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A Comparative Analysis of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South*

bakalářská práce

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Prohlášení

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Abstract

The aim of my bachelor's thesis is to compare Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South*. Since the books are extensive and the number of possible differences and similarities is limitless, I will focus specifically on the relationship between the main female character and the main male character. In my bachelor's thesis, I will therefore examine the key moments in the relationship between the main characters and then the characters that influenced the heroine's behavior or had a great impact on the progress of the plot. The focus of my research is the exploration of differences and similarities in selected moments and characters. In addition, I will provide background information with historical facts and information regarding the Regency and Victorian society.

Introduction

My work will analyze two books. The first is *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, and the second is *North and South* by Emily Gaskell. Both books fall into the romance genre and are considered very successful. It also comes from famous periods when both the Regency period and the Victorian era are highly promoted and the popular subject of many other books and films. Both books have a lot in common and also contain differences. The main focus of work will be to find and highlight these moments.

The aim of the thesis is to select and analyze the main moments that describe the origin and progress of the relationship of the main female protagonists, as well as the characters that greatly influence their relationship or personality development. Then compare the development and characters.

The first part focuses on the book *Pride and Prejudice*, which was written by Jane Austen who is according to F. R. Leavis (1948) known as one of the four “*great English novelists*”. In this section, the parts are highlighted that greatly indicate the course of the relationship between the main female character and the main male character. Another section is also dedicated to highlighting the characters that influenced the development of the main female protagonist and had an impact on her behavior.

The second part of the book deals with the book *North and South* written by Elizabeth Gaskell in 1854. In this part, the same procedure is followed, where the sections that were part of the development of the heroine and her relationship are highlighted. The characters that are highlighted in the second section are closely related to her behavior during the plot or are closely related to her changes. Both parts use secondary sources and examples from the book to explain the importance of the given parts and characters.

1 Jane Austen

Austen was born in 1775 and lived most of her life in rural England in Steveston, Hampshire. She was the seventh of eight children and she never got married. She wrote six novels, yet was only recognized for them *post mortem*. During her life, she published anonymously. Her books were well received but because of the time period, it was only after her death that her authorship was revealed. Some of her novels are known mostly thanks to many adaptations in film, television and theater (Tomalin, 2007).

We can say Jane Austen was a novelist whose works of romantic fiction, set very often in the countryside, earned her a place as one of the most widely read writers in English literature. It is popular and known for realism and biting social commentary that takes on its historical significance even among scholars and critics. She has written many novels which are admired for their humor, satire and insights into contemporary life and behavior of that time. In addition, her work was also a catalyst for the development of the novel genre. Austen's works criticize the sensitivities of the second half of the 18th century and are part of a transition to 19th-century realism (Lascelles, 1995) .

Moreover, her characters are often seen as representing wider societal problems and conflicts. Her novels not only explore women' dependence on marriage in early 19th-century British society but fully can be seen as criticizing the frivolity of the expectations of the society that surrounds it. One of the most common plots is exploring women's reliance on marriage to gain favorable social status and economic security (Tomalin.2007).

2 Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

This book was published in 1813. It is counted among the Regency novels as it was written in the Regency era which spanned the years 1811 to 1820. At this time, England was under the rule of George III. Also, the Napoleonic Wars were taking place and America had become independent from England. It was also a period in which the industrial labor migration took place (Newth, 1968). Thanks to these events, the world changed and moved forward, and so did society. Even so, this was a time when classes were still divided, and great emphasis was placed on finding a suitable groom and maintaining morality. It was a time when society valued proper behavior, customs and good manners. The book itself is therefore very much concerned with certain assumptions and prejudices that accompany this period as well as customs that are not followed nowadays.

Pride and Prejudice is set in early 19th-century England. It follows the story of the Bennett family, especially the five daughters: Elizabeth, Jane, Lydia, Mary, and Kitty. As they come of age, they must all find suitable husbands, while dealing with issues of class and propriety. The story follows Elizabeth as she struggles to understand her feelings and tries to make the right choice for her future. On her way she learns important lessons. Elizabeth is the second eldest of the Bennet sisters and favorite daughter of their father. She is mostly portrayed as a strong-willed, intelligent young woman who can think for herself and make her own decisions (Faye, 2002).

The main reason for her internal struggles is Mr. Darcy as he is the main male character. He is a very wealthy man who even despite a bad first impression develops feelings for her. Over the course of the book, the couple struggles with misunderstandings and situations that deepen their relationship, giving the book a major story aspect. They also gradually overcome their pride and prejudice and eventually fall in love.

2.1 Main plot analysis

In this section I will be dealing with the book *Pride and Prejudice*. First, I will describe the most important parts of the plot which helped to develop the relationship between main characters. The highlighted parts will then be included in the context of the social era.

2.1.1 First impression

An important turning point in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is the first encounter between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy at the Meryton assembly hall.

It establishes the framework for their complex and changing connection and emphasizes the idea of superficial appearances versus inner character. Since Elizabeth and Darcy are still strangers and have not yet gotten to know each other, their first exchange conveys a lot about their personalities and outlooks.

As soon as Mr. Darcy moves to the countryside at the beginning of the book, Elizabeth notices him immediately upon arrival, as he is new to the area. Mr. Darcy also gradually notices the characters found on the ball.

Though he acknowledges Elizabeth's beauty, he also tells his friend Bingley that she has a "tolerable" appearance and is not pretty enough for him to pay more attention to or as he says: "not handsome enough to tempt me." (Austen, 2008, p. 12).

Elizabeth is even less captivated with Darcy's social standing and attractiveness than he is with her appearance as she cares more about his character and behavior. For these reasons, during the ball, Elizabeth does not form a positive opinion and, on the contrary, feels humiliated in the scene when Mr. Darcy refuses to dance with her. This also motivates her to look at him with a prejudiced view, which she also shares with her friend Charlotte Lucas and her sister.

Elizabeth and Darcy later meet when Elizabeth visits Netherfield Park as her sister is lying ill there. During the visit, they engage in discussions in which Elizabeth shows her confidence and expresses her condemnation of Mr. Darcy's high demands and his views. Darcy, on the other hand, is at first disdainful and patronizing toward Elizabeth, but he also

exhibits a softness when he later admits to Bingley that he finds her acceptable despite her lower social standing.

Another couple from the book *Pride and Prejudice* is Elizabeth's older sister, Jane and Mr. Bingley. Mr. Bingley, unlike Mr. Darcy, is a very likeable and pleasant man who actively gets to know everyone. He also asks several girls to dance and is captivated by Jane's beauty right from the start. They engage in conversation throughout the evening and a positive bond is formed right from the start. We can say that this calm beginning is supposed to be the opposite of Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy's relationship in the book.

There are two reasons why we emphasize the first impression of the main characters. The first is that it is an important part of their relationship. And the second, that their opinions and understanding of each other are closely connected with society. Society is very important in Jane Austen's books and affects not only behavior but also the progress of the story.

In the Regency period, the upper class met at social events. It was, for example, a party or dinner or similar events. These events were also the place for many first meetings and of course they took place with given rules and behavior. We can also say that the ball was an ideal place for getting to know each other, because single boys and girls did not have many opportunities to spend time together. "Unrelated young men and women were not supposed to be left alone together in private." (Le Faye, 2002, p. 113).

