stories aiming at the sentimental novel. Soon, however, Austen's literary attempts diversified. A fragment included in the *Juvenilia*, *Catherine, or, The Bower*, probably best exemplifies the gradual shift from a light-hearted satire to work manifesting a growing effort for establishing an expression of her own.

⁴⁴ Janet Todd, *The Cambridge Introduction to Jane Austen* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), ix.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ See Isobel Grundy, 'Jane Austen and Literary Traditions,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, ed. Edward Copeland and Juliet McMaster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 189–210. The author mentions Samuel Johnson, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Fanny Burney, Maria Edgeworth, Henry Mackenzie, Tobias Smollett, Lawrence Sterne and Oliver Goldsmith as representatives of first-rate literature whose works Austen read. She gives examples of Jane West, Sarah Burney, Charlotte Smith, Francis Lanthom as those from the less respected category.

The long preparatory period, which gave rise to the Juvenilia, the epistolary novel *Lady Susan*, the fragment of *The Watsons*, the earlier epistolary versions of the first two novels, and *Susan*, culminated in the first milestone of Austen's literary career, the publication of *Sense and Sensibility* in 1811. The novel was two years later followed by *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), which has been widely acclaimed as Austen's best work. Meanwhile, the death of her father cast a gloomy shade over her life, bringing about financial difficulties which forced her mother, sister and herself to move to the village of Chawton.

At new home, Austen created her mature novels, *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1816), and the posthumously published *Persuasion* (1817). Not a long time before her untimely death, she had made a number of alterations in *Susan*, which the contemporary readers know as *Northanger Abbey*. The latter was published together with *Persuasion*, with the accompanying 'Biographical Notice' written by her brother Henry. Dying probably of Addison's disease, Austen left behind a few chapters of *Sanditon*.

The growing popularity at the end of the nineteenth century inaugurated Austen as an important cultural figure. Until then, her work had not enjoyed a wide readership, at least in comparison with the international familiarity surrounding it nowadays. A full critical appreciation awaited her legacy in the twentieth century, when the contemporary criticism came to associate her work with realism and the development of the novel.⁴⁷ Jane Austen's work has been since then searched out by a great number of scholars, eliciting a multitude of alternative readings, including, for example, the feminist, or the Marxist.⁴⁸ Taking into account the continuing interest in Austen, one may assume that they will yet increase.

2.2 The Juvenilia in the Context of Austen's Oeuvre

Scholars tend to classify Austen's work into four categories: Juvenilia, early unfinished novels, early novels, and mature novels. Before further discussing the Juvenilia, I would like to say a few words on account of the later writings. The early unfinished novels include *Susan*, a predecessor of *Northanger Abbey*, and

⁴⁷ Todd, *Cambridge Introduction*, 33.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 34.

The Watsons. Some critics incline to rank *Catharine, or the Bower* into this category rather than classify it as a part of the Juvenilia.⁴⁹ *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) *Mansfield Park* (1814) constitute the early novels, while *Emma* (1816), *Northanger Abbey* (1817), *Persuasion* (1817), and the unfinished *Sanditon* (1817) are germs of the mature creative period.

Austen started writing her Juvenilia in 1787 when she was twelve-year-old. The last of the Juvenilia were probably created in 1793. The original versions, none of which has been preserved to the present day, were copied into three notebooks by the author herself or her family. They now constitute *Volume the First*, *Volume the Second*, and *Volume the Third*. The manuscript of *Volume the First* is deposited at the Bodleian Library, Oxford; while the other two are stored at the British Library. The collection comprises 29 pieces of varied character. Brian Southam proposes the following chronology:

- 1787–90** *Volume the First*: ‘Frederic and Elfrida’ (f), ‘Jack and Alice’ (f), ‘Edgar and Emma’ (f), ‘Henry and Eliza’ (f), ‘Mr. Harley’ (f), ‘Sir William Montague’ (f), ‘Mr. Clifford’ (f), ‘The beautiful Cassandra’ (f), ‘Amelia Webster’ (f), *The Visit* (pl), *The Mystery* (pl)
- 1790 (June)** *Volume the Second*: ‘Love and Freindship’ (f)
- 1791 (November)** *Volume the Second*: ‘The History of England’ (f), *Collection of Letters* (f)
- 1792** VS: ‘Lesley Castle’ (f); VF: ‘The Three Sisters’ (f); *Volume the Third*: ‘Evelyn’ (f), *Catharine* (f)
- 1793** VS: ‘Scraps’ (f); VF: ‘Detached Pieces’ (f), ‘Ode to Pity’ (p)⁵⁰

The abbreviations in parentheses indicate to which genre particular works belong. Not surprisingly, one can see that fiction works prevail. It is important to bear in mind that none of the pieces was intended for publication; the Juvenilia were restricted to be of service to family entertainment.

⁴⁹ Mary Waldron, *Jane Austen and the Fiction of Her Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 18.

⁵⁰ Southam, *Manuscripts*, 16. I have added the indications of genre and marked in which of the three manuscripts the works are to be found.

2.3 Formal Qualities of the Juvenilia

Some of the Juvenilia are left unfinished; the majority of them are introduced by a playful, sometimes ironic dedication to a sibling or a friend. The reader may encounter a number of errors in orthography. The following sample, introducing *Volume the First*, is addressed to Martha Lloyd:

My Dear Martha,

As a testimony to the gratitude I feel for your late generosity to me in finishing my muslin Cloak, I beg to offer you this little production of your sincere friend, the Author.⁵¹

The endings are formally indicated by the word 'Finis'. More or less elaborated Juvenilia are furnished with a division into chapters, while the two unfinished plays are appropriately structured into acts and scenes. Studying the mode of the Juvenilia, one may notice that Austen drew from the epistolary tradition laid by Samuel Richardson and numerous women writers, as she gave the form of letters to 'Amelia Webster', 'The Three Sisters', 'Love and Freindship', 'Lesley Castle', 'A Tour Through Wales'. *Volume the Second* includes a compilation of letters entitled simply 'A Collection of Letters'.

2.4 Publication and Criticism of the Juvenilia

Due to the Austen family's reluctance to share the products of the author's apprenticeship with the public, the writings constituting the Juvenilia were first published as a whole as late as in 1963 in *The Works of Jane Austen: The Minor Works* in R. W. Chapman's edition. Pieces from *Volume the Second* had been published earlier, in 1922, accompanied with an appreciative preface by Gilbert Keith Chesterton. The separate editions of the three *Volumes* were issued in 1933, 1963, and 1951 respectively. The latest academic edition of the entire collection was prepared by the Cambridge University Press in 2006. Three years later, a Czech publishing house Daranus published Austen's early achievements in Tomáš Tulinger's translation under the title *Láska a přátelství a jiné prózy*.

⁵¹ Jane Austen, *Sanditon and Other Stories*, ed. Peter Washington (London: David Campbell Publishers, 1996), 213.

