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Bakalářská práce

The Portrayal of Jane Austen's Male Characters

Charakteristika mužských postav v románech
Jane Austenové

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Abstract: The thesis introduces Jane Austen as the founder of the realistic tradition of Victorian novel, also as the representative of sentimentalism in English literature. Furthermore, it briefly characterizes the key novels which are going to be analysed in the practical part. The main aim is to characterise the male characters besides the traditional portrayal of the independent heroines. The thesis compares analysed novels from heroes' point of view and tries to stress out their importance beside the heroines.

Key Words:

Jane Austen, male characters, Victorian novel, sentimentalism, husbands, fathers

Anotace: Práce nejprve představí Jane Austenovou jako zakladatelku realistické tradice viktoriánského románu a představitelku sentimentalismu v anglické literatuře, dále stručně charakterizuje stěžejní romány, kterými se bude zabývat v tematickém rozboru. Hlavním cílem práce bude charakteristika mužských postav oproti tradičnímu genderovému pojetí hlavní hrdinky jako nezávislé a samostatné individuality. Práce v závěru srovná analyzované romány z hlediska pojetí mužských postav a pokusí se charakterizovat jejich důležitost ve srovnání s postavami ženských hrdinek.

Klíčová slova:

Jane Austenová, mužské postavy, viktoriánský román, sentimentalismus, manželé, otcové

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Introduction

The aim of my bachelor thesis *The Portrayal of Jane Austen's Male Heroes* is to present Jane Austen in the context of the Domestic novel influenced by the previous tradition of sentimentalism in English literature which later developed into the progressive mainstream literature of Critical Realism of the nineteenth century in Great Britain. Firstly it examines the historical period all together with the social and family background of the author with the intention of better understanding her own original writing combined with the irony and art of dialogues.

In spite of only six finished novels of the author, just two of them, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*, will be analysed owing to their detailed emphasis on characters' descriptions. Also, as the second and fourth book, they show her own progress to the readers along with the contrasting the life phases she had been through as well; therefore, their full characterization will be the subject to the second chapter of the theoretical part.

The importance of the male heroes in the work of Jane Austen lays in the reader's knowledge of the family environment of the heroines thus the fathers will be included, too. The fathers' and the husbands' influence over the heroines is so crucial that readers rethink the social demands. The thesis will describe the parallels between the heroes and the fathers as well as the differences in order to show the philosophy of the old world and the new one especially because of the importance of the understanding Jane Austen's need to create stories and characters like that. The heroines are very important for the growth of the male characters and provides even better interpretation. Their mutual effects on each other

Since the nineteenth century belonged to the part of the history of great changes, men and women had to adjust to the new world order. The mutual influence and the contrast with the old manners are shown in Jane Austen's novels and conclude this thesis.

1. Jane Austen's Life and Her Position in English Literature

1.1. Biography of Jane Austen

The life of Jane Austen, the typical English domestic writer¹ who stood on the range of two great literary movements, began on 16th December, 1775 in Steventon, Hampshire. She joined the large family of reverend George Austen and Cassandra Austen as their seventh child, precisely the second daughter. Hence the close relationship between two sisters was established, although a strong bond was, too, developed with her brother Henry who later on helped her as a literary agent.

During her childhood, the family focused completely on learning and creative thinking; therefore, the children's access to a father's library was highly encouraged. There Jane Austen discovered the world of Shakespeare, Richardson, Fielding or Burney. Additionally, the children composed several plays and short comic stories. At the age of eight, she and her sister Cassandra were sent to their formal education, which included dancing, music and French. Unfortunately they caught typhus and had to go back home. After their return, Mr. Austen and other brothers continued with education of theirs due to the financial constraints. Yet, their health was not the same since.

The break out of the author's talent showed in the course of adolescence. She began taking notes in order to generate her own stories. The first bigger attempts are nowadays known as a satirical comedy *Love and Friendship* and afterward *Lady Susan*. Probably the greatest landmark in Austen's literary work happened in 1795 when young Irish law-student Thomas Lefroy visited Steventon. The two of them fell in love, although were later forced to break up. Despite the sad incident, at that time she started the first drafts of her most readable novels, *Elinor and Marianne* and *First Impressions* (later published as *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*).

In 1801 the Austens had to move to Bath due to Mr. Austen's retirement. At the age of twenty-six Jane Austen left all she had experienced to move far away from home which could cause the antipathy towards Bath. During the living in town she did not write much not to mention its bad quality. After four years her father died which was not helpful either. Three women must have travelled from one brother to another living unsteadily. They assisted with upbringing the children of relatives. This way of life ended when one of Austen brothers offered them small cottage in Chawton. Here, she could finally fully settle

¹ Miles, Robert. *Jane Austen*, Tavistock: Northcote House Publishers Ltd, 2003: 5

after so many years without stable home. The newfound independence served as a fresh start of Jane Austen's inspiration. At this stage of her life she could wholly concentrate on writing and with the help of brother Henry tried to publish her works. In 1811 *Sense and Sensibility* saw the light together with *Pride and Prejudice* two years later. *Mansfield Park* quickly followed in addition to become the most profitable piece of hers at that time. The last published book during Austen's life was *Emma* in 1815. Unluckily, the financial situation got worse for the whole family, especially for the women.

To at least reduce the financial crises, Jane Austen was writing even more devotedly. The first drafts of *Persuasion* and *Sanditon* were written, although only the former was finished. At the beginning of 1816 the health of the author aggravated. That did not interfere her writing. As a strong woman as she was, Austen kept her upbeat attitude, lived like before the illness. Paradoxically, that only led to absolute exhaustion. In 1817 she could hardly walk not to mention the simple chores. This meant the end of her writing. In May of the same year Henry and sister Cassandra strived to get medical treatment. In order to do that, they moved to Winchester. Sadly the cure for the illness did not exist. On 18th July, 1817 in early morning hours Jane Austen died, forty-one-year old, and her remains lie in the local cathedral lacking any reference to the great novelist she was. Until today the sickness Austen suffered is considered unknown, some experts tend to Addison's disease or Hodgkin's disease, however, the truth stays hidden and possibly it always will.

After the publication of the two remaining novels, the whole world found out the author's real name, which was shocking, mainly for her family. Her nephew James E. Austen-Leigh penned his memoir on aunt Jane called *A Memoir of the Life of Jane Austen* (1869) that presented her on the field of literary history to larger audience.

1.2. Jane Austen's Position in English Literature

In the time when Jane Austen was born, lived and her novels were published, the literature appeared to be on very significant junction among the fading sentimentalism and rising Realism, more often performed in so called Victorian novel. These great movements were under a good deal of pressure, for example the French revolution or Napoleonic wars. Still in her works, she managed to leave out these serious themes (with little exceptions of *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion*) and get inspired by the movements written above.

There were many authors who influenced Austen's work due to the quality of her father's library. One of them was the great novelist Samuel Richardson (1689 – 1761) and

his epistolary novel *Pamela* (1740). A book which can be considered as the first one of sentimentalism in a massive way and outlined the chief characteristics of this genre. Therefore, it should not be surprise that early short stories of young Jane Austen are very similar to *Pamela*, for example the epistolary novella *Lady Susan*. Even though she drew more attention to Domestic and Victorian novel, some elements fit into pure Sentimentalism. The majority of the stories of hers contains the typical “mental anguish of good poor woman, the struggle in the heroine’s heart or the individual peculiarities of the human’s nature.” (Sanders, Andrew. *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, 2004: 311-314)

Compering all of her novels, Austen’s method of operating with these characteristics is lucidly seen in them. Every heroine, from Elinor to Anne, has a good heart, deserves more than she receives and is forced to face her own heart desires. In order to live happily ever after, the heroine must struggle the battles not only with herself or her family but also the society itself, which slowly passes on the road of Victorian novel that will be mentioned later.

According to Richardson, the novel “should educate the emotional sensibility, moral conscience and show the noble soul.” (Sanders, 2004: 311-314) Austen even fulfilled this element though the technique seems very different from what Richardson actually meant and the real definition of sentimentalism offers:

The object was to illustrate the alliance of acute sensibility with true virtue. An adherence to strict morality and honour, combined with the sympathy and feeling.

(Thomson, Elizabeth. *Domestic Novel*, 2002: n.p.)

In *Northanger Abbey*, the first real novel of hers she wrote, is shown how she understood this characterization. “The acute sensibility” costs Catherine more harm than good and in many cases it is inappropriate. Only here the characters behave so directly and emotionally. In a way of speaking we could say that in *Northanger Abbey* Jane Austen introduced herself as a writer, although not in a typical way. Instead of showing us of what she will deal with, she showed us what she will not deal with. Therefore, it is such a shame that the novel was published as her last and not as the first, nevertheless this kind of irony can be appreciated in our time, not in the 19th century. This feature, however, stays with “comical” characters in her other books like Mrs. Bennet, Miss Bates or Sir Walter Elliot.

Regarding the “strict morality and honour” all heroes and heroines comply the requirement of the definition of sentimentalism, however, she succeeded in merging them together in entirely new piece of art. The leading characters of morality and honour would probably be Fanny Price, Elinor Dashwood and last but not least John Knightley with strong sense of order. Unfortunately, even here Jane Austen could not write them wholly clearly, although she presented perfect examples of the struggles of their hearts. Their constant battle between what is right and what they feel goes quite well with the basis that Richardson started in *Pamela*, as for the other proof of his influence on Austen’s writing. On the other hand what she was not able to avoid seems obvious due to the fact that all of her novels end with the typical happy end. The good characters get all what they wished for and vice versa. It feels like the ironic author could not help herself to be a little sentimental in the end. This may look like some kind of redemption from her personal life. Her characters got something she did not have and that is the purest piece of sentimentalism even she was not able to escape.

