

JIHOČESKÁ UNIVERZITA V ČESKÝCH BUDĚJOVICÍCH
FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA
ÚSTAV ANGLISTIKY

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

JANE AUSTEN'S CHARACTERS ELIZABETH BENNET AND EMMA
WOODHOUSE AND THEIR SOCIAL POSITION

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Studijní obor: Anglický jazyk a literatura

Ročník: 3

2023

Poděkování:

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Einat Adar, M.A., Ph.D., for her advice and notes, and especially her patience.

I confirm that this thesis is my own work written using solely the sources and literature properly quoted and acknowledged as works cited.

České Budějovice, 05. 5. 2023

.....Linda Hrdá

Anotace

Cílem této práce je analýza společenského postavení hlavních postav v románech Jane Austenové, konkrétně *Pýchy a Předsudku* a *Emmy*. Bakalářská práce je rozdělena do čtyř kapitol. První se zabývá autorkou Jane Austenovou, jejím životem a tvorbou a následně autory, jež Austenovou ovlivnili při jejím psaní. Druhá kapitola nám přibližuje dobu, kdy autorka žila, tedy Anglii 19. století. Době se přezdívalo Regentská Anglie a přiblížíme si zde roli a rozdíly v životě žen a mužů a ekonomickou situaci, jak obecně v 19. století, tak v románech Jane Austenové. Budou uvedeny příklady, kolik vydělávali hlavní hrdinové. Třetí část už se soustředí na samotnou hlavní postavu románu *Emma*. Popisuje rysy, kterými se Emma liší od ostatních hrdinek ve zbytku Austenových románů. Zároveň projednává její postavení v kruhu společnosti, ve kterém se vyskytuje. Druhá podkapitola odkrývá vztah s nejbližšími postavami, se kterými Emma přišla do kontaktu. Poslední kapitola Elizabeth Bennetová má trochu jinou strukturu než předchozí, i přes to že cílem práce je hlavní hrdinky vrhnou na stejné světlo. Vymezuje limity Bennetovy rodiny, které souvisí s jejich příjmem, a tudíž limituje jejich společenské postavení ve společnosti. V poslední kapitole je zahrnuta i Elizabetina ženskost. Na závěr práce porovnávám naše dvě hrdinky, konkrétně jejich osobnost, pohled na manželství, rozvoj charakteru a sociální postavení.

Klíčová slova: ženské postavení, Jane Austenová, regentská Anglie, Elizabeth Bennet, *Pýcha a předsudek*, Emma Woodhouse, *Emma*, společnost v 18. a 19. století

Abstract

This thesis aims to analyze the social status of the main characters in Jane Austen's novels, specifically *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. The bachelor thesis is divided into four chapters. The first deals with the author Jane Austen, her life and work, and then focus on the authors who influenced Austen in her writing. The second chapter brings us closer to the time when the author lived in England in the 19th century. The era was called the Regency Era and we going to look at the role and differences in the lives of women and men and the economic situation, both in general in the 19th century and in Jane Austen's novels. Examples of how much the main male characters earned going to be given. The third part finally focuses on the main character of the novel, *Emma*. It describes the features that make Emma different from the other heroines in the rest of Austen's novels, while also discussing her position in the circle of society in which she existed. The second sub-chapter reveals the relationship with the closest characters with whom Emma came into contact. The last chapter of Elizabeth Bennet has a slightly different structure than the previous one, even though the work tries to cast the main characters in the same light. It defines the limits of the Bennet family, which is related to their income and therefore limits their social status in society. Elizabeth's womanhood is also included in the last chapter. At the end of the work, I compare our two heroines, specifically their personalities, views on marriage, character development, and social status.