Criticism has been preoccupied with the exploration of Austen's oeuvre as a response to her reading.⁵² In her work, subtle allusions to a variety of her precursors' creation have been found. It is in the Juvenilia where the relationship between the reading and the author's literary output emerges in the most direct way, for the majority of them can be qualified as burlesques.⁵³

The Juvenilia elicit the scholarly interest yet for another respect. They represent a material useful for tracing Austen's literary development. One of the critics characterizes the Juvenilia as 'impressive' and 'surprising.'⁵⁴ What he further assesses as 'reveal[ing] a boisterous, hoydenish, sometimes surreal imagination'⁵⁵ and as 'immensely high-spirited, anarchic, occasionally violent and cartoonish'⁵⁶ does not fall in line with the qualities upon which Austen's renown is established. Nevertheless, the Juvenilia contain the germs of what came into bloom in her mature fiction.

2.5 A Commentary on the Selected Juvenilia

The following sub-chapters introduce the selected Juvenilia as regards their plots and critical assessment.

2.5.1 'Love and Freindship'

The burlesque 'Love and Freindship,' reputedly the best piece of the Juvenilia, is the first story to appear in *Volume the Second*. It was completed, according to the date in the manuscript, Sunday 13th June 1790, and dedicated to Eliza de Feuillide, a distant cousin of Austen's. Critics have marked allusions to Sophia Lee's sentimental novel *The Recess* (1783).⁵⁷ As one may notice, the title of the work is misspelt. The metathesis is recurrent; it concerns the word 'friendship', its base, as well as other words containing *ie*, such as 'believe' or 'grief' (in Austen's

⁵² See Olivia Murphy, *Jane Austen the Reader: The Artist as Critic* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

⁵³ Mary Lascelles, *Jane Austen and Her Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), 49.

⁵⁴ Richard Jenkyns, *A Fine Brush on Ivory: An Appreciation of Jane Austen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 31.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Murphy, *Reader*, 40.

version ‘beleive’ and ‘greif’). My edition of the *Juvenilia* retains the original spelling, regardless of the errors.

The narrative has a form of a series of fifteen letters written by Laura, a middle-aged childless widow, responding to ‘repeated intreaties’ of her old friend Isabel, who asks her to relate the ‘misfortunes and adventures’ to her daughter Marianne. Laura’s starts her narrative with a description of her solitary life in a family cottage situated in the vale of Uske, revealing a secret dissatisfaction with its dullness. The solitude is put an end to by an unexpected arrival of a wandering gentleman Edward Lindsay, whom she marries after only a few minute long period of courtship and immediately follows at his aunt’s house, later at his friend Augustus’s estate. In the latter place, she befriends Augustus’s wife Sophia and the two couples live happily together until Augustus’s imprisonment on account of his debts.

Laura and Sophia, deprived of a shelter and money, set out on a journey to Scotland, where they intend to seek help from a distant relative of Sophia’s. The journey is interrupted by an unexpected encounter with a gentleman who proves to be their unknown grandfather. After falling out with their Scottish benefactor, Laura and Sophia are expelled from the newly gained home. On their way back, the two women witness a collision of two phaetons to discover that they were run by their husbands, both of whom have suffered fatal injuries. When Edward and Augustus die, Laura runs mad, and Sophia experiences a series of fainting fits and dies. Returning to Scotland, Laura encounters all the characters she had met after leaving home. Her father-in-law’s generosity enables her to settle down in a Scottish village and lead an uneventful life.

2.5.2 ‘Lesley Castle’

The epistolary narrative subtitled ‘an unfinished novel in letters’ was dedicated to Austen’s brother Henry. Whereas ‘*Love and Freindship*’ bore a strong tinge of comic, ‘*Lesley Castle*’ is more ambitious, as it is getting closer to realism, or even naturalism;⁵⁸ nevertheless, it retains the character of burlesque.

The unfinished epistolary novel follows two narrative threads. One of them concerns the family of Lesley, stricken by the breakup of the eldest son’s

⁵⁸ Jenkyns, *Ivory*, 32.

marriage. The other concentrates on the life of Eloisa Lutterell, a friend of the Lesleys, after the death of her fiancé.

2.5.3 'Evelyn'

The story integrated in *Volume the Third* burlesques both the genres of sentimental novel, as well as Gothic fiction.⁵⁹ It features the protagonist Frederick Gower who arrives at a beautiful village in the South of England called Evelyn. Captivated by the charm of the village and the unprecedented benevolence of its inhabitants, Frederick settles down in Evelyn, and marries one of the locals, Maria. The happiness makes him oblivious of the task which brought him to the region – he was to obtain a portrait of his sister Rose's dead lover from his parents, who had opposed their relationship on account of Rose's social inferiority. A sudden recollection, provoked by the sight of a fallen rose, impels him to carry out the promise given to his sister.

After being informed of her death, Frederick decides to visit the lover's family to find out whether the couple would have obtained the parents' consent, if they had been alive. Having received a negative answer from the grieved baronet, he returns to Evelyn to discover that his wife died of distress caused by his absence. Wishing to take comfort from the care of his large family, he leaves Evelyn for home. The news of Rose's death proves to be false, as he finds her happily married. Accidentally, Frederick meets one of the inhabitants of Evelyn, a young widow, marries her, and they settle down in Evelyn.

⁵⁹ Paul Poplawski, *A Jane Austen Encyclopedia* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), 142.

Analytical Part⁶⁰

The quotations from the *Juvenilia* were taken from an edition entitled *Sanditon and Other Stories*, provided by Peter Washington and published by David Campbell Publishers in London in 1996. The text version of the *Juvenilia* from this edition corresponds to the originals.

1. Sentimental Protagonist

The following section explores Austen's response to the archetypes of sentimental fiction – the suffering virtuous woman and the sympathizing tearful man. In each of the selected *Juvenilia*, the author assumes a different approach to the matter. The protagonist of 'Love and Freindship' is a young woman trying to adopt the role of the woman of feeling. 'Lesley Castle' moves away from the burlesque of the woman of sensibility to target a character that is in sharp contrast with the notions that the archetype embodied. Finally, the protagonist of 'Evelyn' is a critical response to the sentimentalists' approach to masculinity.

1.1 'Love and Freindship'

Austen undermines the concept of the woman of sensibility by employing an unreliable narrator, the quixotic⁶¹ Laura, whose judgment is obscured by a tendency to regard the world as being governed by the principles of sentimental fiction. Laura's biased viewpoint enables Austen to ridicule her apparent falsity, and manipulate the conventions of the genre.

Laura endows herself with the necessary attributes of the woman of sensibility. The very circumstances of her birth and upbringing are presented as if to presuppose her for an extraordinary fate: 'My father was a native of Ireland and an inhabitant of Wales; my mother was the natural Daughter of a Scotch Peer by an italian Opera-girl – I was born in Spain and received my Education at a Convent in France' (296). Laura takes pride in what may be labelled as 'exotic' origin, deliberately disregarding the apparent tinge of ignominy that arises from the social status of her mother. A flattering self-presentation follows, in the same

⁶⁰ The excerpts from the *Juvenilia* preserve the young author's incorrect spelling, as well as the original punctuation and capitalization.