Not only the happy ends belong to the closest parallel to the characterization of sentimentalism. *Pamela* is written in the epistolary form, as the sentimental novel should. Even though the letters play important role in Austen’s works, none of them is written entirely as epistolary (except for *Lady Susan*). Ponder Mr. Darcy or Wentworth’s letters that affect the rest of the plots and in the end lead to the happy endings. She used the most evident aspect in a way of showing us the points of view of the males’ characters as an only opportunity to dip into the heroes’ background with their understanding of the current situation and, more importantly, their feelings. The mere chance for everyone to realise what is suppressed in the hearts. The letters clarify the plot just in time to predict how the things might end up.

Without doubt Jane Austen did not write in one typical genre. She united several components of each and presented them in her own way. Slowly it gets us to her main orientation – Domestic novel as well as to the Victorian novel, the books of Realism. These two huge groups were closely related to one another. The combination of both served Austen as supporting column for expressing her own perception of the world, primarily the society. The definitions of these genres help to understand the whole concept of her works.

Domestic novel, or novel of manners in other words, “describes in detail the customs, behaviour, habits and expectations of a certain social group at a specific time and place.

Deals with gender issues and the differences between city and countryside and very often the authors work with satire.” (Thomson, Elizabeth. *Domestic Novel*, 2002: n.p.)

Victorian novel, on the other hand, records “the great boom of realism, humour or satire in the way of portraying manners, social (industrial) problems, the way of living, especially in individual psychology.” (Sanders, 2004: 425-430)

In these brief characterizations it is perfectly seen what components Jane Austen adopted and how she used them. She is known for her gently satirical portraits of village life and of courtship and marriage. The women she was surrounded by were “passive, ignorant only waiting for husbands” (Thomson, 2002: n.p.) like Mrs. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*. They could not behave how they would like, they were controlled by men. Therefore, the novelist came with something utterly new. She built heroines with strong intelligence and resourcefulness that stand in constant contrast with the rules of decorum that governed social relationships. These rules she examined in detail, in most cases when it came to the marriage matter, and set questions of what should be right. The answers, however, must be figured out by the reader. She just highlighted the distinction between internal merit, goodness of person, and external merit, rank and possessions.

In the matter of speaking the decorum intensified the tension amid the countryside and the city. Austen presented her characters on the field of the country. This setting should indicate peaceful living among inhabitants. Although, in the world of Jane Austen, it does not function like that after all. She did not idealize anything, let alone so much convenient place for a fascinating storyline which makes her not so pleasant for “typical English writer”. Everyone awaits that people would be silly as well as dim-witted, even heroes like Mr. Darcy and Henry Crawford. The strong wit of Elizabeth Bennet and Fanny Price only appears as a pleasant surprise. Someone who can measure up with them in the way people in the city cannot. This causes many problems, the struggle of morality with human nature, the theme is revealed in the romantic plots as well as another social problems at the author’s time. Also “by travelling from one place to another author tests the moral strength and discernment of the young people.” (Kaplan: n.p.) The model goes over and over again with many critics’ assertions of an illustration of Austen’s limited world. When other writers described the poor, she described middle-class. It should not be taken as a proof of her ignorance but simply as a proof of higher intelligence. Why barge in something she did not understand? It would have misled the legacy not to mention the constant keeping on with problem of the tragedy of poor. She came with the themes, settings and relationships

that vast amount of the society was able to identify with and still “knew the difference between literature and life”. (Levine, George. *The Realistic Imagination*, 1981: 65)

One of the excellent talent of Austen is draw a reader in the world she observed. It is no secret that Jane Austen had great powers of observation that give her novels deep authenticity. The characters in every story give the perfect example of this talent. She clearly understood that even in the countryside there can be found interesting spectrum of peculiarities, from amusing, immoral to those who try their best to redeem themselves, these appertain to the author’s favourite. Richard Simson, the critic in the nineteenth century, pointed out:

A character, therefore, unfolded itself to her, not in a statuesque repose, nor as a model without motion, but as a dramatic sketch, a living history, a composite force, which could only exhibit what it was by exhibiting what it did.

(Southam, B.C. *The Critical Heritage: Jane Austen vol. 1*, 1968: 250)

If Victorian novels represent realism this fact occurs more evident. Everyone fancies reading about people who experience the same troubles or develop in the similar way. Austen here describes heroines and heroes without the realisation of the true motivation of their actions which gives them the proper degree of authenticity. They behave like a normal person would, irrespective of the social status that makes the novelist immortal. As for the woman with such qualities, living in the country must have been real torture. Not able to say or act how she would have liked and pretend as if she did not care about it. Writing about everything and everyone from her point of view in the spirit of Realism, humour and a pinch of fantasy, helped to remain sane. Her genius talks to the readers throughout her characters, although Goldwin Smith in 1870 claimed otherwise:

In the case of neither [Jane Austen and William Shakespeare]² does the personality of the author ever come between the spectator and the drama.

(Southam, 1968: 15)

His argument seems logical, but Smith forgot to take into consideration Austen’s sense of irony. Due to the author’s description of everything, from settings to happy endings, anyone can guess true attitude towards the community she lived. In simple terms, “her characters reflect the people around her along with the main characters who reflect part of

² Note of Anna Halamová

herself” (Lerman, Rachel. *The Sense and Sensibility of Jane Austen*, 2000: n.p.) and most importantly she showed us her dreams for the better future, which again represents sentimentalism.

The author’s second greatest ability she possessed is definitely the art of dialogue all together with sense of irony. Through them Austen connected all of her skills to create something unique, something that had not been written yet. At the same time she provokes her high demands on the reader. In the need of distinguishing herself from other writers, Jane Austen involved also the reader into her books. We have to think about every word she has written to reveal the source of the actions she prepared for us. Dialogues function as an aspect of direct and indirect characterization, the collision of two viewpoints through free indirect speech, typical for the novelist. Speeches are tangled up in the enormous amount of riddles so characters are entirely unreliable. Thus the reader has to read very carefully to not be drawn into a warren of intrigue on the author’s side. Otherwise it could end up exactly like in *Emma* when the heroine misinterpreted the actions of Mr. Elton, which led to other miscalculations. The same process is performed during the decision of taking the talks lightly. Some of the writers who wrote in the same style as Jane Austen provide us the ideal example of this misinterpretation. Charlotte Brontë wrote:

Anything like warmth or enthusiasm, anything energetic, poignant, heartfelt, is utterly out of place in commending these works: all such demonstrations the authoress would have met with a well-bred sneer, would have calmly scorned as outré or extravagant. She does her business of delineating the surface of the lives of genteel English people curiously well. She ruffles her reader by nothing vehement, disturbs him with nothing profound. The passions are perfectly unknown to her: she rejects even a speaking acquaintance with that stormy sisterhood. Jane Austen was a complete and most sensible lady, but a very incomplete and rather insensible ...

(A letter to W.S. Williams, April 12 1850)

Charlotte Brontë loved passion and adventure, for sure, however, opinions like these seem to rather rush. If she had taken extra time to read more thoughtfully, she would have discovered not only the actual nature of her characters, but also she would have got into the core of the world Austen had built. If a talented writer as Charlotte Brontë had had a little bit more patience and been opened to the deep thinking, she would have had to admit how much emotion is hidden under the surface. Apart from Brontë, Jane Austen did not feel the

urgency to write things clearly because in the real world it is not like that at all. People shroud themselves in secrets and lies and irony. It does not mean that Charlotte Brontë should have agreed with Austen's perception of the society's manners, but valued the truthfulness of description of the world she had lived in. With the help of dialogues, Austen started a play of life, full of twists, confusion or affection that it may appear at some point as boring, nevertheless at the same time nobody can question the genius of her wits.

Within the heart of each novel of these movements, there comes a question of the portrayal of love. The real challenge for Jane Austen was to capture the vital emotion as she saw it along with the combining it with the expectations of the readers. Inside of Domestic and Victorian novels everything twists around love. On the romantic affairs the novelists usually showed social (later industrial) problems, historic events etc. Therefore, the crucial necessity to interpret them credibly. The features of Realism are also successfully represented, nonetheless they provoke a bittersweet smile. The majority of women at that time was literally hunting the husbands in order to marry well. This view is kind of sad and amusing as well as truthful. People who take Austen's work as a romantic fiction cannot be further from the truth. She had other important things to say than this. Her conception of love classifies on the higher level. It cannot be ranked among the raw version either the version sentimentalism offers. The only time she allowed her characters to loosen up their strong morality and irony was in the moments of the declaration of their affection when no one is able to control the strength of feelings anymore. As for the other romantic aspects, there are hidden in the discreet gestures reader must recognize. Austen's observation is worded as follows: the love comes slowly, unexpectedly in the places we expect least, it does not need exaggerated stream of emotions or huge proofs, for her love is genuine, kind and giving and in most cases very simple. Hence only characters with good hearts deserve it.

There is moreover one feature of the movements of Realism that should be taken into account, at least from the feminist/historical approach. In the early nineteenth century women as the writers by profession were scandalous. They had to hide their real identity behind pseudonyms. Jane Austen was determined to break off this prejudice. During her life, she published four novels under the penname "a Lady" to show obvious disapproval with such matter. Only after her death, her brother Henry published her two last novels *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* under the actual name. Thus the huge influence over the

enormous variety of women to show that even they can achieve something great should be mentioned as well. Therefore, in Victorian era the large boom of women novelists appeared, like Charlotte and Emily Brontë, nevertheless they wrote under pseudonyms Currer and Ellis Bell. This attribute also ranks among the chief features of Victorian and Domestic novel.