Balls are closely connected with dancing which is seen as an obligation. A girl who is introduced to the society should have a broad knowledge of dance and be able to accept at the moment of invitation. A man, on the other hand, should challenge as many girls as possible and give them the opportunity to stand out. This is, of course, within the bounds of decency. However, dancing with someone twice is already a manifestation of interest, which we can also see in the enthusiastic statement of Mrs. Bennett:

"Oh! my dear Mr. Bennet, we have had a most delightful evening, a most excellent ball. I wish you had been there. Jane was so admired, nothing could be like it. Everybody said how well she looked; and Mr. Bingley thought her quite beautiful, and danced with her twice! Only think of that, my dear; he actually danced with her twice! and she was the only creature in the room that he asked a second time." (Austen, 2008, p. 12).

This scene is followed by a paragraph listing all the girls with whom Mr. Bingley danced. Here in the course of naming Mrs. Bennet declares that: "Then the two third he danced with Miss King, and the two fourth with Maria Lucas, and the two fifth with Jane again." (Austen, 2008, p.13)

This short paragraph shows us yet another custom in Regency society. First of all, the dance actually consists of a set of two dances. And also the usage of formal titles that took place in the company. Throughout the book, we can notice that Jane is not referred to by name but only is addressed as "Miss" with her surname, that is Miss Bennet. As in this paragraph where Miss King is named, this title is an expression of the status of the eldest daughter in the household. Thus, after Jane's marriage, the second eldest Miss Elizabeth Bennet would be addressed as Miss Bennet.

Addressing here is taken as a sign of respect, and addressing by name indicates closeness. For example, Mr. Darcey and Mr. Bingley address each other by name.

2.1.2 Arrival of Mr. Collins

Another important part of the book is the arrival of Mr. Collins, who is first introduced to us through a letter in chapter thirteen. Mr. Collins is a distant cousin of Mr. Bennet. In his letter, he introduces himself and expresses wishes for reconciliation and acceptance in the time spent with the Bennets. This ignores social decency by merely announcing arrival and length of stay without seeking permission. His occupation is clergyman which gives him a sense of importance; however, he doesn't bring any major themes of faith or problems with religion to the book.

His interactions with people make him seem pompous and conceited. He is a very proud character who strives to get to the forefront of others and to have a relationship with important people. He constantly emphasizes very strongly the relationship he has with Lady Catherine de Bourgh and the fact that she is his patron. In the course of a short week, he attends several meetings where he also meets Mr. Darcy and wants to get to know him. This interaction is an example of his improper behavior. This time Elizabeth herself warns him against introducing himself, and at same time, introduces one of the other customs in the society.

“Elizabeth tried hard to dissuade him from such a scheme, assuring him that Mr. Darcy would consider his addressing her without introduction as an impertinent freedom, rather than a compliment to her aunt; that it was not in the least necessary there should be any notice on either side; and that if it were, it must belong to Mr. Darcy, the superior in consequence, to begin the acquaintance.” (Austen, 2008, p.98)

Of course, Mr. Collins takes no notice and answers Elizabeth with self-confidence and absolute certainty that: "Pardon me for neglecting to profit by your advice, which on every other subject shall be my constant guide, though in the case before us I consider myself more fitted by education and habitual study to decide on what is right than a young lady like yourself." (Austen, 2008, p.98)

And although we see Darcy's detachment and wonder through Elizabeth's eyes, Mr. Collins subsequently informs us of his success and Mr. Darcy's satisfaction with his presentation of himself.

An important scene occurs when he asks Elizabeth for her hand in marriage. From the beginning of the scene in chapter nineteen when he asks for time alone with Elizabeth, it is clear to everyone that there will be a marriage proposal. Elizabeth is not as happy as her mother and we can see her resentment and her reluctance to even listen to his marriage proposal. Here Mr. Collins publicly gives his long speech in which he mentions one of the main reasons for his wedding and that Miss de Bourgh said: “Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry.” (Austen, 2008, p.106)

And even though it could be a financially stable marriage, she decides to reject it for lack of affection. On another hand Mr. Collins expresses his belief that she will change her mind. Again, he is convinced that everything will turn out as it should and Elizabeth will fall in love with him. However, everything is resolved in three days. This is because he asks Elizabeth's friend Charlotte Lucas to marry him, and his marriage proposal is accepted.

The character itself could serve as another male lead in the book. What is important, however, is the reason why he appears and why he initially wants to marry the daughter of Mr. Bennett. And that's because he's Mr. Bennet's heir. Thanks to his personality, this

serious situation seems less dramatic, but it still points us to the inheritance and property of this time.

According to Jamoussi (1999) in the Regency period it was normal to honor male primogeniture. This is a law that was established already in the Middle Ages with various modifications, which says that the oldest male child inherits a family title, property or position. It is the most common form of primogeniture, in which the first-born child of the same sex inherits a title, property, or position. This is also the reason why Mr. Bennet has to acknowledge the entailment and pass the property to a male heir. And because of the entailment that binds him to it, he cannot divide or sell the property. Mr. Bennet does not have a son and due to his advanced age, he is no longer expected to produce one. This would mean that in case of death, not even one daughter would inherit his property. The only heir is Mr. Collins as the closest male member in the family.

This law was mostly seen as protecting property and ensuring that it would not be divided into smaller pieces. The male member of the family would then take care of the female members and ensure the continuation of the line and the increase of wealth along the way. In the case of several sons, the eldest inherits and the youngest has several options to choose from. There is an opportunity to marry a rich bride and marry into a family. Furthermore, they could find their own career, which would mostly be as an officer in the army London lawyer as country lawyers were not respectable or go and become part of the clergy (Jamoussi, 1999, p.60).

2.1.3 Lidia's elopement with Mr. Wickham

Another man who appears on the scene is Mr. Wickham. Elizabeth is charmed by him and since Mr. Darcy is away for the winter, he is the man who spends the most time around the Benents. It is him who makes Elizabeth's opinion of Mr. Darcey even worse, and he is one of the reasons she gives when rejecting Mr. Darcey's proposal for her hand in marriage.

Later she learns of his true personality, his improper behavior and Wickham's efforts to get the money and thus the girl with the dowry. In the novella, Wickham represents the poor second son, and his efforts to marry well could be understood, but not his practices

and the lies he uses. Thanks to this discovery, however, Elizabeth sees Mr. Darcy in a better light and later goes to visit Mr. Darcy's Pemberley residence, where she meets Mr. Darcy and establishes a better acquaintance, all according to social norms. As in some others book, however, there is an event that threatens everything, and that is the elopement of Lidia with Mr. Wickham. Elizabeth is informed of this event through a letter from Jane. After finding out that her sister has run away from the house, Elizabeth is clearly shocked.

"On his quitting the room she sat down, unable to support herself, and looking so miserably ill, that it was impossible for Darcy to leave her, or to refrain from saying, in a tone of gentleness and commiseration, "Let me call your maid. Is there nothing you could take to give you present relief? A glass of wine; shall I get you one? You are very ill."(Austen, 2008, p.277)

After a moment Elizabeth explain what is happening and shows a strong trust towards Mr. Darcy:

"I have just had a letter from Jane, with such dreadful news. It cannot be concealed from anyone. My younger sister has left all her friends—has eloped; has thrown herself into the power of—of Mr. Wickham. They are gone off together from Brighton. You know him too well to doubt the rest. She has no money, no connections, nothing that can tempt him to—she is lost for ever." (Austen, 2008, p.278)

The seriousness of the situation is clear from Elizabeth's behavior. As already mentioned in the previous section, an unmarried woman and a man were not allowed to be together alone. In this case, the time they spent alone was several days and included a night without supervision or other company. That is reason enough for a completely ruined reputation. Reputation is, of course, something that was taken very seriously in the Regency period. Reputation was closely linked to honor and family. Lidia's act would therefore not only affect her but also the reputation of her sisters. They would be much less likely to marry because of others who would expect the same behavior from them. In that case, without a good marriage combined with a commitment to property, the family could sink into the lower class with no chance of a good future.