⁶¹ Murphy, *Reader*, 30.

way, the conventionalized patterns, for Laura is ready to appropriate any meritorious trait and accomplishment that were of a defining value for the woman of sensibility:

But lovely as I was the Graces of my Person were the least of my Perfections. Of every accomplishment accustomary to my sex, I was Mistress. When in the Convent, my progress had always exceeded my instructions, my Acquirements had been wonderfull for my age, and I had shortly surpassed my Masters. In my Mind, every Virtue that could adorn it was centered; it was the Rendez-vous of every good Quality and of every noble sentiment. (296)

The only weakness which the protagonist readily acknowledges is a ‘sensibility too tremblingly alive to every affliction of [her] Freinds, [her] Acquaintance and particularly to every affliction of [her] own’ (296). Not surprisingly, Laura’s behaviour bears out only the disguised self-pity. The claim of her being sympathetic is shattered altogether. When referring to the death of her parents, she seems barely concerned with the event: ‘To account for the seeming forgetfullness, I must inform you of a trifling circumstance concerning them which I have as yet never mentioned. The death of my parents a few weeks after my Departure, is the circumstance I allude to’ (308).

Laura’s misconceptions do not attach only to the view of her self. In the same way, the internalization of literary conventions affects her evaluation of individuals, limited by the tendency to identify them with stock characters recurring in sentimental fiction. Such simplifications always result in nonsensical assumptions, one of which is the following:

She was a Widow and had only one Daughter, who was then just seventeen – One of the best of ages; but alas! she was very plain and her name was Bridget. . . Nothing therefore could be expected from her – she could not be supposed to possess either exalted Ideas, Delicate Feelings or refined Sensibilities. (320)

It follows that Laura tends to associate physical beauty with the mental qualities that she so much glorifies. For her, an uncommon first name is a proof of an individual's merits.

Similarly, Laura's partiality determines her judgment on individual deeds and actions. Whether an action is good or evil follows from what character type its agent represents in her mind. On the one hand, Laura condescendingly maintains that a character whom she views as a devoted lover, 'gracefully purloined Money from his unworthy father's escritoire' (306). On the other hand, the same kind of prejudice attends Laura's unwillingness to grant her father-in-law the 'smallest atom of sensibility' (325), for she identifies him with the stock character of cruel parent preventing his child's happiness.

In 'Love and Freindship', Austen employs the narrator whose efforts to imitate the literary model result in direct contradictions to it. Without mocking the qualities attributed to the popular character type, Austen's burlesque pinpoints the falsehood and corruption hidden behind the pretences of an un-sentimental protagonist.

1.2 'Lesley Castle'

In 'Lesley Castle,' Austen draws a portrait of two sisters whose personalities display a dichotomy with respect to sensibility. The character of extremely practical and emotionally restrained Charlotte Lutterell is contrasted with the impassioned Eloisa. The incongruity between the two sisters emerges conspicuously against the background of a family tragedy – the death of the latter's fiancé shortly before the wedding. It has been suggested that the choice of the Lutterell sisters' names was motivated by the objective of creating allusions to characters from two well-known sentimental novels, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) and Johann Wolfgang Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774).⁶²

There is a marked difference in the treatment of Charlotte's pragmatism, as it sometimes achieves a comic effect through exaggeration, and Eloisa's sensibility, free of such undertones. 'Lesley Castle' bears a degree of similarity to

⁶² Margaret Anne Doody, 'The Short Fiction,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, ed. Edward Copeland, and Juliet McMaster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 94.

Austen's first published novel, *Sense and Sensibility*.⁶³ Whereas the novel does justice to both of the eponymous qualities, the part of the Juvenilia favours sensibility, ridiculing the character deficient in this quality.

While Eloisa's anguish voices in a nervous breakdown, the strongest emotion that Charlotte experiences is the regret about the wasted time she had spent preparing the lush wedding dinner. She relates her disappointment in a letter to one of her friends:

And now what provokes me more than anything else is that the Match is broke off, and all my Labour thrown away. Imagine how great the Disappointment must be to me, when you consider that after having laboured both by Night and by Day, in order to get the Wedding dinner ready by the time appointed, after having roasted Beef, Broiled Mutton and Stewed Soup enough to last the new-married couple through the Honey-moon, I had the mortification of finding that I had been Roasting, Broiling and Stewing both the Meat and Myself to no purpose. (332)

Critics have detected a lack of uniformity as regards Charlotte, residing in a 'discrepancy between burlesque and realism.'⁶⁴ One may observe that despite the character's occasional verging on caricature, Charlotte serves as a focalizer whose perceptions constitute an eloquent picture of Eloisa's affliction. The instability of the character was attributed to the young author's mismanagement of the epistolary form.⁶⁵

By contrast, Eloisa seems to possess qualities qualifying her for the status of woman of feeling. Charlotte's observation of her sister reveals a young woman preoccupied with the workings of her heart, perhaps vehemently constant in her mourning for the dead lover. Eloisa deems any relief from her grief impossible and even unbecoming for her present situation. '[...] in me Mirth would be improper and I know my own Heart too well not to be sensible that it would be unnatural,' she states in a letter to her confidante (325). Eloisa's attitude to suffering prefigures Marianne Dashwood's in *Sense and Sensibility*.

⁶³ Ros Ballaster, 'Introduction' to *Sense and Sensibility*, by Jane Austen (London: Penguin Books, 2003), xvi.

⁶⁴ Southam, *Manuscripts*, 32.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

The dichotomy between the two sisters is expanded further; it pertains to the domain of their pastime activities and behaviour. Whereas Charlotte's emotional reservedness is associated with the practical hobbies of housekeeping and cooking, Eloisa, a woman of sensibility, takes an avid interest in a more sophisticated form of entertainment – music. Similarly, Charlotte hardly ever gives way to her emotions in the public, while Eloisa is not able to restrain herself from expressing them.

To summarize, in 'Lesley Castle', Austen juxtaposes a character embodying pragmatism with its emotional counterpart. Their treatment is marked by a disparity deriving from a satirical approach to the former.

1.3 'Evelyn'

One of Austen's mature Juvenilia articulates a response to the notion of sentimental hero, epitomized by Henry Mackenzie's Harley. The critic Jocelyn Harris has also marked a considerable influence of Samuel Richardson's epistolary novel *Sir Charles Grandison*.⁶⁶ Whereas Harley and other men of feeling evinced a high capacity for sympathy and 'avoided manly power and assumed the womanly qualities of tenderness and susceptibility,'⁶⁷ Frederick Gower, the protagonist of 'Evelyn', is in some respects an antithesis to the above presented, for he possesses the opposite qualities of emotional flatness and indifference. The relationship with the popular character type of sentimental fiction emerges, above all, from Frederick's interaction with the inhabitants of the village of Evelyn, whose ways are marked by an excessive benevolence and generosity, the pivots of the character type. As elsewhere, Austen caricatures both the lack of sensibility, and its excess.