From an inspired young Steventon girl full of sentimentalism to a wise grown-up woman thick with comprehension to a propensity to the society's sham. Every novel she wrote fits into a life condition she found herself in. *Northanger Abbey* functions as a starter for creative consciousness, *Sense and Sensibility* answers the everlasting question of battle between heart and mind, *Pride and Prejudice* deals with love beyond social class, *Mansfield Park* probes family bonds in the time of crisis, *Emma* shows remedy of community and through *Persuasion* Jane Austen could consider idea of what-ifs all together with second chances. During her life the industry was on the increase, slowly rising the importance of cities. An acceptance of these standards met up with a great acclaim. The writer did not follow the crowd, instead she followed her own instinct which led to a birth of Victorian novel and the women's anticipation in the men-governed world. She craved the society's change, yet kept returning to the basic worth. Rightfully George Levine asserts that "her art tests Romantic energies against the pragmatic and ordering values of a finely civilized community." (Levine, 1981: 36) Her death unfortunately stopped the writing of a new novel – *Sanditon*. The unfinished book would set totally fresh view on the novelist. Despite of merely 10 chapters one can easily notice the author's shift. It is fairly possible that the course of Austen's writing would have zoomed in even more on social descriptions to the level of Charles Dickens for example. Virginia Woolf commented Jane Austen's narration progress, "She would have been the forerunner of Henry James and of Proust." (Mullan, John. *How Jane Austen's Emma Changed the Face of Fiction*, 2015: n.p.) Regrettably this remains forever a mystery. Her ironic novels anyhow live up to its aim and with an amusing form will continue in it for the reason that every person is able to find there wide-ranging experiences according to their gusto.

2. The Characterization of the Key Novels

2.1. Characterization of *Pride and Prejudice*

Probably the most popular novel of Jane Austen would be *Pride and Prejudice*. This piece of work saw the light of the day in 1813, however, the prime origin of the book takes us back to the end of the eighteenth century when twenty-year-old Austen began writing *First Impressions* under the unfortunate life situation. Sadly the publishers rejected this version and the writer returned to it many years later.

The final form represents rather Domestic novel with some elements of sentimentalism. The Napoleonic wars were slowly coming to its end, the behaviour with the people's mentality changed radically thus the need for some stability was almost vital. Jane Austen tackles the themes of social classes, love as well as reputation plus she shows these problems on the deep dissension between the countryside and the city. Take an example of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as an exemplar of snobbish upper-class or Mr. Collins, an illustration of toadying lower-class. Notwithstanding these troubles the author uses the light tone which brings the sense of easiness and nonviolence to the work of hers.

The whole story is told in the third-person narrative from Elizabeth Bennet's point of view, nevertheless the author offers the readers also several excursions into Mr. Darcy's character. To the contrary of these movements, the past tense is used with an exception of a letter of Mr. Darcy which makes an absolutely crucial plot twist and causes a great struggle in a heroine's heart. The setting takes place in rural England more likely at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In extol of the nature Austen emphasizes the role of purity in the world, in other words she judges the (im)morality of the city. This is demonstrated in Elizabeth's love for nature along with her best known statement: "What are men to rocks and mountains?" (Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*, 2003: 152) Also the power of nature – in some ways - triggers at first admiration of Elizabeth and later romantic love towards Mr. Darcy when she sees the effort put into his mansion – Pemberley – as the resemblance of a competent man who is able to take a good care of what he values the most.

This can point out the condemnation of acute sensibility, too. Jane Austen tries to highlight that the people's affection should not submit to the rushed feelings or as the original title suggests, to our first impressions. Exactly like in nature, everything comes with time. The development of two main protagonists goes together with the development of their affections. Nonetheless, the transition would not happen without journeys as a

basic motif of the book. Elizabeth's visit of her friend Charlotte starts a long chain of changes in the matter of her attitude to the "fine, tall person" (Austen, 2003: 12) not to mention her trip to Pemberley. Nevertheless, the more important journey should be taken into consideration, the journey of Mr. Darcy to Longbourn at the beginning of the story. This act, in fact, initiates key variation of the perspective of the main protagonists.

At the heart of the novel is theme of love, of course. The reason why the book celebrated such success is hidden in it. Austen brought to life two characters who are on the same level of personal qualities apart from their sex or social status. They are equal, which was something unseen in the nineteenth century. The possibility to marry someone entirely out of reach can be considered as a rebellious act from the writer's side. She wanted to call attention to the fact that love itself should set social conventions free. To emphasize it she put more than one obstacle in the way of two lovers only to make their bond even stronger (Lady Catherine's control over her nephew, Wickham's deceit etc.). Happiness and justice win in the end just like they should in the world of fiction. In opposition to this sentimental notion, Jane Austen mentions the typical marriage in her time. That is the portrayal of relationship between Charlotte Lucas and Mr. Collins. Through them, she points out all that she is against.

No wonder critics appreciate *Pride and Prejudice* so much. It represents everything that possibly never happens in real life but on the other hand it is served with a great amount of life truths and Austen's sense of irony. The perfect union of presenting the problems in society in addition to romantic plot. Hence it does not merely belong to the sentimental novels, it acts more like a rich source of dazzling wit, detailed observation and hint of undying love, instead. Although *Pride and Prejudice* has its place like the most romantic tale of Jane Austen, to look closely into it, the hard work can be found behind it as well.

2.2. Characterization of *Emma*

In spite of the popularity of the previously mentioned novel, *Emma* shows to its readers something utterly different. When Jane Austen started writing the first concept, she had finally moved into her very house in Chawton. A feeling of stability after so many years of depending on her brothers all together with the possibility to earn her own money set off remarkable difference from the earlier books. The independence inspired the only self-governing woman character who does not need money or favourable marriage. What to

expect from the novelist who breaks her overall pattern and creates completely unique work even for her?

Firstly, Emma's character slowly indicates Victorian novel's aspects and sentimentalism is nearly restricted to its basics. Austen's priority here belongs mainly to the word games with a strong power of human imagination. The writer improves her sense for dialogue to an absolute perfection; therefore, a reader is engulfed with one trick after another. This is stressed with free indirect speech, but in *Emma* Austen leaves no clues to readers, they must find the truth on their own. Basically, the author does not tell people anything.³ Due to that, even the real nature of the leading female protagonist stays well-hidden and ambiguous. The most ideal example would be riddles Emma and Mr. Elton use. The usage of riddles serves as a parallel to the "game" which Jane Austen plays with readers. The tone is still light and ironic, although this time indicates the novelist's rules that people must obey.

Secondly, the status of Emma changed. Instead of being poor or in need of a husband she desperately strives for support and safety of her friend Harriet who actually has problems like these. The story's setting in peaceful Highbury in the early nineteenth century gives more chance to explore those differences. Austen captured social manners as the main theme of the book. A colorful variety of people in Highbury is portrayed as a firm pillar where every turn can be predicted. Ultimately the apt descriptions of local visits or parties do not come in vain and fulfil their purpose effectively to document these complex relationships. Nevertheless, the structure seems to fall apart when a governess Miss Taylor marries a rich nobleman Mr. Weston with the help of our heroine. Emma stands at the top itself in Highbury, yet she is torn between what is right and what she wants to be right. She tries to match together people who should not be matched in the first place like her dear friend Harriet and Mr. Elton or Jane Fairfax with Mr. Dixon. The more Emma intends to make things right, the more mess she creates instead and immediately becomes the only intruder in town. The unmistakable upper-class woman seemingly reveals that she is worse than everyone else around her. Still, it would not be typical Jane Austen if things were this bad in her novel. At the end of the story, when all is said and done, the author offers Emma's awakening due to Mr. Knightley's lesson to undo wrong she has done. The readers discover no real danger, assured about the whole journey as Emma's growing up

³ Mullan, John. *How Jane Austen's Emma Changed the Face of Fiction*, 2015: n.p.

on the moral level. The writer's belief in saving society appears stronger in *Emma*, but it can be accomplished only with a little help of love certainly.

In *Emma* Austen's disapproval with society reaches its top even though in a shape of a satirical comedy. After many years of not writing, experiencing never-ending torments, one could not blame her for being angry at the world she lived in, not being able to do anything about it. The frustration must have been displayed somehow, somewhere. Thus she chose a solution she knew very well to release her fury into creation of an exclusive game of intrigues covered in friendly and pleasant Highbury. *Emma* can be also called one-off because it has never repeated. The last novel published during her life, in December 1815, arouses the readers' sense of justice furthermore hope for a change.

Two novels, such these, could not be more like chalk and cheese, yet be more alike. Thanks to the skillful author a reader does not recognize the difference at first. The same tone, irony and types of the people's qualities initiate a similarity. However, they only cover what is hidden under the surface. Notwithstanding, they both effectively inform about rotten judgement in our world together with a hint of remedy. The reason behind the change may be a long time distance of not writing; therefore, a big turnover of manners took control and also approximately ten years is, too, lengthy for a personal development. As one's personality, the writer's work progresses as well, nevertheless a little piece always remains the same. Nonetheless, due to this element the readers love both Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse's escapades because even so unlike they are after all alike.

3. Comparison of Male Characters

As it was written earlier Jane Austen grew up in the family of the men's majority. Started from writers in the father's library to end up with her five brothers. One would expect that her knowledge of such matter would reach its maximum, however, the opposite is the truth.