Keywords: women's position, Jane Austen, Regency era, Elizabeth Bennet, *Pride and Prejudice*, Emma Woodhouse, *Emma*, society in 18th and 19th century

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Introduction

Even though it has been over two centuries since the author Jane Austen published her successful novels between 1811, when the novel *Sense and Sensibility* was published, and 1816, the year of publishing her last novel *Emma*, which she completed herself, today's readers also found her stories. Her novels portrayed strong female characters, some of whom have become icons of feminism, e.g., Elizabeth Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*, on whom the work also focuses. Furthermore, the novels bring us closer to the society of that time, and the reader can thus explore the manners of the beginning of the 19th century. Finally, the heroines and male heroes met the prejudices of society, as they did not meet certain standards, if we stick to the example of Elizabeth, her family did not have much money and since she had four sisters, they had to dress more modestly than others, at the same time her younger sisters could not behave appropriately. The main heroines of the novels also grow up and, in the stories, they form a new face and, their character changes. Fitting into society and taking on a new face is an ever-present topic, and that is why Austen is still remembered.

In this thesis, my attention will focus on Austen's heroines from *Pride and Prejudice* written in 1813, and *Emma*. My work aims to analyze the social status of the two main heroines. Even though the Emma chapter may appear to have a different structure than the Elizabeth chapter, the relevant sub-chapters have been chosen with the to social differences. In the novel *Emma*, the reader can notice her relationship with the other characters around whom the story revolved. These characters like her father, governess Mrs. Weston, close friend Harriet Smith, and husband Mr. Knightley, create the society in the novel that I aimed to explore. On the contrary, with Elizabeth, my main point of investigation was a male-dominated society, i.e., in the sense that in Elizabeth's vicinity, women were just an accessory to their husbands. Women two centuries ago had only one task and that was to get married and raise children, which became a big theme in Austen's novels. The girl was supposed to be obedient, good-looking, funny, educated, and preferably have a large dowry. Such became the requirements for a suitable bride. If the girl stood out, she could not succeed. Her feminist appearance was therefore closely connected with her place in society. It is the heroine of the novel who tries to oppose these prejudices. In my work, I focus on the mentioned parameters, whether Emma and

Elizabeth were popular and if they differed in some way, why and what they did differently from other women.

The thesis has four chapters and each of them has about two or three subchapters. The first one focuses on Jane Austen herself, especially her life works. We will look a little deeper into her childhood, relationship with siblings, and single life, and we will also point out the problems the author had to face when publishing her novels. The second sub-chapter focuses on male authors who had a large readership during the Romantic era (for example, Walter Scott or William Wordsworth), among whom was Jane Austen. She mentioned the books of these romantic authors several times in her novels, and because they were male authors and male protagonists, Austen could better understand male fictional characters and draw inspiration from them in her heroes.

For the reader to understand why society behaved the way it did in the 19th century, the second chapter focuses on the Regency era, which was the time when George IV ruled as regent for his ailing father. The second chapter will get a little closer to the historical context and especially to the status of women and men. Because, as is known from historical sources, women held a lower position in society (especially those from poorer families). And since the whole essence of being revolved around money, I give examples of income and money management. The chapter serves as a foreshadowing for the two main following chapters themselves, that the reader would be able to assess whether the prerequisites of the two main heroines met the Regency ideal or whether they belonged to rich families. Because many readers today cannot fully understand the situation in which the ladies found themselves in Austen's novels.

Subsequently, we will penetrate the analysis of the heroines. First, I will introduce Emma Woodhouse, her education and upbringing, personality, popularity in society, her relationship with her father, her governess Mrs. Westher, her close friend Miss Smith, later husband of Mr. Knightley, and her rival Miss Fairfax. Since Emma behaved differently from the other heroines in Austen's novels (as will be explained precisely in the first sub-chapter), she deserves different attention than Elizabeth, which is one of the reasons why the Emma chapter and the Elizabeth chapter do not go together. Even though the plot of both novels took place at the same time, the reader finds himself in a different society while reading. After analyzing Emma, it's Elizabeth's turn. Their analysis will not be the same, because they both had different upbringings, different rich parents, and

different opinions. In Elizabeth's chapter, we will see why the Bennets were looked down upon and why they could not achieve respect from, for example, the high-ranking Lady Catherine. As an independent woman, she stood up for her sisters and, on the contrary, argued with men such as Darcy, who tried to send Elizabeth to the place where according to society she belongs, i.e., next to her husband.