One may mark a degree of inconsistency concerning the portrayal of the protagonist. Frederick Gower's initial reaction to the harmonious atmosphere of Evelyn reminds the reader of Harley's excessive emotional responsiveness. Frederick experiences an 'agonizing pain of doubt and suspense' (405) when asking about the possibility of obtaining an accommodation in the village. The feeling described is felt as inadequate to the trivial occasion that provoked it. So is

⁶⁶ Jocelyn Harris, *Jane Austen's Art of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 228.

⁶⁷ Todd, *Sensibility*, 89.

Frederick's exorbitant expression of gratitude for an interlocutor's attempt at helping him:

“Amiable Woman! (said Mr Gower, affected almost to tears [...]) This Greatness of mind in one to whom I am almost a Stranger, serves but to make me the more warmly wish for a house in this sweet village – . What would I not give to be your Neighbour, to be blessed with your Acquaintance, and with the farther knowledge of your virtues! Oh! With what pleasure would I form myself by such an example! Tell me then, the best of Women, is there no possibility? – I cannot speak – You know my meaning--.” (406)

The abstract demonstrates how masterly Austen burlesqued the common lofty style of sentimental novels. The inability to aptly express the intensity of one's emotions, which the protagonist refers to at the end of his speech, is, in particular, linked to the sentimental novels which feature male protagonists such as Harley.⁶⁸ The integration of this element proves Austen's erudition in the genre.

As the story progresses, however, there arises a discrepancy between Frederick's effusions and his subsequent prosaic responses to a series of moving situations, which were, according to the sentimental ethos, likely to affect a man of true sensibility. While Frederick eventually loses ground in this respect, it seems that the inhabitants of Evelyn more than justify the narrator's claim that 'benevolence [...] characterizes [them]' (405). At least, the Webbs comply with the model.

As soon as Frederick appears at the door, the Webbs are eager to give him, a perfect stranger, their fortune:

“Accept this my good Sir – . Beleive me you are welcome to everything that is in my power to bestow. – I wish my purse were weightier, but Mr. Webb must make up my deficiencies –. I know he has cash in the house to the amount of a hundred pounds, which he shall bring to you immediately.” (407)

⁶⁸ Mullan, 'Novels,' 241.

Not only does Frederick comply with Mrs. Webb's request of accepting the money, he asks her husband without hesitation to give him their house and the elder daughter with a large dowry. It is perhaps needless to point out that both of the wishes are instantly granted.

Frederick becomes a passive recipient of the Webbs' excessive generosity, accepting it without reluctance. His conduct reveals a desire for material comfort and possession for himself. Whereas the sentimental novel presented characters with a strong penchant for philanthropy and altruism, Austen's protagonist tries, in the first place, to secure his own profit.

Frederick's dissimilarity with the sentimental ideal is further illustrated in his inability to experience strong emotions, which one may infer from the easy recuperation from the death of his first wife. When the woman with whom he has lived happily dies of grief caused by his absence, Frederick's equilibrium is restored as soon as he leaves Evelyn, for the family find him 'in high health and spirits, after a delightful journey of 3 days & a 1/2' (415). In space of a few days, his well-being enables him to enter into a new marriage and achieve the same contentment he has drawn from the previous alliance. In a letter to the Webbs, Frederick expresses his satisfaction with the new life: 'I see you now in an agony of grief lamenting not your own, but my loss – Rest satisfied I am happy, possessed of my lovely Sarah what more can I wish for?' (416). For a male protagonist of the sentimental novel, such a sequence of events would be hardly imaginable.

The protagonist of 'Evelyn' voices Austen's reaction to the concept of man of feeling. Frederick Gower emerges as an antithesis of the character type, for his pragmatism and shallowness permeate through the narrator's sentimental rhetoric. These qualities become even more conspicuous when compared with the excessive generosity and servility of the Webbs.

2. Suffering

Suffering is an important element of any sentimental novel. Austen's Juvenilia group varied responses to this theme. They feature a character who feigns suffering in order to assert her susceptibility, a character who suffers truly, and a

character virtually unable to experience it. A character's predisposition to suffering derives from his or her relation to the sentimental archetypes.

2.1 'Love and Freindship'

The theme of suffering does recur in 'Love and Freindship.' The narrator, Laura, attempts to present the events concerning suffering in such a way as to assimilate herself to the woman of feeling. She does so by appropriating the position of a victim. The self-victimization is constructed upon assertions of blamelessness, frequent references to her sensibility, and an accentuation of her own afflictions. The manner Austen dealt with suffering in 'Love and Freindship' is parallel to one of the functions of this element in sentimental novels. Whereas suffering attested the susceptibility of the afflicted or of the observer of suffering, its apparent falsity here disproves Laura's.

Since the arrest of Augustus and her husband's subsequent departure, Laura and her friend Sophia are subjected to a series of distressing events, to which they tend to respond with out-of-place fainting fits. Laura emphatically claims that none of the grievous situations had been caused by a misstep on her part. Not surprisingly, the assertions of irreproachable conduct and spotless virtue are destabilized by Laura's transgressions. The protagonist's behaviour evinces a tendency to steal, and disregard of social norms, perhaps best exemplified by the hasty marriage with Edward Lindsay, which was conducted by her father 'who thou' he had never taken orders had been bred to the Church' (300). Similar ludicrous instances eventually debunk Laura's claims of virtue.

The mendacious nature of Laura's sensibility 'too tremblingly alive' makes itself felt in the scene imitative of those exposing the suffering of a woman of feeling. Originally, they were to elicit compassion, and simultaneously produce an educative effect on tearful witnesses and readers. In the thirteenth letter to Marianne, Laura relates the last encounter with her husband and Sophia's husband Augustus, both of whom are seriously injured following a travelling accident and subsequently succumb to their wounds. Here, Laura is both a witness and experiencer of suffering – she watches her dying friends, and the agonized, continually fainting Sophia, while being placed in the same situation.

Laura's rendition of these roles fails to comply with the sentimental pattern. The protagonist does not experience an adequate feeling of compassion

for Sophia's distress, because she is wholly absorbed in playing out outbursts of anguish. To compensate for the absence of a fellow soul who would shed tears over her misery, she furnishes the role of the sympathetic observer on her own: 'My Voice faltered, My Eyes assumed a vacant stare, my face became as pale as Death, and my Senses were considerably impaired' (319). This description corresponds to one that a character of possessing sensibility may supply in response to other's sorrow.