From youth she was surrounded by young boys who, like it or not, were only her brothers. How well could she, as a sister, know the corners of their hearts, especially in the romantic concern? Austen merely experienced better parts of theirs, like honor, kindness, intelligence and steadiness. She was engulfed by these qualities whole childhood. Therefore, the impact with reality caused significant breach in her way of seeing males, the impact she had never recovered from.

The core problem arose from the unfamiliarity of the men's natural environment. The author did not see how they behaved in private when they were only in the company of other men. Hence she portrayed them from two viewpoints she was able to identify with as well as how men appeared to women during their formal meetings. This two sides were described by Margaret Wilson as "the hero and the other man." (Wilson, Margaret. *The Hero and the Other Man in Jane Austen's Novels*, 1996: n.p.) Clearly anyone can tell what is hidden under Wilson's monikers. The hero indicates everything the novelist required from a man worthy enough to become a husband, which means kindness, honour etc. She was acquainted with such characteristics in her family and found them missing in the world. The hero thence suggests someone above the social prejudices, someone better. In contrast Austen offers the other man full of commonness of a "bad boy". The exact type of male who attracts young ladies; on the contrary, lacking good manners. He can be very charismatic, passionate, convincing and also good-looking, plainly everything women desire the most. Take an example in Frank Churchill, Henry Crawford or John Willoughby. In spite of this description the more universal one is served here. The stubborn kind of a man who denies change, personal development and always looks back only on himself. Taking this point of view into consideration almost every man in Austen's work starts as the other man. Jane Austen tries to convince us that the transformation is possible, of course, if you have enough inspiration. The possibility of change was crucial for people living in the early nineteenth century as the rise of the industrial revolution. Nevertheless, Wilson forgot another – very important – type of male character, the father. Easy forgettable, inconspicuous yet absolutely vital for the perception of not only the men's but

the people's in general past and future growth due to the invisible influence over family – especially daughters.

3.1. The Father and the Husband in *Pride and Prejudice*

3.1.1. Mr. Bennet, the Father

In Austen's second published book the position of a father stays more or less hidden. Mr. Bennet, the only man in Bennet's household, does not appreciate everlasting girls' chattering about silly things, permanently runs away to the safety of his library where he can spare time as he wants, usually reading. This self-gratification emerged from twenty-three-year old marriage with Mrs. Bennet, a woman so unlike him. In order to understand the character of Mr. Bennet one must firstly realize the relationship between him and his wife and his two oldest daughters. The writer describes him as:

- a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve and caprice, that the experience of three-and-twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character.

(Austen, 2003: 7)

A mere sentence suffices to explain the whole nature of the master of the house. Although looking back to his younger self must evoke questions about the veracity of the novelist's statement. Is this a man who could fall in love and later marry Mrs. Bennet? Is this a man who could Mrs. Bennet marry? Of course not. His personality – as it is known in the novel – was created during those long years by one crushed hope followed by another.

Imagine young, handsome, wealthy and ambitious man whose intention in the eighteenth century was to marry beautiful, fertile woman who not only gives him an heir, but also becomes his equal. Then, he met beautiful, young Miss Gardiner whose frivolity had attracted him enough to marry her without really knowing her. The first disappointment stroke very soon when her true qualities came to the surface. Mr. Bennet was able to face the reality of an ignominious wife thanks to longing for a son on whom he could pass his knowledge, time and money, his inheritor. Even this dream was crushed as the years went by with only girls being born. Bigger bitterness turned up with every other girl until it became nature to him. Not to mention the expense for six females. Spending so much money triggered decrease of his fortune as well. The position of the father's character is depicted quite hopeless as if he accepted the misfortunes, not willing to fight anymore. Sarcasm, total indifference in their behaviour – learning not to get away with their

problems, escaping to his own world where he could find at least some amount of inner peace; with these qualities he armed himself against the consequences of his rash decision additionally they made the bitterness overly noticeable even for someone like Mr. Darcy.

Initially, the will for fighting against the odds was there, Jane and Elizabeth are the irrefutable proof. He participated in their upbringing, maybe even he had the main word in it. Hoping for them to be males, he had given them everything he could offer. The result of such action caused their interest in literature, wisdom and mainly in Elizabeth's case – similar personality. These factors influence approach to their future. Through his two eldest children, he is able to find the freedom he always craved. Expecting they would let him stay with them after the marriages of theirs. The similarity between him and Elizabeth can be considered incredibly close that his reaction to the bond among his daughter and Mr. Darcy may be interpreted in two proper ways.

Firstly, he is afraid of the fact that Elizabeth could end up like him thanks to reckless judgement, only saving her family's name. Secondly, he also sees something alike in Mr. Darcy himself thus he does not want her to marry someone like him because she deserves better. Both situations demonstrate he was pretty much aware of what was wrong about his behaviour. It signifies the possibility of changing if he wanted to. Moreover, in both cases, the dear father's concern is shown. Mere assurance of reciprocal affection from Elizabeth's part soothes him. Mr. Bennet must admit that the wedlock would be happier than his in order to the willingness of both main characters to change and grow together. He realises that Lizzy has found the true happiness he himself was searching for long time ago. Nonetheless, his goal of getting away from his wife and other daughters is fulfilled due to spending a great deal of time at Pemberley.

Actions like these indicate the clear love for Jane with Elizabeth; therefore, he is capable of such a tender emotion plus the change of character, but the resignation on his life situation is much stronger than affection for the sisters. Maybe they were only his last connection with the man he used to be. The reason for keeping the sanity. When the reason was gone he does not have a must staying at home with single daughters and his spouse. The relationship with other children and attitude towards them, after Elizabeth and Jane's weddings, is utterly summarized in Mr. Bennet's statement: "If any young men come for Mary or Kitty, send them in, for I am quite at leisure." (Austen, 2003: 357) A reader can nearly touch the apathy in him. He would give his own descendants to anyone, despite the personalities, social status etc., who would come, just to get rid of them. The disability of

loving them enough causes runaways to his favourite child, perhaps sensing that he would hurt them even more if would stay with them. His lack of interest in Lydia's trip to Brighton sets off the whole line of unchangeable problems with a fatal solution. To prevent something like this from happening again, he rather steps aside because deep down he knows that he would react exactly the same in the future. He is being kind in the merciless situation he created.

There exists other motive for staying right at Pemberley – his deep respect for Elizabeth's husband rooted in gratitude. He is very aware of what Mr. Darcy did for his family and what the help of such delicate matter means. To get to know the man of Lizzy's heart is the least he can do in return. Moving his fondness from the rest of the daughters to someone without his financial support Bennet family's social existence would have not remained the same is a debatable deed. Someone can understand it as the action of a cold-hearted man, whose only intention is to thank Mr. Darcy, nevertheless another point of view shows him in more suitable picture. As the man who tries to like the husband of his child and wanted to be liked back, all for the love of Elizabeth. "I could not have parted with you, my Lizzy, to any one less worthy." (Austen, 2003: 356) The declaration speaks for itself. He values him despite his previous opinion and if no other change in him is possible, than let it be the only one.

When all is said and done Mr. Bennet continues to shock readers with his sarcasm and aloofness, which concealed the unhappiness in a marriage as well as with his warm heart only reserved for two daughters. One can either judge him for lack of love for the majority or adore him for love he gives to the minority. The union of these characteristic signifies that he just belongs to people living in a real world. His hopes were disappointed, yet he managed to find at least the parent's love. He cannot be less perfect but on the other hand he cannot be more perfect normal human being. The wise man struck by fate fighting for keeping his own sanity.

3.1.2. Mr. Darcy, the Husband

From the era *Pride and Prejudice* saw the light of the day to this time two hundred years later, one legendary man, whose devotion to a woman he loves is transcendent, enjoys immense popularity. Fitzwilliam Darcy, the aloof gentleman from Pemberley, represents at the beginning of the story all contemptible in Jane Austen's age – a man of good looks, money, social status, although overconfident "haughty, reserved and fastidious and his

manners, though well-bred, were not inviting.” (Austen, 2003: 18) This is Elizabeth Bennet’s description of his behaviour around people less noble than himself. Nearby well-known friends as Mr. Bingley or family like Georgiana Darcy, he unleashes his true generous personality. Even in these bonds he is set in the superior position, in Bingley’s case he is more intellectual and in his sister’s case he is older brother, simply dominant all the time. When a reader has a chance to meet him for the first time, it is exactly like that – he charms everyone around in the room with his fortune, yet they soon discover his looking down on them, take an example in not wanting to dance at all. Still in his arrogance and bias, he manages to notice energetic, mature opponent, the heroine.

Moving around happy, carefree Bingley and Georgiana Darcy initiates the first flashes of admiration in Elizabeth that completely catches him off guard. His intellect with pride could not catch up with the new feelings coming to life and he does the only thing he should not do – insult her in the presence of hers, without even knowing it. Putting aside an unfortunate verdict over her appearance he must have seen the easiness, resistance together with kindness and nobility. This qualities were hidden in her eyes and the author mentions countless times that the exact first thing he admires is Elizabeth’s eyes. Not many men would, even nowadays, primary observe eyes, which is fascinating because no one so reserved and cold could be attracted with something so basic. The signal for readers that Mr. Darcy is not an empty shell without deep feelings like the novelists suggests and as he likes to present himself in the unfamiliar company.