This is also the reason why everyone hopes that the marriage already took place. However, this is not confirmed and that only changed when they received a letter from Mr. Gardiner stating:

"I have seen them both. They are not married, nor can I find there was any intention of being so; but if you are willing to perform the engagements which I have ventured to make on your side, I hope it will not be long before they are. All that is required of you is, to assure to your daughter, by settlement, her equal share of the five thousand pounds secured among your children after the decease of yourself and my sister; and, moreover, to enter into an engagement of allowing her, during your life, one hundred pounds per annum." (Austen. 2008, p.303).

The family agrees as their reputation is on the line and the marriage is necessary. Several doubts are expressed here regarding the modesty of the requirements, which are, however, revealed in the following chapter. Here, Elizabeth learns that it was Mr. Darcy who helped to force Mr. Wickham to marry Lidia for an additional financial sum. However, he did it with the intention of keeping it to himself. This act again brings Elizabeth closer to Mr. Darcy and we can say that she feels not only gratitude but also affection for this man.

2.1.4 Engagement

Towards the end of the book, since it is a novel, the main couple Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth get engaged. This betrothal and the second marriage proposal from Mr. Darcy, takes place during a walk where they reflect on the past and their mistakes together. The couple here already feels a mutual affection that gradually developed, especially with the help of the secondary character Mr. Wickham. The later announcement in the Bennet household is received with surprise as Elizabeth has expressed an unkind opinion of Mr. Darcy throughout the first part of the book. Her change and her feelings clearly different from her previous self are seen when she tells her father:

"I do, I do like him," she replied, with tears in her eyes, "I love him. Indeed he has no improper pride. He is perfectly amiable . You do not know what he really is; then pray do not pain me by speaking of him in such terms." (Austen, 2008, p.377)

At this stage, in addition to Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy, Jane and Mr. Bingley are also engaged. Both unions are a joy for the Bennets, especially for the mother, as they are financially well-off engagements.

2.2 Analysis of characters

In this section, I will point out the important characters of the book *Pride and Prejudice*, which were not pointed out fully in the previous part and highlight their behavior.

The characters I will describe are the following. The female protagonist and her love interest, as well as the protagonist's parents and their behavior. And lastly Miss Bingley who acts as a link between the Bennets and the group around Mr. Darcy.

2.2.1. Elizabeth Bennet

Elizabeth is the main character. She is the second oldest daughter and is generally introduced to us as a sensible and intelligent girl. It is important to mention that the entire plot of the book takes place from her point of view and therefore we also receive information gradually and through her eyes. Overall, we can say that Elizabeth is very proud and has a rather free-thinking attitude for this time. As a character, she is mostly confident and her judgment of others seems logical and reasoned. However, she often gets carried away by personal feelings.

A prime example of her assessment that turns out to be wrong is the information about Mr. Darcy and Mr. George Wickham. Mr. Wickham seems to be a sympathetic young man right from the beginning and several times she describes him as pleasant. In conversation with her aunt Mrs. Gardiner, when they discuss potential love and marriage, she also comments very positively on his personality when she says: “At present I am not in love with Mr. Wickham; no, I certainly am not. But he is, beyond all comparison, the most agreeable man I ever saw...” (Austen, 2008, p.146).

Finding out that the truth and reality are actually different affects her deeply and thus begins her gradual change in personality. Despite her judgment at the start, her personality

development is interesting. This greatest realization and gradual change comes after reading Mr. Darcy's letter where he explains events in the past.

“How despicably I have acted!” she cried; “I, who have prided myself on my discernment! I, who have valued myself on my abilities! who have often disdained the generous candour of my sister, and gratified my vanity in useless or blameable distrust! - How humiliating is this discovery! -Yet, how just a humiliation! -Had I been in love, I could not have been more wretchedly blind. But vanity, not love, has been my folly.” (Austen, 2008, p.210).

2.2.2 Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy

Mr. Darcy is the main male character. He himself no longer has a father and is his own master. His annual income exceeds £10,000 which is a large enough amount, and he owns his own mansion in Derbyshire, which makes him a potential ideal husband. However, as was said, the first impression is rather stiff and negative. This negative impression is then easily extended thanks to the story of Mr. Wickham, who for several months in Darcy's and Mr. Bingley's absence. Thus, the realization of his potential bad character becomes an acknowledged reality. The following extract from chapter twenty-one is an example: "The whole of what Elizabeth had already heard, his claims on Mr. Darcy, and all that he had suffered from him, was now openly acknowledged and publicly canvassed; and everybody was pleased to know how much they had always disliked Mr. Darcy before they had known anything of the matter." (Austen, 2008, p.140).

Of course, this realization changes during the course of the book, but before that, Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy meet while visiting her friend Mrs. Collins. Here she talks to Colonel Fitzwilliam and in the presence of Mr. Darcy she explains what else he is guilty of.

"You shall hear then—but prepare yourself for something very dreadful. The first time of my ever seeing him in Hertfordshire, you must know, was at a ball—and at this ball, what do you think he did? He danced only four dances, though gentlemen were scarce; and, to my certain knowledge, more than one young lady was sitting down in want of a partner. Mr. Darcy, you cannot deny the fact." (Austen, 2008, p. 177)

This expression points to Mr. Darcy's restraint but also to the social duty that men had at this time. As a participant at the ball, it was proper for a gentleman to invite a girl to dance. Dancing once was seen as a social act, but dancing several times in a row with the same person was already seen as an expression of interest. There was a clear emphasis on politeness in society and therefore Mr. Darcy's non-involvement could be seen as an act of rudeness not only by Elizabeth. His personality can be described as cautious and prejudiced. Later, however, his understanding and pleasant personality are shown, especially through letters. We see his thinking and can fully understand his holding back and caution in making new contacts because of past experiences and betrayal.

The main reason for development in Elizabeth's view of the world is the letter written by Mr. Darcy and for him it is her rejection (which can be seen as unusual, since marriage is presented as something most women strive for). However, the rejection does not stop his efforts and after clarifying all the misunderstandings and his help with Lydia, he wins Elizabeth's affection.

2.2.3 Mr. Bennet

Mr. Bennet is the father of the main character and her sisters. As a character, it is difficult to determine whether he should be classified as positive or rather negative. As readers, we meet him already at the beginning when he has a conversation with his wife about his daughters. It is he who first highlights Elizabeth to us as readers when he declares that: "They have none of them much to recommend them, they are all silly and ignorant like other girls; but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters." (Austen, 2008, p. 5)

Apart from the fact that he takes Elizabeth as his favorite, we also encounter his sarcastic remarks and he appears to be a funny character. In the course of the book, however, his presence gradually disappears and we do not see him as often as we would expect from the head of the family. And even if his presence is very closely connected with the library and evokes an intelligent impression in us, it is not certain that this is the case.

In several parts it can be seen that he is a great father to Elizabeth. Both in the part when she asks him for help to interrupt her sister's performance (Austen, 2008, p. 101) and especially when he supports her against her mother in rejecting Mr. Collins' proposal for her hand in marriage. He says to her:

"An unhappy alternative is before you, Elizabeth. From this day you must be a stranger to one of your parents. Your mother will never see you again if you do not marry Mr. Collins, and I will never see you again if you do."(Austen, 2008, p. 113).