The essence of the last part comparison is to define the social place of both heroines and to compare them. In this section, the reader can confirm the assumptions he had about the heroines while reading.

1 Jane Austen and Her Time

Jane Austen is considered one of the most important English authors. During her publishing, no one knows her name, because of her pseudonym A Lady. Even though she lived in the time of Romanticism, her novels are classified as Realism, because of her portrayal of English society, speech types, and moral behaviors. Austen projected her life experiences through the characters. Austen focused on topics she was familiar with. She was very familiar with women's societies, about which she writes throughout her works. (Kirkman, 24)

1.1 Life and Works

Jane Austen was born in 1775 as the youngest child to a numerous family with six sons, and one other daughter to George Austen, a clergyman, and his wife. Their residence was at Steventon, where the family had a happy time. Growing up with brothers brought her an interest in sports rather than women's finery like dolls and clothes in her childhood. Three of her brothers, Frank, Charles, and Henry became helpful during the wars in France around 1785-1790 when people rebelled against taxes and the rule of King Louis XVI and Austen's brothers had to leave the family for a while. Another brother, Edward, who was adopted by their uncle and aunt, did not stay at home either. Mrs. Austen could not raise so many children at once, even though her role in life was aimed precisely at raising children, and the uncle promised to provide Edward with the necessary education. The Austen family corresponded very often to keep in touch and know how the boys were doing. Correspondence probably awakened Austen's passion for writing. (Keymer, 57-58)

As a young girl, she enjoyed writing her own stories with ironic aspects. One of them is called *Love and Friendship*. She also inherited her love for literature from her mother, an amateur writer. Jane read a lot as a young girl. Her family tried to be sophisticated as possible. Because of that, she met Shakespeare's works at a young age. For example, in *Pride and Prejudice*, when Mr. Darcy wants to propose to Elizabeth, they have a little fight, and Elizabeth overplays because of her personality. The drama sometimes consumed her mind while writing. (Keymer, 65)

In 1785, Jane Austen and her sister Cassandra visited Abbey School for Girls. Unfortunately, they did not even stay at school for a year. However, we can conclude from their stay at school that their parents wanted both daughters to receive an education. Two years later after leaving the school, Austen took her writing career seriously and started writing her stories and collecting her memories completed in 1793. Such stories, which the author wrote in his youth, are called Juvenilia. (Copeland, 2)

A few years before the beginning of the new century, Austen traveled a lot with her sister and her parents, who were not residents, they tried to culturally educate and entertain their children. The family often visited Bath, where Austen's aunt lived, or Southampton. She is said to have begun writing *Lady Susan*, now known as *Northanger Abbey*, and *Elinor and Marianne*, now known as *Sense and Sensibility*, during this period. We even get a few mentions of her suitor and family relative Tom Lefroy, who fell in love with her and corresponded with her. (Copeland, 4) Later, in her older age, she achieved success. At the beginning of the 19th century topics of women became more popular and female authors were more desirable. Women became an influential element in literature. Their moral side started to be pivotal in many novels. Jane Austen expressed herself on customs of her age, which evoked prejudice. (Kirkham, 44-48)