He was born in noble family where he was for a long time the only child, moreover the heir. All attention had been on him. A certain amount of arrogance was handed over his mind since childhood. Also, from a very young age he has been moving in the highest society, getting to know people who were noble maybe only because of their blood rather their characters, consider the behaviour of Caroline Bingley or Lady de Bourgh, both very close women in Darcy’s life. No wonder he adapted to such level of nobility, taught how to suppress most of his good qualities in front of these wrong people. He trained himself in aloofness and with time the initial pride worsened and extended to every company he found himself in, automatically assumed that all people are the same, with a little exception of Bingley. The extension blinded him from seeing the change to worse that had happened. The shock of finding true, innocent, honourable soul among false ones and, more importantly, much lower than he was used to, must have been mind-blowing. The

disturbance of his peace Jane Austen explains in the little excursions into Darcy's point of view where a reader can discover real fondness behind the cold mask.

Darcy's fascination with Elizabeth increasingly grows after each meeting. All of he knows about the world vanishes once he learns more about her. He takes in the fact that Miss Elizabeth Bennet is different from his (and eventually her) family, but somehow perfectly living up to his priorities he did not know he had. Nevertheless, the circumstances about the relationship between her sister Jane and his dear friend Mr. Bingley make him (incorrectly) realise that falling in love with a person, whose feelings are not mutual, only causes pain. Possibly thinking about chance of being in the same position as Bingley, Darcy does an unselfish thing ever. To save his friend from such a torment and at the same time to escape from his fear of rejection, he compels him to leave Netherfield Park merely hurting both of them. Nonetheless, is the fear the only interpretation of his action? Take into consideration Darcy's strict logic in the first phase of the story. During their short visit, he had a few opportunities to meet Lizzy, but still he did not get the complete picture of her personality. This argument wins and he concludes that their ways probably will not cross again, thence his ambivalent feelings should sooner, or later pass.

Hard to say what would have happened, if it had not been Elizabeth's visit at Charlotte's new home and coincidentally nearby Mr. Darcy's aunt, Lady Catherine de Bourgh. The event sparkled a new hope within him all together with uncertainty of second chance so strange for otherwise confident gentleman. Without speculation he came to Rosings because of Lizzy, even at the time when he was slowly putting up with the idea of not seeing her again. An effort in getting to know her better reflects on Darcy's gently shifting thoughts, which creates a weakness in his impenetrable mask. Yet, for that moment it is not enough. He does not think about her as a living creature, only as a romantic notion. The unlucky confession proves believing in positive answer, lacking any hesitation. However, he obviously did not know what to do with his affection, he tried to show it instead. He was visiting the Collins when he did not have to, he found himself in situations that must have been annoying for him and most importantly he was keen on Elizabeth's health. In many of these occasions he remained silent. A concern about rejection does not fit the clarification, somewhat like shyness to expose true emotions. The fierce answer initiates two key results. At first, Darcy's pride has been hurt but on the other hand, he is not ashamed for the love he feels. Secondly, he respects Elizabeth's decision, admits his defeat

like a real gentleman should, despite the pain. He accepts her arguments against the previous actions and takes them as a moral lesson.

By then Mr. Darcy displays all he has learnt about Lizzy's customs during her stay. He seeks her out in the park and delivers an explaining letter. A letter that plays very significant role in the whole novel because it has vital meaning for both. Until this time the readers got only small fragments of his infatuation, thus one can doubt its seriousness. Here, he shows high opinion about this country girl. He values her more than pride or status, hence he takes her conclusions to heart. Practically, Darcy acknowledges that there is something terribly wrong in his behaviour. Elizabeth's arguments made him ponder and he tries to explain misunderstandings as the first step of his change. Notwithstanding, the personal contact persists the same with a little exception. His chivalry does not allow to embarrass both of them, so he hands Elizabeth the letter "with a look of haughty composure." (Austen, 2003: 190) This time a reader does not see the sign of his arrogance but the accepting feelings. Apart from unfulfilled hopes he decides to better himself, or be true to his personality.

How badly Mr. Darcy keeps trying can be seen during Lizzy's time in his mansion – Pemberley. He attempts to please not only her but also her uncle with aunt. The kind-heartedness he expresses to unknown, less important people amazes immediately. Especially when all of his attention is mainly turn on them, not Lizzy. Hard to say if he wants to show her how much he changes, maybe in order to impress her, or not to open the old wounds. The introduction to Georgiana seems nearly void as the highest compliment Elizabeth could get because Darcy's sister is the most valuable person for him. Apparently, both explanations are right. Even Fitzwilliam Darcy belongs to the majority in terms of emotional complexity. The affection varied cold logic into hope (probably) without the fulfilment. What the readers see now is not the same person as at the beginning of the novel. The original iron certainty is gone, replaced with fear and weakness. Nevertheless, it does not cause the negative impact, one could say the complete opposite. It was proven that a person, particularly a man, from higher social class is nothing more than everyone else in the field of emotions, actually it makes him nobler and happier. Starting to be a little selfish, think about himself, too. Trying to realize what he really wants from life, a woman and a marriage. The narrow-mindedness of the outer world bounded his spirit and now he finally sets it free, or at least intends to. All thanks to a failed attempt in love. The

first person who dared to say no to him teaches him the most significant thing in the world, to let the character grow.

The atmosphere in Pemberley looks peaceful, yet a little bit tense due to the last encounter of the couple. Still a reader perceives it as a natural environment, which is disturbed by Lydia's and Wickham's nasty incident. This episode happens to be most crucial for the future of Mr. Darcy. He manages to solve two problems with one action. Firstly, he settles up the debt he had with Wickham. Secondly, he has the opportunity to repay Elizabeth the favour. A large amount of money together with arranged wedding function like a tool for no mortification of the Bennets'. In this case, Darcy could have asked for Lizzy's hand in return for his generous help and nobody would have denied him the right. He must have known that if he had let Lydia to her fate, the whole family would have been ashamed and any plans with Lizzy would have been impossible. There are many explanations of such a decent act from Mr. Darcy's part. However, the insistence on a fact of not telling a living soul about his participation eliminates the selfishness from the list. He does not feel the need of sharing a good turn, mainly in front of a woman he loves. He does not want her gratitude or duty, he wants her to choose him, not his acts or fortune, by herself. This sounds as a grown-up man who matches up with a revolutionary time.

Once he undid one of Elizabeth's comment on previous action, he feels a must to remedy the next one. To bring Bingley and Jane back together. Darcy could not do greatest deed (for Lizzy) because of her undying love for her older sister. He admits his previous error in judgement and after reconsideration of such subject he must confess that no one should stand in their happiness. Regardless of the good intentions, status or anything else, in the love affair he should stay away, which is another proof of his whole change. Simply, his help is not always helpful, more likely the exact opposite and his high social status does not mean anything in the ordinary people's interaction.

Saving Bingley's future, however, evoked gossips that got to Lady Catherine de Bourg herself and with her very unpleasant visit she speaks out her own opinion from the perspective of a superior social class. Her rudeness contrasts with Darcy's clarity. The reconciliation to mundanity, the rejection of superiority over anyone lower than them only because of wealth. A reader is able to detect a substantial shift between the attitude of Mr. Darcy at the beginning and at the end of the novel by comparison with his aunt. Also, the encounter with Lady Catherine indicates the final stage of his permanent change. The standing against blood relative suggests his renouncement of world order, he finally

entirely embraces an inevitable variation that the state of the current world is not the most ideal. The moment of revival “has made him forget what he owes to himself and to all his family.” (Austen, 2003: 335) The acceptance of something more important than money, like kindness, respect and last but not least love of any kind to one other, completes his character and is rewarded with happy ending.

As for Wilson’s classification Mr. Darcy does not seem like a hero type for a very long time. In the beginning he represents rather the other man or even the father. It is possible that Jane Austen drew parallel between those two men in the heroine’s life. Before a recognition of Elizabeth Bennet, he had pointed to the very same life as Mr. Bennet, he would have married Anne de Bourgh, lived false life only because of his stubbornness, just like the father had done, become the bitter man. Mr. Bennet serves in the novel as a warning example of what should have become of Fitzwilliam Darcy. Nevertheless, he chose for his intellect to grow, not to surrender to the public opinion; therefore, he gets the benefits of a good life. It somehow unlocked the deep buried “hero” qualities and made him a man. Those qualities were too well-hidden in Mr. Bennet, but the life choices with circumstances disabled them to show its true colours. The heroine could identify these characteristics in the father and also later in her future husband, even if it took her longer than expected. The similarity of two men resembles the state of thinking in those days. The world was full of people like Mr. Bennet, limited in old believing, denied the new ways. The novelist sensed that a character like Mr. Darcy would have served as an example that the change does not emerge out of nowhere, but from people who were disappointed with usual way because it did not fulfil their deep longing. The world was changing, so there was no place for old opinions and Mr. Darcy only shows that it is possible, if you have enough motivation.

3.2. The Father and the Husband in *Emma*

3.2.1. Mr. Woodhouse, the Father

In *Emma* the role of a father goes together with the social class of the Woodhouse family. On the contrary, Mr. Woodhouse adjusts himself to the conformity that was foreign for Mr. Bennet. The person who has everything he desires for entire life and in his old age is finally able to raise whims into a new level. Emma’s father seems like the typical spoiled upper-class man who did not work for a day his entire life and all together with aging

becomes more annoying owing to the boredom in the ostensibly small town in the country. The author describes him as:

- a nervous man, easily depressed, fond of everybody that he was used to and hating to part with them, hating change of every kind.