This scene could even be described as the peak of his display of fatherly love. Later, unfortunately, his character is shown rather in an unfavorable light. It can be seen that his influence is decreasing and that he does not try very hard to provide security for his daughters. In a later part he is not even able to be active in solving or doing anything when his daughter Lidia runs away from home. It is important to say that this situation would not only hurt him but also his daughters and their chances of getting married decently.

Overall, we can say that his character is quiet and his existence did not affect the plot in any extraordinary way.

2.2.4 Mrs. Bennet

Mrs. Bennet the mother of Elizabeth and wife of Mr. Bennet is one of the least popular characters. Her character is often described as the opposite of Mr. Bennet. She is very loud, has a lot of inappropriate opinions and even actively tries to marry off her daughters. Her daughter's wedding also seems to be the only thing she cares about. We could take this character as the opposite of Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who represents the upper class. Mrs. Bennet is rather uneducated and her behavior may seem inappropriate. It is precisely her behavior and bragging about the future money that Mr. Darcy overhears and it causes his efforts to separate his friend Mr. Bagley and Elizabeth's sister Jane.

Another thing that is already in the first parts of the book is her scheme to keep her daughters in the presence of potential partners longer, when she replies to Elizabeth's request for a carriage: "Well, my dear, you had better go on horseback, because it seems likely to rain; and then you must stay all night." (Austen,2008, p.30)

It is necessary to mention that precisely because of this idea, Jane falls ill and is forced to stay for several days. It is therefore a question whether risking the health of your daughters for the sake of marriage is appropriate. Also in the course of the book, another topic is her disagreement with her husband, who, as mentioned, is rather cold and perhaps even tired of his wife. Even Elizabeth herself notices their behavior and it can be seen that their marriage cannot be described as happy one.

In the book itself, their marriage is labeled as follows:

"Her father, captivated by youth and beauty, and that appearance of good humour which youth and beauty generally give, had married a woman whose weak understanding and illiberal mind had very early in their marriage put an end to all real affection for her. Respect, esteem, and confidence had vanished for ever; and all his views of domestic happiness were overthrown." (Austen, 2008, p. 238)

However, it must be noted that as the book progresses, even though her personality is still the same, the question arises as to whether her obsession with marriage is a sign of desperation. Because in the case of her and Mr. Bennet's death, the daughters would not be provided for in any way. Even so, however, her behavior is very aggressive and inappropriate when compared to the customs of Regency society

2.2.5 Miss Bingley

Miss Caroline Bingley is Mr. Bingley's sister. She appears less in the book than her brother, but has a big influence at the beginning of the book and serves as a liaison between the Bennet sisters, Mr. Darcy and her brother.

Overall, her character is presented as shallow when she envies the attention Elizabeth gets from Mr. Darcy. This personality trait is already seen in chapter ten where it is stated:

"Miss Bingley saw, or suspected enough to be jealous; and her great anxiety for the recovery of her dear friend Jane received some assistance from her desire of getting rid of Elizabeth. She often tried to provoke Darcy into disliking her guest, by talking of their supposed marriage, and planning his happiness in such an alliance." (Austen, 2008, p.52)

However, it is Caroline who establishes a bond of friendship with Jane and later, albeit for selfish reasons, warns Elizabeth not to believe everything Mr. Wickham says. Furthermore, she is the character mainly associated with the letters. She mostly sent them to Jane. In these, she informs Jane and Elizabeth about staying in London for winter and about her brother's potential closeness with another girl.

Letters in general are an important part of the plot of *Pride and Prejudice* as they were the main way of staying in touch. However, we always see letters sent between women, as it is only appropriate to send letters to a man after an engagement. This is also the reason why Mr. Darcy handed over the letter which explained his past with Mr. Wickham instead of sending it.

2.2.6 Lady Catherine de Bourgh

Lady Catherine de Bourgh is Mr. Darcy's aunt. Her character did not affect the development of the main couple dramatically. Her function was more like the opposite of Mrs. Bennet where she served as an example of education and upper class. Towards the end of the book, she tries to talk Elizabeth out of a potential relationship with Mr. Darcy, which helps us see Elizabeth's determination. Here is the part where Lady Catherine talks about the importance of position and tries to point out Elizabeth's imperfection: "You have no regard, then, for the honor and credit of my nephew! Unfeeling, selfish girl! Do you not consider that a connection with you must disgrace him in the eyes of everybody?" (Austen, 2008, p. 358)

Her references to class are frequent throughout the book and she sets the expectation of the lady's abilities which were in the Regency era very important as the behavior was an example of class. After marriage, a woman took care of the house, attended social gatherings, raised children or provided servants for the given activity. In general, the woman was in charge of the husband's household, with the fact that the duties differed from the position of the man. In order to marry well, however, in addition to status, she had to have the right education. Mostly it was an ability to play a musical instrument, singing, a foreign language, manners, several types of dances, fashion knowledge, basic knowledge

of the world for discussion, having a charitable activity and being able to make jokes, knitting, painting and also some other activities such as horse riding.

"What a proper woman should have is already discussed at the beginning of the book when it is declared that: "...A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages, to deserve the word; and besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions, or the word will be but half-deserved."
(Austen, 2008, p. 39)

Therefore, with such a large number of activities, it was customary to hire a governess. For that reason, even Lady Caroline was shocked when Elizabeth told her that they had none in the Bennet family. Overall, we can say that her character represents another theme of the book, which is education and upbringing.

3 Elizabeth Gaskell

Elizabeth Gaskell was born in 1810 and died in 1865. She had seven siblings, but only she and her brother John survived childhood. However, after the first year of her life, her mother dies and Elizabeth is raised by her aunt. Despite her separation from her father, she had respect for him. Her relationship with her brother was very close as he visited while she was growing up. This changed when John became a sailor and unfortunately became lost at sea (Easson, 2016).

Elizabeth became famous for her novels *Mary Barton* written in 1848 and later for her novel *North and South* written in 1855. Connections with her life can be seen in the *North and South*. She wrote thirteen novels, one play and even seven volumes of short stories. Gaskell's writing was praised even by Charles Dickens and George Eliot, and her works are considered a very important part of literature from the Victorian era. She was an influential figure in the emerging fields of realism, social criticism, and women's rights. Her aims in writing were for example pressing social issues like hard labor, education and new social reforms. And we can consider her writing connected with the role of women in this time period and the social changes as well (Weyant, 2007).

And her novel *South and North* is both a social critique and a romance, and serves as an important document of the social, economic, and religious changes taking place in nineteenth-century England (Gaskell, 2011).

4 North and South by Elizabeth Gaskell

The book itself is placed in the middle of the Victorian period, which lasted from 1837 to 1901. The Victorian period is one of the most famous periods in England. Of course, manners had its importance, but a somewhat more liberal approach was obtained. Furthermore, the progress of industry greatly influenced society and the perception of classes. People started moving more to cities and finding work in industry. New reforms were coming, but we also encountered overcrowding, encroachment of slums and difficult working conditions for adults and children (Newth, 1968).

The novel follows Margaret Hale, a young single woman who moves with her parents from the countryside of southern England to industrial northern England. Her experiences in the north bring her into contact with vastly different classes of people than she had previously been used to. As she interacts with these people and learns of their struggles, Margaret develops a newfound sympathy for their plight (Gaskell, 2020).