When her lovely father died in 1805, Jane stopped writing for a while, ideas of new novels did not come to her mind. She, her mother, and her sister moved to Bath. Jane Austen could not try living there at first, but then she adapted to the way of living. Austen (Even though she got a proposal, which was first accepted) and her sister Cassandra never got married and thus they became a burden for their brother Edward, who was a very rich man and lived in Southampton (much like one of her characters Darcy). Same as Bath, Southampton did not give her many writing opportunities. Hard to say if her restraint of writing was caused by her father's death or chaos and no privacy in her life. Her brother Edward later moved them to a barn that she shared with her mother and sister (now known as Jane Austen's House Museum) because his house was full. Austen's preference was outdoor living, and her daily routine was the same every day. This period finally brought her happiness at work. Finally, this place calmed down her mind and she could publish her long work in progress. The titles of *First Impression* and *Elinor and Marianne* were changed. In 1811 the world saw *Sense and Sensibility* for the first time and two years later

Pride and Prejudice. She also moved from place to place very often during this period. From Steventon to Chawton House to London and opposite. (Copeland, 7-9)

Sense and Sensibility had a marquee success, the story about Elinor and Marianne brought something new, for example, social background, or women's feelings. One copy was even bought by the British Prince George IV himself before the novel began to be written about publicly. However, Jane Austen did not see this as a success, as she did not support him as a prince. (Keymer, 252) She wanted to capitalize on the success of her previous novels and in 1814 Jane and her publisher revealed *Mansfield Park*. This book did not get as many positive responses as the first two but still became popular. It seemed that Austen finally doing well, but Austen's death slowly came. The last novel published during her life was titled *Emma*. The other two novels *The Elliots*, which she later renamed *Persuasion*, and *The Brothers*, later titled *Siton*, were unfinished by her. At that time Jane does not feel well and even her head was no longer thinking clearly because of her illness, which was not fully diagnosed. (Copeland, 8-9) Unfortunately, in 1817 Jane Austen died. Circumstances of death have never been clarified. A promising author who could have contributed to the development of English literature with her other potential novels dies at the age of 42. Luckily, her stories survived and are read even today. (Keymer, 327)

1.2 Romantic Authors and their influence on Jane Austen

In the 18th century, British authors Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding started to write longer stories with plots, more thoughtful characters, and narrated in the first or third person. With the popularity of this new writing style new novels came onto the scene and authors had a new opportunity. The main reader became a woman. Unfortunately, higher society judged the simplicity of this style. Although, many historians and writers consider case first novel in English Daniel Defoe's book *Robinson Crusoe* written in 1719. (Deresiewicz, 5)

Jane Austen wanted to go against a new genre. However, she had a huge problem getting her stories out to the public. Books had to fulfill certain morality. The stories should not be written with a distorted view of the world. Women had to have their due rights, i.e. that they submitted to the father and subsequently to the man. They could not

earn their own money. However, their presence in the novel had to be included to add authenticity. Austen's heroine fulfilled this morality. Unfortunately, female authors still did not have the same place in literature as male authors. Jane's father tried to get published her novels. He saw potential in her that the publisher did not. Jane Austen's first novel *First Impression* was marked as useless. The Titles of her novel were often changed by herself, and she began to lose hope of release. The book market very often adapted to the readers, and books were published that were supposed to interest the readers, either because of the plot, the characters, or the author himself. The publishers tried to promote female heroines at the time since the works were mostly written by men. Readers are more used to male authors, therefore female writers had to fight for their place in the literary industry as they still could not earn money and their place primarily revolved around family and household. If a woman became a successful author, she published under a male name. (Kirkham, 44)

By making the women the victim of romantic fiction, Austen mocked those who feared that women could not be trusted as readers. All her female characters are clever, educated, and have good manners. She also created her characters for expressing criticism towards the books *Joseph Andrews* by Henry Fielding and *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson because of their sexual objectification. Pamela represents a sexual object in the novel, and she is being chased by a man who only wants her for his pleasure. Joseph Andrews is facing the same situation in Henry Fielding's novel and thus the novels imply that men are the objects of women. Jane tried to create characters who would not only be objects of desire and whose life story would also revolve around more meaningful things Jane tried to create characters who would not only be objects of desire and whose life stories would also revolve around more meaningful things. (Kirkham, 48)