Authors of sentimental novels have not always granted a happy fate to the heroine, on the contrary, there might be even a preference for a tragic ending in order to enhance the moralist appeal of the fiction.⁶⁹ Laura, apparently aware of the tendency, offers an explanation for her survival that she finds in contradiction to the sentimental paradigm:

[H]ow could it be otherwise accounted for that I should have escaped the same indisposition, but by supposing that the bodily Exertions I had undergone in my repeated fits of frenzy had so effectually circulated and warmed my Blood as to make me proof against the chilling Damps of Night, whereas, Sophia lying totally inactive on the Ground must have been exposed to all their severity. (321)

In other words, Laura attributes her survival and Sophia's decease to the consequences of their physical responses generated by suffering. At the same time, she derives a moral lesson from the distinction, as she advertised at the beginning of her narrative by reporting Sophia's last words:

"Beware of fainting-fits... Though at the time they may be refreshing and agreeable yet believe me they will in the end, if too often repeated and at improper seasons, prove destructive to your Constitution... My fate will teach you this... I die a Martyr to my grief for the loss of Augustus... One fatal swoon has cost me my Life... Beware of swoons Dear Laura... A frenzy fit is not one quarter too pernicious; it is an exercise to the Body and if not too violent, is I dare say conducive to Health in its consequences – Run mad as often as you chuse, but do not faint –" (324)

⁶⁹ Todd, *Sensibility*, 113.

By attempting to supply a moral lesson for her reader, Laura satisfies another of the necessary conventions of the sentimental fiction, the one, which, as she claimed in her first letter, was the major purpose of her correspondence.

In conclusion, suffering is an element that largely contributes to the disintegration of Laura's sentimental identity. Her experience of suffering sharply contradicts the model responses found in the fiction of sensibility. In this way, the discrepancy between Laura and the woman of sensibility with respect to suffering provides evidence refuting all her self-centered claims.

2.2 'Lesley Castle'

In this story, the treatment of suffering is marked by a dichotomy emerging from the opposition between the male and the female. Austen presents the female suffering as long-lasting, while the male form has, in comparison, a rather unstable character. The way Austen dealt with suffering in 'Lesley Castle,' reflects sentimentalists' endorsement of the gender stereotype lauding the meek, virtuous and faithful woman.⁷⁰

Suffering is the crucial element that establishes Eloisa as a sentimental heroine. Charlotte's reports concerning the younger sister mostly focus on her emotional deprivation and physical decline after the death of her fiancé. Despite the care of the whole family, Eloisa remains submerged in her grief, renouncing the possibility of a future restoration of happiness.

The male character to whom suffering is directly related is Mr. Lesley. In her letters to Charlotte, Margaret Lesley dwells on her brother's unhappy proceedings following the marital break-up. Interestingly, the Lesleys' separation seems to be in certain respects an ironic variation on the faithful suffering wife theme,⁷¹ with the inverted roles of an afflicted husband and an adulterous wife. A meek, submissive wife tolerating her spouse's infidelity later epitomized the self-sacrificing maternity.⁷² Clearly, Louisa Lesley, who left behind her and Lesley's daughter, is an antithesis to the presented character type. She becomes the subject of the Lesley sisters' indignation, for she 'so wantonly disgraced the Maternal

⁷⁰ Ibid., 110.

⁷¹ Ibid., 111.

⁷² Ibid., 112.

character and so openly violated the conjugal duties' (330). It is Mr. Lesley who earns their compassion and pity. 'Never was there a better young Man! Ah! How little did he deserve the misfortunes he has experienced in the Marriage state. So good a husband and so bad a Wife!' (330) the sisters lament.

Certain parallels emerge from the comparison between Lesley and Eloisa's situations. Both of them face the loss of a beloved person, extinguishing, at least for a while, their prospects of a future happiness. In addition, similarities can be found in their efforts invested in escaping from the painful situation, as both Eloisa and Lesley leave the place connected with the affecting events in attempt to come to terms with the blows. Despite the initial likeness, the affinity between Lesley and Eloisa is distorted by the time Margaret tells of the change of environment bringing the overall reversal of her brother's state:

My Brother is already in Paris. He intends to quit it in a few Days, and to begin his route to Italy. He writes in a most chearfull manner, says that the air of France has greatly recovered both his Health and Spirits; and he has now entirely ceased to think of Louisa with any degree either of Pity or Affection, that he even feels himself obliged to her for her Elopement, and he thinks it very good fun to be single again. (336)

The last letter from Margaret announces Lesley's eventual reconciliation with the former spouse, and a new marriage to a rich Italian aristocrat. Eloisa, on the contrary, remains indifferent to her recuperative surroundings: 'Poor girl! She still laments his death with undiminished constancy, notwithstanding he has been dead more than six weeks,' comments Charlotte (351). Regardless of the change of place and the flow of time, the psychical distress lasts, impacting Eloisa's health.

I believe that the treatment of the male and female suffering in 'Lesley Castle', in some way prefigures Austen's preoccupation with the constancy in love, which she elaborated at the end of her writing career in *Persuasion*. In a conversation with Captain Wentworth, Anne Elliot argues for a greater constancy embedded in the women nature, as opposed to men's.

“I believe you equal to every important exertion, and to every domestic forbearance, so long as [...] you have an object. [...] while the woman you love lives, and lives for you. All the privilege I claim for my own sex [...] is that of loving longest, when existence or hope is gone.”⁷³

Even though the protagonist’s belief may not be applicable for Captain Wentworth, it bears much relevance to Eloisa and Mr. Lesley in ‘Lesley Castle’. Deprived of an object of love, Lesley goes on living his life, while Eloisa lingers with the memories.

To conclude, the way Austen made Eloisa and Lesley deal with their painful experience articulates a response to fiction stereotypes as reflections of gender stereotypes. She complies with the notion of an earnestly suffering woman by leaving Eloisa desolate, and simultaneously dismisses Lesley’s suffering as an equal parallel to Eloisa’s. In other words, Eloisa is the one to suffer because she fulfils the role of the woman of sensibility. Lesley’s recuperation, on the contrary, is secured partly by his independence of literary models, and partly by his masculinity.

2.3 ‘Evelyn’

In parallel to the previous stories, Austen proves her understanding of the sentimentalists’ tendency to employ suffering as a means to distinguish the characters of sensibility from those deficient therein. Frederick and his sister Rose are contrasted in terms of suffering with Frederick’s first wife Maria Webb. The latter, who represents sensibility, suffers to death for a trifling cause, while the Gower siblings go through more distressful situations without being impacted by them. The way Austen dealt with suffering in ‘Evelyn’ undermines the glorification of susceptibility articulated by the sentimentalists.

With her submissiveness, respect of her parents and an equally strong devotion to her husband, Maria epitomizes the picture of womanhood cherished in the past decades. The power of her suffering attests the greatness of her inert susceptibility, which, however, does not receive the deserved attention. While the sentimental novelists tended to depict suffering witnessed by an affected observer, Austen’s narrator limits to the brief information that the ‘beloved Maria had been

⁷³ Jane Austen, *Persuasion* (1817; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 189.

so much grieved at his departure that she died of a broken heart about 3 hours after his [Frederick's] departure' (414–15). The deliberately laconic treatment of Maria's suffering and death deprives the events of all impressiveness. Consequently, the death fails to comply with the common tendency to stir the reader's emotions by relating the reactions of a sentimental witness.