During her time in the North, Margaret also becomes acquainted with Mr. Thornton, who is a successful mill owner, who despite owning a factory has a desire to educate himself as he is her father's student. Their relationship evolves over time and experiences several changes. However, unlike *Pride and Prejudice*, the main aspects of the book are focused on industrial issues and social conflicts. Through Margaret, in addition to her development in her relationship with Mr. Thornton, we see the fates of the people in Milton and the working conditions in the Victorian era.

Overall, the book also explores the complex relationships between the north and the south of England and the attitudes and values of people from individual regions and shows us the development of the main character up to the moment when she gets into a relationship with the main character.

4.1 Main plot analysis

In this part, as in the previous book, I will present the main situations that are the most important in the plotline of the book. They contain important points in relationship development of the main female character and main male character or contain a moment that is closely related to the main idea of the book and helped in development of the main female character. The mentioned parts are specifically related to the first impression that introduced us to the initial relationship of the book's heroes. Furthermore, the strike that was the climax that led to an important point in the relationship of the main characters and is also part of an important historical context that affects the entire book and the delivery of the story. Next part is dedicated to the brother's visit, which led to the main misunderstanding. And the last situation is the final realization of the main heroine's feelings.

4.1.1 First impressions

It is important to mention that the main character Margaret lives, in the first chapter of the book, in London with her aunt and her cousin Edith. However, Edith marries Captain Lennox and thus leaves her home. This causes Elizabeth to return with her father, who helped at the wedding, to her mother at home in Helstone. Helstone is a charming small town surrounded by greenery and small-town spirit. Margaret likes this place even when it is quiet, different from the luxury of London.

All this happens in the first chapters as very soon the family is moving from Helstone to the city of Milton, in the north of England, at her father's instigation. This gives us the first impression not only of the protagonist but also of the city itself. Milton is an industrial town and doesn't seem welcoming. Its first description in the book emphasizes its unfriendliness:

“Nearer to the town, the air had a faint taste and smell of smoke; perhaps, after all, more a loss of the fragrance of grass and herbage than any positive taste or smell. Quick they were whirled over long, straight, hopeless streets of regularly-built houses, all small and of brick. Here and there a great oblong many-windowed factory stood up, like a hen among her chickens,

puffing out black “unparliamentary” smoke, and sufficiently accounting for the cloud which Margaret had taken to foretell rain.” (Gaskell, 2020, p.65)

Even in the next few descriptions, the city is described negatively, and especially Margaret's mother takes the move hard due to her poor health and the polluted air in the factory town.

Immediately after the move, we also get the scene of the first introduction to the main character. Unlike *Pride and Prejudice*, although the story is still following the main female character, we have the story told in the third person which gives us a lot of access to the thoughts of the male protagonist and the first meeting gives us a much better understanding of the personality and their mutual view of each other.

Mr. Thornton is the owner of the factory and is the new student of Margaret's father. Their meeting is just before finding the house when Mr. Thornton goes to visit Mr. Hall in the hotel. However, Mr. Hale went to the landlord of the house they decided upon, so Margaret went to keep Mr. Thornton company. There is a passage in the course of their conversation which clearly reveals Margaret's reluctance, but her determination to maintain good manners in keeping the company to the guest.

"She was tired now, and would much rather have remained silent, and taken the rest her father had planned for her; but, of course, she owed to herself to be a gentlewoman, and to speak courteously from time to time to this stranger; not over-brushed, nor over-polished, it must be confessed, after his rough encounter with Milton streets and crowds." (Gaskell, 2020, p. 68)

Her upbringing and manners are also one of the things that brings us to the question of social classes during the acquaintance.

While Margaret sheds her shawl during the conversation and keeps the topics light, Mr. Thornton admires her beauty, her figure and her cold serene look. Yet from his point of view, the first meeting, which takes place peacefully, is seen differently by each of them:

“...he looked upon her with an admiration he could not repress, she looked at him with proud indifference, taking him, he thought, for what, in his

irritation , he told himself he was—a great rough fellow, with not a grace or a refinement about him.” (Gaskell, 2020, p.69)

This is partially confirmed when Margaret describes Mr. Thorton to her mother and she declares: “About thirty—with a face that is neither exactly plain, nor yet handsome, nothing remarkable—not quite a gentleman; but that was hardly to be expected.”(Gaskel, 2020, p. 71)

The first meeting ends with the return of Mr. Hale, complaining about the wallpaper that the landlord, to Margaret's disappointment, refuses to take down. The first impression of the main female and main male character is very different. It ends with more affection and admiration on the part of Mr. Thorton and cold indifference on the part of Margaret.

4.1.2 Strike

The strike is one of the most important moments in the book as it is an event that greatly develops Mr. Thorton's relationship with Elizabeth and moves the plot forward. Furthermore, it is also an event that has been approaching for a long time and we can say that it is closely connected with the idea of the book.

The book itself deals with issues of society, social classes, but mainly discusses the roles of factory workers and factory owners. Even most of the conversations in the book take place on this topic. In addition, Margaret also often finds herself around or in conversations regarding the thoughts and actions of workers, wage cuts, and the pride of the men. Such a situation for example occurs when Mrs. Thorton explains what she thinks is the main reason for the strike, after Mr. Hale asks if the reason is demand for higher pay:

“That is the face of the thing. But the truth is, they want to be masters, and make the masters into slaves on their own ground. They are always trying at it; they always have it in their minds; and every five or six years, there comes a struggle between masters and men...”(Gaskell, 2020, p.129).

The very strike that is being discussed here will happen, however, Mr. Thornton stands his ground and refuses to budge from his position. He solves the problem by hiring cheaper workers from Ireland, which infuriates the striking workers in Milton. They go to the factory as a crowd to protest. The moment is very tense and Margaret, who is here at the moment, urges Mr. Thornton to go address the crowd and hopefully calm them down. Mr. Thornton is unsuccessful and Margaret, fearing senseless violence, goes out into danger and protects Mr. Thornton from being attacked with a stone. However, the stone hits her and this causes several events. The first is that the crowd loses its passion and dissolves. The second is Mr. Thornton's realization of his love to her when, after carrying her to safety, he lays her in light unconsciousness down and declares: "Oh, my Margaret—my Margaret! no one can tell what you are to me! Dead—cold as you lie there, you are the only woman I ever loved! Oh, Margaret—Margaret!" (Gaskell, 2020, p. 200)

The second is that an act of protecting him causes the mistaken belief that Margaret has feelings towards Mr. Thornton. This assumption is also supported by Mr. Thornton's mother, who represents a strong Milton woman and who, thanks to Margaret's actions, has changed her opinion of her to a more accepting one. She will also support Mr. Thornton to go and comment the next day, as that is expected in the given situation.

This misunderstanding therefore causes Mr. Thornton to go the next day to ask Margaret for her hand in marriage. She rejects him and justifies her act by trying to prevent more violence. This scene is important because it again brings us closer to the main couple's relationship and points out their current feelings. While Mr. Thornton is sure of his feelings toward Margaret: "One word more. You look as if you thought it tainted you to be loved by me. You cannot avoid it. Nay, I, if I would, cannot cleanse you from it. But I would not if I could." (Gaskell, 2020, p. 216).

Margaret in the following paragraph views their relationship differently:

"I never liked him. I was civil; but I took no trouble to conceal my indifference. Indeed, I never thought about myself or him, so my manners must have shown the truth. All that yesterday, he might mistake. But that is his fault, not mine. I would do it again, if need

were, though it does lead me into all this shame and trouble.”(Gaskell, 2020, p. 217)

At this stage of the book, Mr. Thornton's feelings are fully awakened, while Margaret feels disinterested and does not understand what could have caused Mr. Thornton's feelings.