But it was still a new genre that had to pass the test of time, and therefore authors still applied poetry. One of those Austen's contemporaries writing poetry were Samuel Taylor Coleridge known for *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, William Wordsworth known for *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, and William Cowper known for *The Task*. All of these authors were recognized by high society because poetry represented the high state. If someone can read poetry and can talk about its meaning, the person has higher education. Also, it was a question of society 's status. (Deresiewicz, 3)

“Austen’s favorite moral writers were Johnson in prose, Crabbe in verse, and Cowper in both, stood high.” (Deresiewicz, 5) Also, Austen approved of Walter Scott, and George Gordon Byron, who manifested itself in her novels. Jane Austen appreciated them very much; Walter Scott is one of the favorite authors of Marianne Dashwood in *Sense and Sensibility*. Both authors are mentioned in the novel *Persuasion*. In this novel, we as a reader met many lonely women. They lived without their husband. The thought was borrowed from Byron’s *Turkish Tales*, the concrete tale *The Giaour*, whose main topic is faith in love. Which could be easily compared to all of Austen’s novels. Jane also included the theme of madness. Giaour went crazy when he lost his lover. In *Persuasion*, Mr. Eliot produced observable elements of madness. The novel began after wars in France. Wentworth, a war hero, came back to England from France. Events that had an impact not just on Austen’s writing. Walter Scott wrote the poem *Field of Waterloo* and also *Paul’s Letter to His Kinsfolk*. (Deresiewicz, 128-133)

Despite her fondness for Scott, Austen made fun of him in her private letters to her sister Cassandra. The relationship between Austen and Scott was mutual. After releasing *Emma*, Walter Scott published a critical essay in 1816. Jane Austen until then considered a romantic author represented a threat in his eyes. Scott is talking about Cupid here, which is supposed to overshadow the author’s real basis of writing. “Cupid indivisibly with calculating prudence, we would have them reflect, that they may sometimes lend their aid to substitute more mean, more sordid, and more selfish motives of conduct, for the romantic feelings which their predecessors perhaps fanned into too powerful a flame.” (Kirkham, 106) Scott divulged Austen’s critical view of society and selfish phenomena. (Kirkham, 105-8)

In 1814 William Wordsworth published the poem *The Excursion*. One year later, Jane published her latest novel, *Emma*. In one part of *The Excursion*, Wordsworth described his sadness after his mother’s death. Thereby alienating society to a large extent. A bit like *Emma*. His works are encountered several times by Mr. Knightley, *Emma*’s close family friend. (Deresiewicz, 86-98) His poems made Jane’s days pleasant. What she liked most was how Wordsworth used elements of impulsiveness. Her liking for him could create *Emma* in Jane Austen’s head. (Keymer, 61)

Samuel Richardson, the preromantic author, grew close to Jane’s heart. She tried to write a satiric play called *Sir Charles Grandison*, inspired by Richardson’s novel *The*

History of Sir Charles Grandison. In Richardson's novel there is an important character called Harriet Byron, a woman with a huge dowry who embodies power. She is not supposed to represent just a silent companion. Richardson introduced a new opportunity for women's character, that they can do great things and be independent. Richardson was not the only author of this novel. The main thoughts and expressions in this novel were raised by women (for example by Richardson's sister Charlotte), so can be said to have they helped him write the book. Richardson respected women and consulted the women characters in his book with other women, for example, how should they behave. At the same time, Richardson pointed out human nature and prejudices against which female authors, especially Jane Austen opposed. A surprising fact is, that the novel was not successful. As a reader of this book, Austen felt naivety in some scenes and made up her version on paper. The try to parody Richardson's work was not her first experiment. She parodied several authors. Jane Austen grew up in Richardson's novel. Few references were heard in *Northanger Abbey*, that his novel *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* should be read. In the 19th century Richardson's, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* should be the basis for the spread of feminist ideas of both authors. (Kirkham, 58)