In contrast, the actuality of Frederick and Rose's suffering can be easily disproved. Frederick's inability to experience strong emotions has been already commented on. Until the ending of the story is reached, Rose seems to have succumbed to her grief for the dead lover, in which she resembles the delicate heroines of sentimental novels. However, the attention that her alleged distress elicits proves to be undeserved. Eventually, when it is revealed that the news of her death is a lie invented by herself, Rose turns out to be a superficial manipulator. The burlesque nature of the tale has it that it is she and her equally mediocre brother who achieve happiness and prosperity.

In 'Evelyn,' Austen formulates a negative reaction to the sentimentalists' preference for pathetic portrayals of distress resulting in the death of the susceptible sufferer. In this view, Maria's death can be regarded as devoid of value for not being witnessed and adequately pitied.

3. Bodily Responses

Sentimentalists endowed body with the ability to express emotions. In her *Juvenilia*, Austen's drew a close affinity between a character's status with respect to sensibility, and the value of his or her bodily responses. In this way, Laura's falsity pertains to what she presents as somatic expression of anguish; Eloisa's suffering is, in contrast, faithfully echoed by her body. Frederick's emotional emptiness is stressed by an integration of bodily elements not connected with laudable feelings at all.

3.1 'Love and Freindship'

In 'Love and Freindship' and elsewhere in her *Juvenilia*, bodily responses give the impression of artificiality and exaggeration, which result in a depreciation of the emotions that the narrator proposes for their sources.

For the protagonist and her friend Sophia, the ‘fainting on the sofa’ is a usual reaction to even the slightest emotional stirs, both pleasant and disagreeable, which the two experience or pretend to experience. For illustration, Laura and Sophia faint out of when watching their husbands’ exorbitant protestations of friendship. At the end of the 8th letter, Laura comments:

Never did I see such an affecting Scene as was the meeting of Edward and Augustus. ‘My Life! my Soul!’ (exclaimed the former) ‘My Adorable Angel!’ (replied the latter) as they flew into each other’s arms. It was too pathetic for the feelings of Sophia and myself – We fainted alternately on a sofa. (304–5)

In addition to illustrating the exaggeration which underlies Laura and Sophia’s fainting, the extract demonstrates the imitative lofty tone that pertains the narrative.

Apart from their high frequency, bodily responses in ‘Love and Freindship’ are marked by the lack of spontaneity, which places them at odds with the ethos of Sentimentalism. Instead of being truthful echoes of their emotional charge, Laura and Sophia’s bodies seem to be kept under control. When being deprived of a shelter, Laura comments on her and Sophia’s swoon in the following way: ‘Ah! What could we do but what we did! We sighed and fainted on the sofa’ (307). Laura considers fainting an appropriate feminine reaction to any upsetting event. Her attitude reflects the conventional views on female weakness accepted in the sentimental novels, as well as the lack of autonomy entailed in the status of women in Austen’s lifetime. In fact, Laura and Sophia can do little more than faint to avoid poverty, when not protected by their husbands and parents.

By contesting the arbitrary nature of the protagonist’s bodily responses to distress, Austen disproves the sincerity of her emotions, as well as the actuality of her being a woman of sensibility. Simultaneously, she presents the motifs of bodily responses as not necessarily reflective of emotions.

3.2 'Lesley Castle'

Charlotte's reports of Eloisa's suffering are marked by the concentration on the latter's body as an eloquent medium expressive of her inner struggles and tensions. The tendency to let speak the body draws directly from the methods of sentimental novelists. Contrary to the preceding story, the protagonist's body faithfully mirrors her inner life. The passages in which Charlotte directly treats Eloisa's physical state map distinct stages of her distress.

The first stage, a prelude to the mourning, is the shock received upon hearing of Hervey's accident. Charlotte proves to be an attentive observer, as her account of Eloisa's depicts much detail. The description of Eloisa's reaction is not limited to a single swoon; instead, the reaction is seen as a process gradually intensifying from a mere paleness in her face, to the swoon and the subsequent 'most dreadful convulsions'.

[...] my sister came running to me in the store-room with her face as White as a Whipt syllabub and told me that Hervey had been thrown from his Horse, had fractured his Scull and was pronounced by his surgeon to be in the most eminent Danger. [...] Here I was interrupted, by seeing my poor Sister fall down to appearance lifeless [...] we laid her upon the Bed, and she continued for some Hours in the most dreadful Convulsions. (332–33)

After Hervey's death, Eloisa's tension culminates in a nervous breakdown, the second stage of her grieving for the lover. Charlotte relates: '[...] her sufferings on hearing it [the news of his death] were too violent for her reason, and she continued for many hours in a high Delirium. She is still extremely ill and her Physicians are greatly afraid of her going into a decline' (334). To relieve the pain, the family resolves to move Eloisa away from the place bringing back the memories. However, their scheme fails to fulfil its purpose. Eloisa plunges into apathy, another phase of her emotional journey. Charlotte states that 'Poor Eloisa is still indifferent both in Health and Spirits, that I very much fear, the air of the Bristol downs, healthy as it is, has not been able to drive poor Henry from her remembrance' (339).

In her last report, Charlotte describes the static character of Eloisa's sorrow having a debilitating effect on her mind and a harmful impact on her health:

Poor Girl! She laments his death with undiminished constancy, notwithstanding he has been dead more than six weeks; but some people mind such things more than others. The ill state of Health into which his loss has thrown her makes her so weak, and so unable to support the least exertion, that she has been in tears all this Morning [...]. (351)

One may only presume which direction Eloisa's development would take, if Austen had managed to finish the tale. Even though her attitude to sensibility in 'Lesley Castle' proves to be in many aspects favourable, and her portrayal of Eloisa possesses characteristics of the woman of feeling, I believe that she was far from having Eloisa's body succumb to the damaging impact of her sorrow, as a sentimental writer may. I assume that after the stage of apathy, a stage of acceptance would follow and Eloisa would form a second attachment, as her successor Marianne Dashwood did.

To conclude, the presentation of Eloisa's suffering is rendered mainly by indications of her bodily responses, upon which the reader may construct the picture of Eloisa's emotional development, consisting of three phases: the shock, the breakdown, and the apathy. The author, failing to finish her tale, left the character of Eloisa at the point when she was faithfully mourning for her lover and declining in health.

3.3 'Evelyn'

In the realm of sentimental novels, swoons traditionally accompanied spasms of grief or exaltation, and tears were marks of sincere compassion. In this story, the body echoes feelings of mild surprise and fear. For the purposes of burlesque, Austen associated bodily responses to less noble or less intensive emotions than those cherished by the eighteenth-century sentimental novelists. Her application of the popular motif reinforces the discrepancy between the protagonist and the masculine perceptiveness of other people's suffering glorified by the sentimental novelists.