4.1.3 A visit from Frederik

Another selected moment from the North and South shows a visit from Frederik.

Margaret's mother's deteriorating health causes her to request to see Frederik. Her love and admiration and strongly expressed feelings for her son are contrasted many times in the book with the gentle affection shown to Margaret. Margaret writes a letter and Frederick returns despite the threat as he was a participant in the mutiny. Mutiny is an act that can lead to an immediate death sentence as it is a fundamental violation of the Navy and Army of the United Kingdom and is seen as a serious violation (Clode, 1874).

The visit is short, but it leads to further misunderstandings between the main female character and the male hero. This situation occurs when Margaret accompanies her brother to the train station from which he is to go to London to visit Henry Lennox, a lawyer, who only appeared in the book at the beginning as a friend of Margaret when he proposed to Margaret and was rejected.

At the train station, her brother gets into a scuffle and accidentally knocks a man off the platform. After leaving, Margaret checks the place, but the man is not there, and everything seems fine. However, this changes when a man dies afterward, and Margaret is visited by a police inspector in Hale household. Because of the brother who should not be in England, she lies when she repeatedly tells the police inspector: "I was not there," (Gaskell, 2020, p.302).

The situation is resolved when Mr Thornton uses his influence as a magistrate. At this moment, however, he thinks that Margaret is lying for the well-being of her lover but still helps her as he still feels love towards her. This is clearly seen: "Miss Hale

might love another—was indifferent and contemptuous to him—but he would yet do her faithful acts of service of which she should never know." (Gaskell, 2020, p. 309)

However, Margaret discovers his involvement in the situation and believes that because of her lie, his opinion of her becomes less positive:

"She was a liar. But she had no thought of penitence before God; nothing but chaos and night surrounded the one lurid fact that, in Mr. Thornton's eyes, she was degraded."(Gaskell, 2020, p. 313)

This event could be seen as the first signs of affection because Margaret expresses disappointment at her downfall in Mr. Thornton's eyes, which is a big improvement from her lack of interest in the past. Another example of first signs of her affection we get to see her initial confusion over her feelings:"How was it that he haunted her imagination so persistently? What could it be? Why did she care for what he thought, in spite of all her pride; in spite of herself?" (Gaskell, 2020, p. 315).

4.1.4 Acceptance

The last important part in the relationship of the main characters is their acceptance and confession of mutual feelings. This takes place in the book towards the end, and it takes place in a particularly specific way, since Mr. Thornton and Margaret have not seen each other for a year. The reason is the death of Margaret's father who dies in his sleep in Oxford while visiting Mr. Bell. Since he died and Margaret has no parents, she is picked up by her aunt and goes to live back in London. It is also at this stage, without Mr. Thornton present, that Margaret realizes her feelings. In London, Margaret realizes not only her personal change but also the desire and longing for her time in Milton. She also visits Helstone, which, of course, looks completely different in her eyes than in the past. This also shows us her personality development and changes in her outlook on life.

Because of her feelings, Margaret asks Mr. Bell to reveal the situation at the train station and clear up the misunderstanding. But that doesn't happen because Mr. Bell

is dying and Margaret inherits from Mr. Bell, especially Marlborough Mills and the Thornton house, which causes her to meet the main male protagonist.

Mr. Thornton was forced to close his factory due to the crisis and wants to settle his business affairs with Margaret, his new landlord. He already knows why Margaret lied to Mr. Higgins. What he doesn't know is that Margaret has decided to help save his factory, especially after hearing his reconciliation and his talk about becoming a friend to his employees. The overall confession is short. Margaret communicates her proposal for financial support. At that moment he says her name twice with no response so he declares:

“Take care.—If you do not speak—I shall claim you as my own in some strange presumptuous way.—Send me away at once, if I must go;—Margaret!—”(Gaskell, 2020, p. 477)

Embarrassed, Margaret hides her face, but with words: “Oh, Mr. Thornton, I am not good enough!” (Gaskell, 2020, p. 477) she accepts his feelings, thus closing the chapter and, after a few lines, the whole book.

4.2 Characters analysis

In this part of the work, I will focus on the analysis of the characters and their actions in the plot. I am the first to analyze the character of the main female character and main male character. Furthermore, the parents and their function and behavior towards the main character. And as the last supporting characters who greatly helped in Margaret's adaptation to the new environment and her understanding of the situation.

4.2.1 Margaret

Margaret is the main character of our story. In the beginning, as mentioned, she lives in London with her aunt. And after moving home to Helstone, it is not long before she moves to Milton. At the beginning of the book, she has several moments

when we can see her as proud, whether it is when she comments on the merchants or when she shouts at Dixon to know her place. In the course of the book, however, her selfishness disappears very quickly and we rather meet a heroine who helps in the household and is a support for everyone in it. Even when her mother's illness is discovered, she remains strong and realizes her father's weakness when she says to Dixon: “No, Dixon,” said Margaret, sorrowfully, “I will not tell papa. He could not bear it as I can.” (Gaskell, 2020, p.144)

Throughout the book, she tries to help the people around her. It can be seen after the death of her mother, when she tries to help her father. And after the death of her best friend, she tries to counsel Mr. Higgins. It is she who, even at the stage of great misunderstanding caused by her lie, sends Mr. Higgins to ask for a job at Mr. Thorton factory.

In the book itself, there are many tragedies in her life and it is the death of her father that seems to be the worst. After his death, she moves away from Milton back to her aunt and realizes her changes in expectations and values. The last death that affects her is Mr. Bell, because she inherits his property and uses it to help the male protagonist in a financial crisis. Margaret is a confident female character with a strong personality, kind heart and someone who does not lose hope even after the tragic events around her.

4.2.2 Mr. Thorton

Mr. Thorton is a man who feels affection and admiration for Margaret from the beginning of the book. Despite the misunderstandings, he still helps her and gives great importance to her words. In several moments he strongly admires her and yet he clearly feels her rejection towards him, such as when he describes their first meeting to his mother:

“The only time I saw Miss Hale, she treated me with a haughty civility which had a strong flavor of contempt in it . She held herself aloof from

me as if she had been a queen, and I her humble, unwashed vassal.”(Gaskell, 2020, p.85)

This changes thanks to the rebellion, when he fondly believes that his feelings are at least partially reciprocated. And even though he is rejected, he still holds Margaret in high regard. Mr Thorton, is a strong, initially slightly prejudiced but favorable character who has a deep love for his family and subsequently Margaret. His love for Margaret is constant throughout the book. His character development relates mostly to the factory and work environment which is shown throughout his friendship with Mr. Higgins. He gradually accepts a somewhat more realistic view of the workers and not just as their master.

What separates him from Margaret the most is the misunderstanding about her lover and also her departure to London. Overall, it is his character that shows us diligence and pride in the work he has built.

4.2.3 Mr. Hale

Margaret's father is one of the main characters in the book. His presence is prominent here, and his decision to leave Helstone sets the whole story in motion. The main reason for this separation is the loss of faith in the church of England and the inability to carry out the work of a clergyman with pride. On the one hand, his personality is firm because he stands by his opinion and decides to leave everything, but it cannot be said that he is fully responsible for his decisions. And that's also because he is unable to share this news to his wife and leaves this responsibility to his daughter. Even during the conversation, he seems unstable in his opinions. At the beginning of the conversation, he strongly emphasizes the utter impossibility of continuing to work and compares himself with martyrs despite Margaret's efforts to change his mind:

“Margaret, dear!” said he, drawing her closer, “think of the early martyrs; think of the thousands who have suffered.”