Even though Jane Austen tried to come up with original work and create a new world of characters, she took advice when creating her works. For example, James Stanier Clarke, an English clergyman, and writer, gave her some advice on which direction her work should go, especially with the book *Emma*. (Kirkham, 106)

It seems that Jane was mainly influenced by male authors. The heroines of her novels refer to many English excellent authors. This was caused, among other things, by the fact that there were not many female authors. Through her characters, Jane Austen revealed her opinion of several authors of her age. Authors influenced each other and mentioned authors certainly contributed to Jane's creation of stories. (Keymer, 62)

2 Regency Era

For understanding Austen's novel's background, it is important briefly describe the era when Austen lived. The Regency era officially lasted from 1811 when George IV became regent for his father George III to 1820 when the English king George III. George IV became regent because of his father's dementia. George III even died because of symptoms of his persistent mental illness and blindness. However, many historians also include the Regent George IV to the year 1830. (Sales, 16) The new king George IV contributed to the development of culture and architecture and brought progress to Britain. People learned to dress differently and overall; his government set new rules in society. When the king spoke out against his advisors and politicians, many people became so confident that they could also express themselves more verbally, which is exactly the case with Austen's heroines. (Sales, 194)

2.1 Education and Destiny of Women

Being a woman in the 18th and 19th centuries brought with it responsibilities and worries as their only goal in life was to get married. Women in the Regency era were raised to be obedient and their behavior in society was supposed to be acceptable according to all the rules. They should behave naturally and show their inner side, talk about their interests, but at the same time appear mysterious and inaccessible to arouse interest in men and respected people in society. But Austen rather had a weakness for swerving ones. She tried to point out that women have a mind of their own in many ways they can be useful in man's world. (Copeland, 115)

Although someone in the 21st century might think that being by their man's side and not having to go to work might not have been terrible, they lived under a lot of pressure all the time. Having to rely on their looks, appear charming, and later take good care of themselves about their children. Therefore, to be born as a woman did not represent a prize. Reading Austen's novels gave readers a perfect picture of women's necessary characteristics and skills. Charming in a company, good at dancing, singing, embroidery, having a warm relationship with children, or having some education. They were prepared for the wife's duty. Success for those who got married young, shame for those who must wait or worse got married at all. Most people thought that women, who

became old virgins must suffer. As mentioned above, Jane Austen was one of them and had an unmarried status. It was her decision and if she got married, she would not live with her mother and sister, whom she loved. The life of an old lady, drinking wine, frolicking at balls, or making free decisions. She was the main character in her own life. People should not care about her life. However, her female characters could not end like her, unmarried with an unclear future. The heroine would not get a happy ending and the novel would lose its appeal and find favor with a smaller number of readers. If Austen finished *Pride and Prejudice* with a single Elizabeth, her novels would hardly survive. The world, that Austen enveloped in her novels is cruel like hers. Marry Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice* was relegated to becoming a single woman, even though she was too young for marriage. The judgment stems from her lack of interest in fitting into society. Readers had some expectations about the main characters, for example, marriage. Because of that none of the females could be like Jane in way the of single life. Women in the 19th century were referred to their husbands depending on their property, which could be seen in *Pride and Prejudice*. If Mr. Bennet (father of Elizabeth) dies, everything would accrue to cousin Collins. (Copeland, 115-118)

“Wife and daughters are deprived and the estate and the money as well must descend to his son and his son’s son.“ (Copeland, 115) Most attention is directed to the eldest child. The younger ones are just supplements. Since the oldest child receives the most attention from the parents, they want him to have enough knowledge, enough good manners. The smartest child should be the most fit for life. If the family has a high position, people from society have respect for the eldest child, and for the younger ones they allow them to have a few remarks. It’s all depending on the company and contacts. Harriet from the novel *Emma* had a bigger chance to find a husband after she makes friends with Emma. In the world of higher society characters did not escape the gossip, without which no ball or society even is complete. The characters are also brought up not to cause any scandal, which can easily ruin the family.