(Austen, Jane. *Emma*, 2011: 5)

The social status of this man gives the novelist bigger room for a better illustration of his comical character. Additionally, Mr. Woodhouse's scope of activity drastically reduces from Mr. Bennet's, so the reader's compassion is hard to evoke. The description also serves as an indication that no change has ever figured in his life. Thus he shows the readers the perfect example of the rigidity in that time.

The heir of family fortune, Mr. Woodhouse, was raised up like a true gentleman to the outside world. He always acts politely to the ladies such as Mrs. Elton or Mrs. Weston (formerly Taylor), his presence at the local parties shines through when he finally decides to go there. Although for the closest family and friends, he sets completely different façade. He safely spends the whole life in Highbury in one house surrounded only by the people like him or the people who admire him. Therefore, his judgement is clouded with the forcing his opinion to everybody else, he acts as if he knows everything and is right no matter what. While the opposite is quite right. He declares his loneliness by not going almost anywhere, so his views are rather shrank, he only understands something he experiences, which is not much. Rare visiting of the social gatherings is conditioned with his terms on weather and healthy environment. The only relationship he has is with his two daughters, mainly with Emma, however, the better bond he finds with her sister. In Emma he sees his saviour, just like at Christmas party where he looks for his daughter "for comfort; and her assurances of safety." (Austen, 2011: 101)

The childlike, fearful man, who thinks that everyone serves him, including his own family, and the whole universe turns around him, had trouble with finding a wife. His character did not guarantee that the woman who married him would have loved him, more likely a reader could presume that she was interested in his money. Maybe an aversion to weddings the readers are forced to witness played some role, perhaps he saw matrimony like a prison. A place where one must surrender cosiness, ponder about someone other than oneself, prefer the company of other people. Mr. Woodhouse is the right opposite. The simplicity of his life as well as character unable him to fully include himself in the society

and be the true companion. No wonder Emma welcomed the presence of Mr. Knightley with open arms. It must have been refreshment to talk about something different than diseases. The only good intention of Mr. Woodhouse may be his dear concern about the health of others close to him. On the other hand, the insight into this matter might also mean that his worries about the other's health would affect his very own. So even this issue is highly debatable. Yet again, the question of health appears.

The writer gives the readers an enormous amount of reports about his physical condition, such as "inability to walk far, an upset stomach from wedding cake, becomes too warmed with a fire and has to move back etc." (Austen, 2011: 8; 19; 171) Still if the age is taken into consideration, a reader can discover under the hypochondriac mask a hidden old man filled with fears of staying all alone and ageing. The thought of staying by himself without anybody looking after him could be causing the damaging behaviour he constantly keeps showing. Why should he strain when for all his life everyone handles him with kid gloves? Unfortunately, Austen did not give many opportunities in exploring this character more into the detail. Mr. Woodhouse's qualities are portrayed only from three perspectives, which means that his scope of importance lowers for the novelist or there was nothing more to examine. His simplicity tightly links with the straightforwardness corresponding to the social classes when everything was planned without any pondering.

Nevertheless, focus on the period of his wedlock. Surely, Mr. Woodhouse hoped for a male heir, which can be the mere reason for his marriage, but was disappointed and left whole parenting on his wife. Unfortunately, she died thence the upbringing became his responsibility. Sadly, he did not care about parenting them or it could be said that he did not want to give up the comfort of his so he hired governess, Miss Taylor. A person like him, could not manage such a delicate task. The only thing he did in his children's case was spoiling them in every way. In return for "taking care" of them he uses Emma as a tool for his well-being. She almost decided on dedicating her entire life to look after him and after doing one, so called, selfish thing as wanting to marry a man her heart desires father Woodhouse feels betrayed, aggrieved and practically compels Mr. Knightley to move in as soon as they tied a knot. A reaction like this is not typical for a loving parent, but serves as a confirmation of the fact that Mr. Woodhouse has problem with the change itself to an extent of nearly paranoid anxieties.

The comic character as Mr. Woodhouse causes many smiles on the face of readers. Although the more deep you look, the less you find him comic in every way. Yes, some

can say that he loves his children and his hypochondriac tendencies only indicate the nervousness of ageing. Nonetheless, the behaviour he shows to Emma throughout the whole novel suggests sadder assumption. His selfishness with spoiled personality lead to a deduction that he is not worthy enough of understanding like Mr. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*. Apart from him Mr. Woodhouse does not try to assimilate or surpass. Thinking only on himself and his needs, possibly spoiling the daughters as well because he does not know how to be strict and the tight circle of his interest make the sympathies harder to get from an audience. This factor may result in not accepting him as an example of good qualities, rather the exact opposite. Still, Jane Austen illustrated the most disgraceful nature in elated way to stay unseen to the readers, exactly like in the real world and right in the style of entire *Emma*.

3.2.2. Mr. Knightley, the Husband

The most representative novel of Austen conceals another unusual aspect, which the readers tend to overlook. Above all the gossips, intrigues, parties and long monologues of Miss Bates that catch the reader's eye more often, one can simply omit the leading feature in the whole book, "not a trifling, silly young man." (Austen, 2011: 169) Mr. George Knightley, the proprietor of Donwell Abbey. His age may cause the readers' confusion because in his thirty-seven or eight years he essentially differs from other Jane Austen's heroes, not only in age. The owner of the house "larger than Hartfield, and totally unlike it, covering a good deal of ground, rambling and irregular, with many comfortable and one or two handsome bedrooms" (Austen, 2011: 290) possesses a great amount of characteristics typical for a grown up man whose character was settled long time ago. This factor influences the overlooking because he is not represented as someone young and passionate like Mr. Darcy, whose opinions on life and society can be transformed. He could be also recognised as a father figure instead of a romantic one since Mr. Woodhouse entirely does not fulfil his proper role. Yet, Mr. Knightley's nature proffers the same desires of anyone else.

During the story Emma mentions that Mr. Knightley was sixteen-year-old when she was born. Hard to say how their relationship would have looked like before his brother John married Emma's sister, Isabella. Throughout this marriage he is related with Woodhouses, maybe not voluntarily. Since then he became a great friend to Mr. and Miss Woodhouse, a staple of a new family and his optimism is always welcomed in Hartfield. This could, too, indicate a reason behind the constant care of his about Emma's behaviour, as he "was one

of the few people who could see faults in Emma Woodhouse, and the only one who ever told her of them.” (Austen, 2011: 8) As her older brother-in-law, part of a family, he is allowed to chide her for her snobbery⁴ without being rude. A manner quite interesting due to his own social status. He takes Emma’s personal development to the heart all together with the necessity of making her the best version of herself. Relatively young Donwell proprietor learnt to appreciate a good character irrespective of the people’s position. According to him, those people deserve more respect and compassion. He shows such philosophy countless times towards Mrs. and Miss Bates, Jane Fairfax together with a farmer, Robert Martin. His preference in walking instead of carriage rides reflects independence he has over himself. No wonder they go to him for some advice. He is very well aware of the hard-earned money, not taking them for granted. The thought that he must have been in these kind-hearted situations for a long period of time and did not become bitter or cruel serves him good. All of this makes him a noble man more than a fortune ever will.

The importance of this character is foreseen by his first appearance. Even after a long journey Mr. Knightley does not hesitate to visit Woodhouses. The sad tone from the beginning is gone and changes into something cheerful, additionally his close friendship with Emma is described as it is in the whole book. Knightley’s straight-forwardness with her can be considered as one of a kind because he shares bond like this with nobody else, telling her everything wrong about behaviour of hers, his real opinions etc. Take it from the initial meeting with him to the very last one. He is the most reasonable person in the novel, nevertheless does not lack humour. The complete disaster of the Emma and Harriett’s amity is known to him even before its deepening and the theory is justified with Emma’s bad influence over Harriett, especially in the rejection of Robert Martin. Such a good guess proves his acquaintance with her personality particularly not having any illusions about it. As the proof of the humorous side of him, the jealousy of Frank Churchill must be taken into consideration.

In *Emma* it takes longer for a reader to get under Mr. Knightley’s skin as his presence is only explained in the presence of others, although the author lets him speak pretty clearly and openly. The first change can be acknowledged in Jane Fairfax’s arrival. Thanks to her visit at Highbury, he is able to demonstrate how considerate he can be to the people desperate for help. From lending them his own carriage through the dear concern about

⁴ Triska, Zoë. *Jane Austen Birthday: Here’s Why Mr. Knightley Is WAY Better Than Mr. Darcy*, 2014: n.p.

their health to bringing them apples. Exactly actions like these misled Mrs. Weston's judgement about Knightley's feelings towards young Jane Fairfax. A man like Mr. Knightley could afford such manners toward poorer women without being romantically involved. Nonetheless, the attention he keeps showing her might misinform the readers, too, which was probably the purpose of the novelist. If you are able to free yourself from the influence of the game parallel, you will find out that in fact he tries to get to know a girl more compatible for Emma rather than Harriett Smith in terms of friendship. The speculation about feelings he might or might not have during this "investigation" stays a mystery. The state of his mind and heart is unknown at this point, but it is possible that he could have cared, nevertheless the affection did not last long. The other thing Jane Fairfax brings to the light in Mr. Knightley's character is his perspective on women. The explanation of his to Emma and Mrs. Weston sounds fairly revealing:

Her sensibilities, I suspect, are strong – and her temper excellent in its power of forbearance, patience, self-control; but it wants openness. She is reserved, more reserved, I think, than she used to be—And I love an open temper.