“But, father,” said she, suddenly lifting up her flushed, tear-wet face, “the early martyrs suffered for the truth, while you—oh! dear, dear papa!”

“I suffer for conscience’ sake, my child,” said he...(Gaskell, 2020, p. 42)

Immediately, however in conversation regarding their future he rejects Margaret's proposal to live in a quiet part of England on a hundred pounds a year, which explains the impossibility of providing the same comfort for her mother after paying for household necessities and his need to be active and work. However, after moving to Milton, where he works as a tutor, he does not become the strong head of the family. Important decisions are left to Margaret as well as part of the household, and after her mother's death she has to take care of the funeral all by herself. The role of the father as the head of the family is therefore insufficient here, and his character rather brings us closer to the questions of faith and the doubts associated with it.

4.2.4 Mrs. Hale

Mrs. Hale is a mother of two children, firstborn Frederik and Margaret. As a mother, she is nice, but very often complains, mainly about the quality of her housing. This can also be seen in her monologue, where she clings to the necessity of her daughter Margaret to help in the house, where she clearly remembers her past and status:

“Yes! if any one had told me, when I was Miss Beresford, and one of the belles of the country, that a child of mine would have to stand half a day, in a little poky kitchen, working away like any servant, that we might prepare properly for the reception of a tradesman, and that this tradesman should be the only”— (Gaskell, 2020, p.83)

Her character is also greatly influenced by her sensitive health, which gradually deteriorates after arriving in Milton. We can also say that her deteriorating health makes her more patient but more dependent on the comfort of her daughter or her long-time maid Dixon.

Overall, her character is that of a typical woman in the Victorian era, taking care of the household and minor chores, raising children and managing servants. However, we can see in her a certain dissatisfaction for her decision in the past to marry for love. Another important part of her character is her strong love, faith and support which she feels towards her firstborn son despite his part in the mutiny:

“I think, Margaret,” she continued, after a pause, in a weak, trembling, exhausted voice, “I am glad of it—I am prouder of Frederick standing up against injustice, than if he had been simply a good officer.”(Gaskell, 2020, p. 121)

However, unlike the mother in *Pride and Prejudice*, she seems apathetic towards her daughter and her prospects for the future. In the book, especially in the beginning, there are not too many passages expressing love or concern, which again gives a feeling of subtle disinterest.

4.2.5 Bessy Higgins

Bessy's character is Margaret's friend. Their meeting is already in the first phase after moving to Milton in chapter eight. When Margaret meets her, Bessy is on her way with her father, whom Margaret has already met. The first description we get about her as a reader is that she looks unhealthy. And already in the first conversation we have information that she does not look strong. This is confirmed when Margaret tries to cheer her up with a remark about the coming spring. But the answer she gets from Bessy is: “Spring nor summer will do me good,”(Gaskell, 2020, p. 80). And even her father confirms the message in the following words:“I'm afeared hoo speaks the truth. I'm afeared hoo's too far gone in a waste”(Gaskell, 2020, p. 80).

So from the first meeting we know that Bessy is dying and won't be here for long. This is interesting, because while we would normally expect a moment of surprise in literature, here Gaskell does not hide death and informs readers directly. This heightens our sense of reality and draws us more into the factory environment and, due to the reason of her illness, into the working conditions.

The very reason for her poor health is explained in their conversation when Margaret visits her, and they together discuss Bessy's condition.

“Fluff,” repeated Bessy. “Little bits, as fly off fro’ the cotton, when they’re carding it, and fill the air till it looks all fine white dust. They say it winds rounds the lungs, and tightens them up. Anyhow, there’s many a one as works in a carding-room, that falls into a waste, coughing and spitting blood, because they’re just poisoned by the fluff.”(Gaskell, 2020, p.113)

Bessy herself is reconciled to her death. She very often refers to her death in conversations and gives us a sense of its inevitability. She is also described as a strong believer and connects her death with God, often quoting the Bible or commandments. An example can be seen in the paragraph in chapter eleven, when she quotes Isaiah 49:10.

“Do you think such life as this is worth caring for?” gasped Bessy, at last. Margaret did not speak, but held the water to her lips. Bessy took a long and feverish draught, and then fell back and shut her eyes. Margaret heard her murmur to herself: “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.”(Gaskell, 2020, p.112)

Her reconciliation represents the normalcy of the situation in the Victorian era, which has been described as the Golden age.

The Victorian period can be characterized as a time of economic growth and industrial revolution. However, through Bessy, Gaskell points out the disadvantages that are part of progress as she represents the working class and shows the consequences of the unsatisfactory conditions in the factories. Workers in cotton mills were exposed to a humid and hot environment which, combined with flying cotton particles, caused lung diseases, especially tuberculosis. There was also danger in other industries, such as pottery, where there was a risk of lead poisoning. Of course, the conditions gradually improved during the Victorian era, for example Bessy was working with other workers, according to the act from 1847, for only ten hours (Cody, 2008).

Bessy was one of the core characters who helped Margaret to realize the change in environment and helped her adapt. She is an example of a typical girl and her possibilities in an industrial city as being a worker was essential to help the family with the financial budget and also to provide for younger siblings. The possibility of becoming something other than a laborer became more widespread with education, which did not become particularly widespread until the 1870s and 1880s (Lloyd, 2007).

4.2.6 Nicholas Higgins

Nicholas Higgins is Bessa's father. His main role is as one of the leaders of the strike. It is the same as Bessy's character that Margaret introduces to the situation in Milton and the situation regarding the need for a strike. He has a firm belief in the rights of workers and speaks very loudly about the union and the cruelty of the factory masters.

“Yo’ know well, that a worser tyrant than e’er th’ masters were says. ‘Clem to death, and see ‘em a’ clem to death, ere yo’ dare go again th’ Union.’ Yo’ know it well, Nicholas, for a’ yo’re one on ‘em. Yo’ may be kind hearts, each separate; but once banded together, yo’ve no more pity for a man than a wild hunger-maddened wolf.”(Gaskell, 2020, p.172)

His change of character comes after the death of his daughter when he has a conversation with Margaret. He admits that workers are forced by the union to participate, but also that it is a necessary evil for greater justice. Margaret considers this inappropriate behavior, but again it brings the complexity of the situation and the realization that there is not only good and evil or north and south. This moment also shows us the beginnings of unions that did not yet have a voice and the time when they were not legalized. In this period it was difficult to determine whether it was better for the worker on the side of the factory or the uncertain union (Webb, 1976).

After the death of her neighbor Mr. Boucher, who kills himself, Mr. Higgins decides to help and take care of Mr. Boucher’s children. This will cause his efforts to

find financial security. He thinks about going for the work in the south for a while. In this phase, however, the Hales change his mind and point out that he would not be able to handle the difficult work conditions on the farms.

At this stage, Margaret convinces him to ask Mr. Thorton about work. It is interesting how in the plotline of the book, due to necessity, Higgins changes his approach as well as Mr. Thorton, and both conclude not only an agreement on how to work together again, but also a form of friendship.

5 Main similarities and differences

In this section, I will summarize the main similarities and differences that were presented in the previous selected sections.