After hearing about his sister's death, Frederick experiences a fit of the gout, which can be scarcely considered to be in a direct relation with the event. Similarly, he faints before being told about his wife's decease. The swoon is caused by a triviality – the surprise at seeing his servants drinking tea together. Dismal, sympathy-eliciting events likely to initiate a physical response, to which Frederick's body rests indifferent, are juxtaposed with comparably less significant incidents accompanied by an inadequate body language. Consequently, the protagonist's dissimilarity with the sentimental ideal is accented.

Another occasion in which the author lets Frederick's body speak concerns a night journey, during which his cowardliness comes to the fore. Frederick experiences a 'universal tremor throughout his whole frame' when 'riding on horseback with 'no light to direct him but that of the Moon almost full, and the Stars which alarmed him by their twinkling' (414). The tremor echoes the fear experienced by the protagonist. It exemplifies the usage of body language as a device endowed with the eloquence expressive of one's emotions.

This instance can be contrasted with the one occurring in the passage concerning Frederick's return home, which his family have no reason to find surprising:

What was his surprise on entering the Breakfast parlour to see Rosa his beloved Rosa seated on a Sofa; at the sight of him she fainted and would have fallen had not a Gentleman sitting with his back to the door, started up, saved her from sinking to the ground [...]. (415)

Rose's swoon is felt as an inadequate reaction, considering the event which presumably triggered it. As elsewhere, Austen ridicules the bodily responses recurring in the sentimental fiction by exaggerating them, and simultaneously contests their validity as reliable indicators of one's emotions.

To conclude, bodily responses in 'Evelyn' are used to corroborate the antithesis arising from the comparison between the protagonist and the character type of man of feeling. Furthermore, Austen calls into question the legitimacy of the belief in the body as a faithful reflection of the spirit.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to discuss Jane Austen's *Juvenilia* as a reaction to the eighteenth-century sentimental novel. Theoretical Part was to characterize the genre, introduce the relevant social and historical background and briefly present the *Juvenilia*. The genre emerged from Sentimentalism, a cultural movement prominent in Britain and other European countries founded on the premises of the contemporary moral philosophy dealing, besides other things, with the notion of sensibility.

Apart from other possible classifications, the genre can be divided into two distinct branches. One of them concentrates on the suffering of a virtuous female protagonist, the other focuses on the way a susceptible and compassionate male protagonist reacted to the distress of others.

Pathetic situations displayed in the novels elicited tears, which were considered proper, as they were expressive of the reader's sympathy. The society cherished this fiction, for it was representative of the ideas and ideals in vogue. In addition, it was believed to have a power to morally elevate the readers. The emergence and the decline of the genre, are closely related to fashion. When the public mood towards sensibility and other promoted causes deteriorated, the sentimental novel lost its brilliant reputation, as well as its former appeal.

Apart from other genres popular in her lifetime, the sentimental novel was familiar to the young Jane Austen. Reading incited the future novelist to respond to the conventions upon which the genre was established. The group of her predominantly fragmentary stories, written in her adolescence, can be also considered a lively exercise of an aspiring novelist aiming to explore the strengths and limits of the techniques commonly employed by the writers whose work she was interested in. When reading the *Juvenilia*, one should not disregard the fact that they served as a form of family entertainment, not intended for publication. Neither were they subject to Austen's careful revisions with which she would attend the novels.

Analytical Part comprised three sections, each of which was dedicated to a specific element of the sentimental novel treated in the *Juvenilia*. Namely, I decided to explore the archetypal characters of this fiction – the man and the woman of sensibility, the theme of suffering, and the motifs of bodily responses,

for they can be qualified as defining characteristics of the genre. Three stories, which I considered suitable for the purpose, were analyzed with respect to the chosen elements.

Analytical Part dealt with the variety of Austen's response to the concerned elements. The protagonists of the chosen stories are rather schematic representations rendering the purpose of burlesque aiming at the archetypes of the sentimental novel. It is possible to generalize that the characters in the *Juvenilia* are either antitheses to the archetypes, or they possess an immoderate amount of their defining qualities. Through the characters, Austen created lively portraits of false sensibility, the lack of sensibility, as well as its excess.

One may notice that a character's disposition to sensibility is echoed in his or her bodily reactions. In this way, those who embody the false sensibility only imitate bodily responses as well as emotions. Those who are emotionally flat have mute bodies. In contrast, the latter's sensitive counterparts risk illness or death due to overpowering feelings. The preoccupation with this interconnection attests Austen's profound familiarity with the genre.

As I have shown in Analytical Part, Austen's reaction to the sentimental novel in the *Juvenilia* emerges in diverse forms. None of the stories I have discussed featured a character in whom the merits of sensibility would come to the fore. It probably owes much to the fact that integration of such a character would not comply with the burlesque nature of the stories. Nonetheless, its absence supports the view that Austen's disfavour is restricted to the surface of the genre – the recurring elements sometimes verging on the ridicule, which can be easily misused in such a way as to make the mediocre and the pretentious in man's nature seem good and praiseworthy. The core ideas of compassion, care for others, and susceptibility, which the genre was to express, is left untouched.

Resumé

Cílem této práce bylo zhodnotit vliv sentimentálního románu osmnáctého století na rané prózy Jane Austenové. Teoretická část práce měla nastínit základní rysy tohoto žánru, přiblížit charakter doby, s níž byl spjat, a stručně charakterizovat autorčina raná díla.

Sentimentální román vzešel ze sentimentalizmu, směru, jehož filozofickými východisky byly teorie hraběte ze Shaftesbury a jeho následovníků. S centrálními koncepcemi těchto filozofů, jako byly mravní cit, víra v jedinci vrozené dobro a glorifikace soucitu, se společnost poměrně rychle ztotožnila.

Žánr lze klasifikovat do dvou samostatných větví, z nichž jedna se soustředila na utrpení a nezasloužená příkoří ctnostné ženy, zatímco klíčovým tématem druhé větve byly reakce citlivého a soucitného jedince na nesnáze druhých. Za nejvýznamnějšího představitele první linie žánru je považován Samuel Richardson, jehož díla v době svého vzniku dosáhla nesmírné popularity jak z řad čtenářů, tak z řad profesionálních spisovatelů, kteří se je pokoušeli napodobit. Nejznámějším autorem druhého typu románů je pravděpodobně skotský prozaik Henry Mackenzie, autor tehdy velmi úspěšného románu *The Man of Feeling*.

Vznik a vývoj žánru jsou úzce propojeny s dobou, jejíž ideály v něm našly plnou odezvu. Utrpení hrdinek, či reakce soucitného svědka utrpení, měly ve čtenářích vyvolat soucit a docílit u nich mravního povznesení. Ti čtenáři, kteří si byli vědomi dobových trendů, sentimentální romány vyhledávali s vírou v mravní poučení, ale i s touhou získat pověst soucitného jedince. Patetické zápletky dávaly čtenáři příležitost vyjádřit hloubku svého soucitu s trpící postavou a tím mu umožňovaly přesvědčit společnost o jeho morální hodnotě. Pláč nad neštěstím postavy byl ve vyšších společenských kruzích určitou dobu poměrně častým jevem, jak dokládá dochovaná korespondence.