(Austen, 2011: 231)

The "open temper" is stressed out for the second time as it was written earlier in this conversation and leads directly to the only woman in Knightley's life who possesses the particular feature. Furthermore, the dialogue between Mrs. Weston and him at the beginning of the novel about Emma's physical appearance serves as a key to his requirements on the perfect woman for himself. He admits that he "loves to look at her" (Austen, 2011: 31), although he emphasizes her personality:

With all dear Emma's little faults, she is an excellent creature. Where shall we see a better daughter, or a kinder sister, or a truer friend? No, no; she has qualities which may be trusted –

(Austen, 2011: 31)

In a world where the looks or money played almost the most important role, the wealthy gentleman, who is expected to observe them, expresses disturbing thought that demolish all conventions in the nineteenth century. A man of a good fortune wants a wife with her own reason and mind. A risk tactic that Jane Austen always indicates, but never uses in a direct way, not even in *Pride and Prejudice*.

The other side of the reasonable and serious Mr. Knightley is offered by the interaction with the match of Miss Fairfax, Frank Churchill. In the town like Highbury where young suitable men were almost rare species for someone like Emma, except of course the hero, who could hardly find the equal rival. Yet, Frank Churchill's staying at his father and stepmother changes this condition. A young, handsome, rich gentleman and undoubtedly the only one who can measure up with Mr. Knightley in Emma's attention. He is supposed to be the envy of Knightley from the very start. His objections about Churchill's bad manners are wholly appropriate. Hard to say if he really had a suspicion about his rotten character, or he was determined to spoil Emma's view on him before even meeting him. He argues against every good side which Emma finds in Frank, in doing so he attracts more suspicion and all together with the arguments of the heroine he lets the readers peek under the humorous side of him. Although his odd acting is not unnoticed by Emma:

To take a dislike to a young man, only because he appeared to be of a different disposition from himself, was unworthy the real liberality of mind which she was always used to acknowledge in him; for with all the high opinion of himself, which she had often laid to his charge, she had never before for a moment supposed it could make him unjust to the merit of another.

(Austen, 2011: 120)

The jealousy, on the other hand, awakens Emma's foolishness in those cases, to nearly forgetting his own beliefs and moral principles; therefore, he seems more human. The situation does not change with Churchill's arrival to Highbury, only worsens owing to the attachment created between Emma and him. Everyone begins to adore the young man, blinded by his London charms, but "there was one spirit among them not to be softened, from its power of censure, by bows or smiles—Mr. Knightley." (Austen, 2011: 165) If Mr. Knightley had in that time any romantic intention with Emma, they would be questioned during Frank's stay.

Nevertheless, the sensitive side of the hero is indirectly uncovered by Mr. Churchill as well. This discovery can be found in the chapter that is written entirely from Knightley's perspective, which only highlights his importance and the author's progress from the time of *Pride and Prejudice*, too. The hero notices a hint of intimate closeness between Frank and Jane Fairfax, which later proves to be right. Since then, he increases efforts to warn Emma because of potential feelings she could have for Churchill and maybe he admits the

shallowness of his own sympathy for Miss Fairfax. He foresees a catastrophe resulting from such trouble. These worries become similar to punishment due to previous statement:

It would not be a bad thing for her to be very much in love with a proper object. I should like to see Emma in love, and in some doubt of a return; it would do her good.

(Austen, 2011: 32)

On the one hand, he has a point, however on the other hand, it does not please him to see Emma like this; at least he thinks so. To be a witness of Churchill's intrigues and falseness makes him miserable over Emma's behalf. A reader is able to catch a concern of his after Frank's first exit:

Mr. Knightley, however, shewed no triumphant happiness. - but he said, and very steadily, that he was sorry for the disappointment of the others-

(Austen, 2011: 210)

Still, those anxieties lead to some progress in Mr. Knightley's emotions, respectively to the awareness of his love towards the old friend. The long waited ball in Highbury guides the whole society together including Mr. and Mrs. Elton, Harriett Smith, Westons or Frank Churchill. Every conflict between those comes to its heightening. Eltons try to humiliate Harriett with Emma and their misery is not missed by Mr. Knightley who glares at Emma the whole night. The awkward situation is saved when Harriet is asked to dance with Knightley. Again, he shows his benevolence to the ones in need even if it means to break principles on dancing. After such a deed the hero must admit that he was partly wrong about the friendship of Harriett and Emma due to Harriett's "first-rate qualities." (Austen, 2011: 268) There is more greatness, intelligence in her than matching everyone around, just like he thought all the time. The heroine's gratitude and surprise over the dancing skills mix with astonishment of this unseen part of him. The joy of rising in her eyes comes crushing down when she compares them to brother and sister. However, during the novel their relationship is referred to as a friendship despite Mr. Knightley actually minding it, this time is different. The atmosphere of the evening lights up the spark of hoping for something more than a friendship or family relations.

The more Knightley understands his own emotions, the more Frank's pernicious impact on Emma disturbs him. The crucial point of the whole book, likewise their relationship, can be considered the infamous trip to Donwell Abbey. Frank's influence over Emma's

behaviour heads to a catastrophe in which Miss Bates is involved. The injustice and humiliation that the heroine displays causes Mr. Knightley's most known reaction. His speech seems like the last desperate cry to save a dear friend from damnation. The result turns out immediately though the consequences are lethal. Saying those not very pleasant things to the woman he undoubtedly loves only demonstrates the loyalty and the good intentions with her of his. Yet, the intensity of his feelings evidently takes him aback, hence he decides to think things through at his brother's home in London. Throughout the leave-taking the confusion only raises up thanks to the good deed of Emma towards Mrs. and Miss Bates. It proves the effect he has over her cannot measure to the one of Mr. Churchill. This innocuous act strikes him unexpectedly and triggers even more confusion. The letting go Emma's hand and rushing his leave function as the evidence of the inner fight.

How the staying in London was going the author does not say in detail. Still, the visit at home environment could not simplify the problems to him. To see Emma's sister and his brother completely happy must have evoked at least hoping for the same luck they had instead of letting go. The chaos in him was solved by the news about Churchill and Jane's engagement which rose up the chance of succeeding higher than before. The return to Highbury directs him right to Woodhouses' home where he comes across with the heroine. He lives in a suspicion that she loves Mr. Churchill very much, so he expresses regret over her potentially broken heart not to mention his endless complaining about Frank's manners. The shock of discovering the truth distracts him from the usual straightforwardness of his and the hope sets his emotion free. The man of a reason is gone, replaced with an unsure young man so overwhelmed with his own feelings that he barely speaks one sentence. Naturally, in this situation the less he says the greater effect he achieves. Simply it can be summed up in two sentences: "I cannot make speeches, Emma. If I loved you less, I would be able to talk about it more." (Austen, 2011: 349)

The happy end unfortunately has to be challenged with one more obstacle – an acceptance of Mr. Woodhouse himself. Mr. Knightley acts as a true gentleman who wants nothing else than be with someone he has been craving for such a long time. The envy for Frank Churchill's possibility to marry a woman of his heart in a young age can be enough motivation for agreeing with every difficulty standing in the way. At the same time he proves the knowledge and mainly respect for the old man and strong affection for his beloved. The giving up the living in Donwell, his home, to live in Hartfield, the home of

Woodhouses, indicates the submission of men to women. To show that something like this is not important if you deeply love someone or cherish them as much. The pride, money, sex are nothing compared to the happiness at the end. The journey of Mr. Knightley is a proof that a reasonable, wealthy man can become humorous, wearing feelings on his sleeve and not be ashamed of them.

The satirical comedy, almost with the most provocative tone Jane Austen has ever written, conceals the real treasure for male heroes. Not only that Mr. Knightley is older than the rest of Austen's heroes and Emma herself, but the nature of the relationship with the heroine is nearly parental. He keeps proving the fragile interest in Emma's moral judgement, the concern about many others who are socially below him as well as equal. Showing that even a grown up man does not have to know all about his emotions, changes the opinion over something, or even voluntarily gives up living at his own place to live together with the father-in-law increases the author's despair of the nineteenth century social state. Knightley's character shines through the rotten ones of Mr. Woodhouse and Frank Churchill. Yet, all men display the strong compassion for those closest to their hearts, the questionable actions forgotten.

The most famous Jane Austen's sentence: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife." (Austen, 2003: 5) perfectly reflects her portrayal of male heroes. As a female writer, she could not express personal disagreement with the men's supreme position in the early nineteenth century in a different way. The very first sentence of *Pride and Prejudice* implies the (wrong) assumption that a fortunate man must have wanted simple, unpretentious wife in order to gain an heir. The indication of wanting someone equal, not only in the matter of money, but also on the mental level. The author's real experience with injustice as well as true nature of men through her own brothers and father caused her conciliation with the fact that men are not the romantic idols from the tales she had read. She accepted their real nature as a person, although as a woman she still hoped for their better selves buried deep down in them. Not giving up on their admired values from the books. The novelist portrayed men whose imperfections make them perfect and enjoy a large amount of popularity. Fitzwilliam Darcy and George Knightley are two most powerful examples, which reading Jane Austen could offer. The author introduced the possibility that even men are able to err and in the same time develop into something more, better than they used be. Throughout them she can illustrate the devastating consequences in remaining in the same

place, refusing to change. The strong, wealthy men display the tenderness and insecurity all at once without being ashamed of it in the end. Their progress only unleashes the suppressed “hero’s qualities” in them hence they complete the heroines entirely. (Wilson, 1996: n.p.) The rebellion against the order of her time comes not mainly from women as from men. They stand for their own desires and wants, try to free themselves from the stringent rules as well as the families and make a compromise. Showing that the change is indeed possible, in the whole society, not barely in the people’s qualities. To emphasize this factor even more, the roles of the other men and fathers come in handy. The other men (as Wickham or Churchill) symbolize the ordinary, selfish types who rather stay in their safe haven than sacrifice a little bit of their comfort to get something rewarding. Nonetheless, the dangerous aspect in them catches the attention of the heroines more. The miserable fathers serve as a warning to the heroes. Daughters have a great habit to choose their husbands according to the fathers’ figures. When a reader looks closer at Mr. Bennet or Mr. Woodhouse via the eyes of their children, (s)he finds out the hidden truth that Austen’s female protagonists actually did marry men with some fathers’ features. The author described them like a vivid illustrations of what should have happened to her heroes if they had chosen the wrong path. Deep down they are same, nevertheless the male protagonists are their better versions more suitable for living in the modern world that was coming.