5.1 Main plot

After selecting the main events that contained the most essential parts of the books, I came to the conclusion that the relationship of the main characters in both books is very similar, differing rather in minor differences.

When choosing important moments, I emphasized the first impression. In *Pride and Prejudice* it is rather negative from both sides while in *North and South* there is disinterest and one-sided admiration from Mr. Thornton. This slowly develops, and while misunderstanding plays an important role in both books, it is important to highlight its different uses in the development of the relationship.

In the first book, there is a misunderstanding on Elizabeth's part about Mr. Darcy's personality until the truth is clarified by letter. However, this only takes place after a firm rejection of his proposal for her hand in marriage. In the second book, however, Margaret's effort to prevent violence only causes Mr. Thornton to misunderstand her, prompting the marriage request itself. However, both heroines act the same when asking for a hand in marriage. They don't accept the request because they don't feel enough affection. It must be said that both heroines also reject other suitors due insufficient affection. Elizabeth rejects Mr. Collins's proposal, Margaret Henry Lennox's and both again give the reason for the lack of affection.

The misunderstanding also plays a role when Mr. Thornton believes that Frederick is Margaret's lover. Even so, he helps her when she needs it because of his affection, which is another similarity with Mr. Darcy, who also helps Elizabeth by getting involved in the problem of Lydia's escape. Another difference here is the speed in building feelings. In *Pride and Prejudice*, feelings are born out of mutual and gradual discovery and conversation, even if they arise from a bad first impression. In *North and South*, the affection from Mr. Thornton is evident from the

beginning, and the slower affection is with Margaret, who despite knowing Mr. Thornton's personality from the beginning without any misunderstandings, does not develop feelings until later in the book.

5.2 Main Female characters

The main female characters have common traits in personality, they are strong, loyal to their family whether they are treated with respect or disinterest, and they show and share their opinion about the situation around them. The main difference, however, is clearly visible in their personality development and the details in their awareness of feelings for the main male character.

For Elizabeth, her main change and realization comes from finding out the truth about Mr. Darcey. This causes her to doubt herself and realize her mistakes and actions. It also allows her affection for Mr. Darcey to be fully expressed and she no longer tries to suppress her growing affection for him. In the second book, however, there is no sudden change in Margaret's personality or her feelings as her understanding of Mr. Thornton's character is clear from the beginning. Margaret's change continuous and is gradually connected to the events in her life. Either by moving to a completely foreign environment, or by the death around her. First death of her friend then death of the mother and the father.

Moreover, unlike Elizabeth who has to deal with expectations of society, manners and perhaps good marriage proposals without drastic changes in her family or environment, Margaret tries to help and is in the close presence of the strike and hatred of the two opposite sides. Because of this, even when they are both romantic books, *North and South* seem much more sophisticated and we have a much greater insight into the thoughts of the characters.

5.3 Side characters

The biggest difference in the development of secondary characters, whether family or friends in both books, is that their personalities and the ending are strongly related to the theme that the authors tried to bring to the fore. While Jane Austen focused on society, marriage, and family relationships, Elizabeth Gaskell focused on family relationships, the Industrial Revolution, and factory conditions, with a discussion of the distribution of power.

This can be seen in the character of the best friends, who in the book have the task of supporting the main character and represent a selected part of society. Elizabeth's friend Charlotte Lucas is twenty-seven years old and in the book supports Elizabeth's opinion and view of society but also is getting married to secure herself and have a decent life as it is expected of her. Bessy in *North and South* helps Margaret with new life after moving to North and helps her understand new life in Milton. She is a normal girl from the environment of the book and thus was working in the factory and her death is showing to readers the possible outcome of working there. Other secondary characters such as Mr. Higgins and Catherine de Bourgh with Miss Bingley point out to us and approximate the standard of the time and expectations from society.

Conclusion

The book *Pride and Prejudice* and *North and South* are books that share a lot of similarities. After completing my bachelor's thesis, I came to the conclusion that a large number of differences, which can be found even in selected sections, are caused by the focus of the authors. While in *Pride and Prejudice* the main theme is marriage, social class and the position of women in North and South, we are more concerned with working conditions, the working class and industrialism. These themes are also closely related to the development of the relationship between the main heroines and their partners, because the misunderstandings they overcome are strongly connected to them. Elizabeth overcomes the early misunderstanding about Mr. Darcy's personality that arises through her understanding of good manners. And Margaret causes a misunderstanding with her brother because of the threat of his hanging, which arises due to the theme of mutiny in the book.

Another major difference between the books is the setting. In *Pride and Prejudice* we are more in the countryside, while in *North and the South*, as the name suggests, we get a contrast of environment and the plot takes place in several places. Despite this, however, we find a similar family distribution where we can label the family as dysfunctional. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the father is more in the library and is not very interested in the fate of his daughters, which is similar to mother Margaret, who, however, had a reason for staying at home, her illness. As for the similarity of the heroines, we can see in them the affection for the family and their influence caused by the father. Elizabeth is, after her father, stubborn with a love of books, and Margaret is kind-hearted with a love for her neighbors but stubborn in her decisions. Since these are romantic books, despite the differences in their relationships and development, both end with a happy relationship between the main characters.

Many studies have already been created on the works of Jane Austen. By connecting with the book *North and South*, we get additional possibilities for comparison. As further work, I would recommend a deeper and more extensive comparison, primarily devoted not only to the main characters, but to expand the

work to include the relationships of the secondary ones. Also, change the angle of comparison to specific differences or themes.

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Resumé

Cílem mé bakalářské práce je porovnat *Pýchu a předsudek* Jane Austenové a *Sever a Jih* Elizabeth Gaskell. Jelikož jsou knihy rozsáhlé a množství možných rozdílů a podobností je neomezené, zaměřím se konkrétně na vztah hlavní ženské postavy a hlavního mužského hrdiny. Ve své bakalářské práci proto prozkoumám klíčové momenty ve vztahu mezi hlavními hrdiny a následně postavami, které ovlivnily hrdinčino chování nebo měly velký vliv na průběh děje. Cílem mé práce je zdůraznit rozdíly a podobnosti ve vybraných momentech a postavách. Kromě toho poskytnu základní informace s historickými fakty a informacemi týkajícími se regenské a viktoriánské společnosti.

Anotace

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Název práce:	Srovnávací analýza <i>Pýchy a předsudku</i> od Jane Austenové a <i>Severu a jihu</i> od Elizabeth Gaskellové
Název práce anglicky:	A Comparative Analysis of Jane Austen's <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> and Elizabeth Gaskell's <i>North and South</i>
Anotace práce:	Práce porovnává knihu <i>Pýcha a předsudek</i> s knihou <i>Sever a jih</i> . Poukazuje na vývoj vztahu hlavních hrdinů a charakterovou změnu hlavní hrdinky. Dosahuje toho zdůrazněním důležitých sekcí v ději a vedlejších charakterů jež ovlivňují hlavní hrdinku.
Anotace práce anglicky:	The work compares the book <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> with the book <i>North and South</i> . It points to the development of the relationship between the main characters and the character change of the main female character. It achieves this by emphasizing important sections of the plot and secondary characters that influence the main female character.
Klíčová slova:	Nedorozumění, regentská společnost, industrializace, viktoriánská společnost, stávka, Jane Austen, Elizabeth Gaskell
Klíčová slova anglicky:	Misunderstanding, Regency society, industrialization, Victorian society, strike, Jane Austen, Elizabeth Gaskell

Přílohy vázané v práci:	Žádné
Jazyk:	Angličtina
Rozsah:	