Poté, co se přízeň společnosti začala od dříve prosazovaných vzorů odvracet, opadl i zájem o sentimentální román. Žánru jako takovému byla vlastní řada stereotypů a konvencí, které se později stávaly terčem kritiky. Rovněž se postupem času začalo pochybovat o mravní prospěšnosti této literatury, která byla důležitým faktorem přispívajícím k její popularitě. Odpůrci žánru poukazovali

mimo jiné na riziko, že se mladé čtenářky pokusí napodobit trpící a slabé hrdinky, čímž by mohly dát v sázku svou pověst nebo zdraví.

Ačkoliv by se mohlo zdát, že žánr byl, alespoň v kontextu britské literatury, pouze přechodným jevem, který neměl větší dopad na příští generace prozaiků, jeho význam ve skutečnosti zdaleka není zanedbatelný. Žánr přispěl k vývoji románové tvorby jako takové. Nelze opomenout ani jeho roli ve vývoji gotického románu. V neposlední řadě je jeho význam patrný i v tvorbě individuálních autorů, jejichž díla prošla zkouškou času. Jednou z nich je Jane Austenová.

Austenová byla se sentimentálními romány velmi dobře seznámena, jak dokládá její korespondence i četné aluze objevující se v jejích dílech. Podle odborníků bylo dokonce dílo *Sir Charles Grandison*, epistolární román Samuela Richardsona, jednou z knih, které si oblíbila. Právě četba dodala dospívající Austenové impulz započít vlastní tvorbu. Nejvýrazněji se tento vliv projevuje v prvotínách, které se od románů, jež vznikly v následujících desetiletích, značně liší.

Prvotiny, psané v době autorčina dospívání, byly určeny k pobavení rodiny a blízkých. Ambicióznější z nich mohou být považovány za stylistická cvičení budoucí autorky, nikoliv však za díla původně určená k vydání. Dochovaly se ve třech svazcích, do nichž byly přepsány buď samotnou autorkou, nebo někým z její rodiny.

První svazek obsahuje jednu báseň, dvě hry a dvanáct krátkých, v několika případech nedokončených próz, jejichž názvy jsou většinou odvozeny od jmen postav. Druhý svazek, sestávající z pěti próz, obsahuje pravděpodobně nejzdařilejší prvotiny Austenové. Ve třetím svazku jsou dvě delší prózy, které již svědčí o autorčiných výraznějších literárních ambicích.

Teoretickou část práce završuje stručný komentář tří próz vybraných k analýze v následujících kapitolách. Analytická část práce sestává ze tří podkapitol, z nichž každá je zaměřena na jeden ze tří vybraných prvků sentimentálního románu a jeho zpracování v raných dílech Austenové. Předmětem analýzy byli typičtí protagonisté, téma utrpení a motiv těla jakožto prostředku k vyjádření emocí. Všechny tyto prvky se postupem času staly důležitými součástmi žánru. Jak již bylo zmíněno, vybrané prózy lze kvalifikovat jako burlesky poukazující na konvenční prvky sentimentálního románu. Protagonisté prvotin Austenové mají

daleko k bezchybnosti hrdinů a hrdinek, kteří k žánru patřili. Jejich tělesné projevy se nedají přisoudit citovým pohnutím, protože je před trápením, které by je mohlo vyvolat, chrání vlastní povrchnost. Některé z vedlejších postav jsou jejich pravým opakem. Na rozdíl od přízemních protějšků je však nečeká dobrý konec. Nejenže jejich citovost zůstává nedoceněna, mnohdy vyúsťuje v nemoc nebo dokonce v předčasnou smrt. Lze tedy konstatovat, že Austenová reagovala na archetypální postavy sentimentálního románu protichůdnými způsoby. Postavy jejích raných próz s nimi jsou buď v přímém kontrastu, nebo trpí vyhocenou formou vlastností, které jsou pro muže a ženu citu typické.

Příslušnost postavy k jednomu ze dvou typů předurčuje její náchylnost k psychickému a fyzickému strádání. Zatímco protipóly archetypů sentimentalismu jsou imunní vůči utrpení a jejich fyzické reakce jsou vyvolávány jinými než emočními podněty, druhý typ postav se projevuje jako nadměru přecitlivělý. Provázanost povahového typu postavy s jejími psychickými a fyzickými reakcemi dokazuje, že Austenová byla jako čtenář velice vnímavá a uvědomovala si její funkci v sentimentální literatuře.

Rané prózy Jane Austenové jsou reakcí na soudobou literární tvorbu. Kritika autorky se omezuje na stereotypní prvky sentimentálního románu, poukazuje zejména na zneužitelnost sentimentální rétoriky k zakrytí negativních vlastností jedince nebo jevů ve společnosti, přičemž myšlenkové jádro sentimentalizmu, v jehož duchu byl žánr vytvářen, ponechává nedotčeno.

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Abbreviations Used

f fiction

ibid ibidem

p poem

pl play

VF *Volume the First*

VS *Volume the Second*

VT *Volume the Third*

Annotation/Anotace**Author's Name/Jméno autora:** Linda Krausová**Department/Katedra:** Department of English and American Studies/Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**Title of the bachelor thesis/Název bakalářské práce:** The Influence of the Eighteenth-Century Sentimental Novel on Jane Austen's Juvenilia/Vliv sentimentálního románu osmnáctého století na rané prózy Jane Austenové**Supervisor/Vedoucí práce:** Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D.**Number of Pages/Počet stran:** 47**Number of Words/Počet slov:** 13 708**Number of Characters (without spaces)/Počet znaků (bez mezer):** 75 028**Number of Literary Sources/Počet titulů použité literatury:** 27**Number of Internet Sites Consulted/Počet použitých internetových stránek:** 0**Number of Appendices/Počet příloh:** 0**Key Words/Klíčová slova:** British literature, eighteenth century, Jane Austen, juvenilia, Sentimentalism, sentimental novel/britská literatura, osmnácté století, Jane Austen, juvenilie, sentimentalismus, sentimentální román**Abstract/Abstrakt:**

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to explore Jane Austen's Juvenilia as a critical response to the prevailing late 18th century literary trend, Sentimentalism as reflected in the genre of sentimental novel. The thesis is to provide a brief characteristics of this fiction *per se*, its impact on the cultural milieu and inherent criticism that is embedded in Sentimentalism itself. The body of my thesis is to explore Jane Austen's ambivalent approach to Sentimentalism as it manifests itself in her early fiction.

Cílem této bakalářské práce je zhodnotit prvotiny Jane Austenové jakožto reakci na sentimentální román osmnáctého století. První část práce nastiňuje povahu tohoto žánru a jeho dopad na kulturní prostředí. Ústřední část práce má za cíl prozkoumat přístup Austenové k sentimentalismu a to, jak se projevuje v jejích raných prózách.