4. Comparison of Male and Female Characters

4.1. Male and Female Characters in *Pride and Prejudice*

The male characters in Jane Austen's work are not the only ones that develop throughout the novels. The females do, too, not so evidently or rapidly. In the case of Elizabeth Bennet readers could get the impression that she simply accepts her misjudgement in Darcy's genuine character, as everyone else does. This particular mistake leads to the reciprocal improvement of both characters. Miss Elizabeth Bennet is basically influenced by Mr. Darcy's awaking in behaviour. A proof like this one signifies the great resemblance of the two main protagonist.

Since the very beginning of the novel, the writer draws the dynamic between the couple from their mutual defiance towards each other, which can initiate the attraction they are both aware of immediately. Both of them look for someone who could challenge them both, although the core problem of Elizabeth is her denial, or ignorance, of such matter. Her refusal is shown in the conversation with Jane after their first meeting: “-and I could easily forgive *his* pride, if he had not mortified mine.” (Austen, 2003: 21) The other proof of the hidden awareness of their matching character can be found during the visit in Lady Catherine de Bourg's mansion. “We neither of us perform to strangers.” (Austen, 2003: 171) Their similarity attracts them more and more and Elizabeth is able to see the truth after the reading of Darcy's explanatory letter. The assurance is settled after visiting Pemberley.

It has been coming on so gradually, that I had hardly know when it began. But I believe I must date it from my first seeing his beautiful grounds at Pemberley.

(Austen, 2003: 353)

To see his loving care about such a manor and younger sister as well initiates the needed spark. Mr. Darcy charms her in fact with the ability of taking a good care of everything and everyone. The gentle reminder that as the second born daughter she, too, has responsibility to marry well in order to secure the family. In this quote the author connects the cold logic of a gold-digger and warm affection of a woman in love. Same happens in the first sentence of the book:

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

(Austen, 2003: 5)

What Jane Austen suggests in her work and primarily in *Pride and Prejudice* is the change of the women's position in the society. The heroines in Austen's world are made for so much more than sewing, bearing children or just being pretty. Elizabeth Bennet is not enchanted with sweet words but actions instead, she is more practical, resisting the urge of her own feelings. Her love for Darcy is preceded with respect at first. As if the novelist switches the typical portrayal of main characters. Fitzwilliam Darcy, the noble and pride man, gives in to an acute sensibility on the contrary of the simple, country Elizabeth Bennet who holds to the strict morality. She also proves that men involved in the marrying the strong women can find happiness or balance at least. There is no danger in stepping into the unknown territory. The similar method is used in Jane and Mr. Bingley's relationship, nevertheless not as clearly. The writer assurance is required in Elizabeth's facing up with her own feelings:

She began now to comprehend that he was exactly the man who, in disposition and talents, would most suit her. His understanding and temper, though unlike her own, would have answered all her wishes. It was an union that must have been to the advantage of both; by her ease and liveliness, his mind might have been softened, his manners improved, and from his judgment, information, and knowledge of the world, she must have received benefit of greater importance.

(Austen, 2003: 295)

Elizabeth Bennet perfectly completes Fitzwilliam Darcy in every way possible. Through them Jane Austen destroys all the prejudices in the society about the marriages and comes up with something entirely unique that utterly fits well. The heroine manifests her own independence together with logic that is more typical for men. Furthermore, these qualities are highly accepted and wanted from the hero who is from the higher social class. The writer reveals the men's need for the strong women in the world which was changing. There was no space for the stereotypes like Mrs. Bennet and the youngest daughter – Lydia. Otherwise, the unluckily marriage of Mr. Bennet or even Mr. Wickham functions as the author's emphasis on the importance of equal partners.

4.2. Male and Female Characters in *Emma*

On the contrary of Elizabeth Bennet and others Austen's heroines, Emma Woodhouse's development appears more significantly than the hero's, nevertheless their dynamic functions even more vitally. Due to the losing her mother in a very young age she became the mistress of the house but:

The real evils indeed of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself; these were the disadvantages which threatened alloy to her many enjoyments.

(Austen, 2011: 3)

Maybe Emma's age all together with the never-ending spoiling by Mr. Woodhouse, lead her to the belief in the fix order in the world.

The yeomanry are precisely the order of people with whom I feel I can have nothing to do. A degree or two lower, and a creditable appearance might interest me; I might hope to be useful to their families in some way or other. But a farmer can need none of my help, and is therefore in one sense as much above my notice as in every other he is below it.

(Austen, 2011: 22)

The statement shows her own arrogance that only Mr. Knightley's calm temper can slowly affect. The writer presents to the readers another strong, independent female character who does not need a husband to survive. Although the strong woman needs a strong man, someone who is superior to her "to be tempted." (Austen, 2011: 68) With this proclamation Austen expresses the permanent problem that lasts to the modern day. Mr. Knightley is the only one who loves Emma despite her imperfections but also sets clear boundaries to her. He knows her enough to understand that too much freedom would mean possible problems in the future.⁵ Fortunately the proprietor of Donwell Abbey stays as the only man suitable for the heroine in Highbury, let us forget Frank Churchill. Though Austen uses him as a reflection of Emma's unscrupulous qualities and with Knightley's advice that later heads to the emotional confrontation, because of Miss Bates, the heroine's realization escalates to her own maturity.

⁵ Stewart, Maaja A. *The Fools in Austen's Emma*, 1986: n.p.

As it was said earlier, the readers proceed from the friendship mark, more likely the father's control. The hints of the possibility of something more are erased right by this feature. Although Emma's kindness and generosity towards other people are able to develop to the state, that Mr. Knightley could only be stunned with the true nature of his affection for Miss Woodhouse. As for Emma, her feelings change with the thought of losing Knightley to a dear friend Harriet or the intimate addressing of Mrs. Elton. The novelist describes Emma's most serious blemish – selfishness. However, there are no other possibilities of the acknowledgement of such a tender feeling for Emma and just for once the flaw opens the heroine's eyes to see the inevitable fact that their friendship outgrew into something entirely different, yet purer.

The couple stands for the author's judgement of rushed engagement. Together with *Mansfield Park*, Emma and Mr. Knightley's relationship is the most complex one. A reader cannot exactly guess the whole character of Mr. Knightley until his proposal declaration. Since then he seems more open, loving, not father-like and Emma finally acts rationally. The two after all find the way to coexist with each other on the higher level than friendship.

The connection between the heroes and the heroines in Jane Austen's work can be understood as the most crucial aspect. The author herself struggled with the not so high opinion on the women's intelligence and their position in the world among men. Therefore nobody should be surprised in her choice to portray not only strong heroines but also the heroes. She realised the change in the world could mean the possibility of showing something that had not been shown yet. Hence the characters mirror her own beliefs in something deeper than shallow reality and perfectly connects the truth with the wild idea in better future. The readers learn with the characters to appreciate the inner qualities in others, too. It is vital that the main characters not only marry well, but they are married with someone they have developed a relationship.⁶ To the marriage work, the both sides must try, learn and teach. That is her legacy. Elizabeth, Emma, Mr. Darcy and Mr. Knightley break the rules in the old order of the world. All of them develop together, influence each other and bring the best despite conventions. Only when they completely know themselves, as well as each other, the novelist allowed them to live happily ever after. Otherwise they would experience the lives of Mr. Bennet, Mr. Elton or even Mr. Wickham.

⁶ Shubinsky, D. *Sense and Sensibility: an Eighteenth-Century Narrative*, 1999: n.p.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was the portrayal of the male characters in Jane Austen's work and their effect on the female ones. Due to the analysis of her two novels (*Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*) and the secondary literature the thesis was able to get to the following results.

The novelist brings two ostensibly dissimilar characters together and writes the whole novel as a journey to discover that they were, are and always will be exactly the same. The argument stood against the former characterizations of the males and females as well. To highlight the urge to move toward a new world she uses the roles of "a father and the other man". The author portrays the equal partners who know each other to the core even with their imperfections. Her work shows that the independent women can find happy relationships or marriages. Although to live in a world like this, men should be able to change, accept the strong women and also show their own vulnerability. She describes that the real source of change comes from men, not women. Thus the demand on truly knowing and mainly understanding each other in addition to oneself is emphasized so often and clearly. The important message of Austen's novels is that her characters can live without their companions but do not want to. The choice of being truly happy with someone, being vulnerable with someone and admit needing them requires the strength that the world where Jane Austen lived was considered as a weakness. The courage to illustrate the problem slowly led to Victorian novel where Brontë sisters, Charles Dickens or Walter Scott continued what she had started.

The popularity of these novels only shows that even nowadays the situation has not changed. To demonstrate the one's caring, loving plus the soft spot is deemed as something bad and humiliating. Nevertheless, the reading Austen and her successors gives the world more courage to defy the social rules.

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