Besides living a housewife life, women had the opportunity to live cultural life. Many people would think that it includes just balls. (Deresiewicz, 87-88) However, shopping, theatre, walking, and visits to neighbors’ houses were also cultural life. In the 19th century, Britain’s economy increased, culture began to assert itself and people were able to enjoy more hobbies. Women could show off, have a nice dress, and interesting

hairstyle. In the middle of the action were London and Bath. Even though both cities enabled social activities, London was more public and did not allow so much peace as Bath. After all, women had nothing else to do but show off and perhaps attract a promising bachelor preferably rich. Because boys from their social class could always court each other. In conclusion, we can conclude that women did not have an easy life in the 19th century. (Copeland, 115-7)

2.2 Men's Position

The Romanticism period was strongly influenced by the French wars. In France was growing up the new ideology. England as France's neighbor hit the fright that something like this could happen to them. A lot of the references to these wars are represented by officers in Austen's novels. (Wickham from *Pride and Prejudice*, Colonel Brandon from *Sense and Sensibility*, Wentworth from *Persuasion*). Society respects them, and Colonel Brandon and Wentworth married the main heroine. Perhaps, Austen wanted to point out that the officer is just not the savior of the heroine but also the savior of the whole country, which is a very romantic notion. (Deresiewicz, 140)

Men also had strict demeanors. The term gentleman refers to a man from an aristocratic family endowed with eligible manners. In all of Austen's novels, the female characters try to find their gentleman. But men are unpredictable and at any time they may depart from their manners and behave a little impolitely. And sometimes they are just proud, and they do not need to hide their true face. In the topic of education, men had different rights. Having acquirements lined up as a high quality, for being a good example of a gentleman. Or at least a gentleman's company should think that. The real man and perfect material for a husband should have money and education. Also, the man was assumed to be much more clever than his wife. Perhaps because of this reason, chatty ladies always drew prejudiced looks. Yes, they should have general knowledge, but surely not be part of some political discussion. (Copeland, 121)

In Austen's novels, the main heroes like Darcy from *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Knightley from *Emma*, and Colonel Brandon from *Sense and Sensibility* had a large fortune and not by accident. Austen in her novels made men rich and main heroines poorer. In the opposite situation, if men did not have a good background, they would

hardly find a suitable bride. (Copeland, 117) Wentworth from *Persuasion* also had to build himself up and make money. But that was the reality of the Regency era. The man had to take care of the family and therefore had to be wealthy. If Austen put women upon men from the financial side, many readers could be shocked and concerned about the characters. (Deresiewicz, 140-141)

2.3 Economic Situation

“Money as spendable income is the love-tipped arrow aimed at the hearts of Jane Austen’s heroines and her reader. Incomes are openly discussed in all Austen’s novels and, when the significant details are not given in the first pages, they follow when it is most useful for them to appear.” (Copeland, 132-3) As we already know, women could not make their own money. Unfortunately, everything revolved around money. Austen did not show the lower class in her novels, even though the Bennets were not the richest, they still had the residents, maid service, and a carriage. She cannot even write about poor ones, because she did not know, how they lived. At the same time, she does not focus on the nobility, the main hero contrasts with the main heroine, who is richer than her family, and the author wants to point out marriage from love. In Austen’s novels, money is also an obstacle in the eyes of family members. For example, Fanny Dashwood from *Sense and Sensibility* (John Dashwood’s wife) acted towards Elinor and Marianne very haughty after their father died and they lost all their property. Since she became the lady of the house, she should have treated them properly, but she did not do so on the contrary, she wanted to get them out of the house. In *Persuasion*, Anne Elliot fell in love with Wentworth, who was not acceptable to her father. After some years, he came back as a captain with a lot of money. Mr. Elliot was obsessed with these instruments of power and because of his spending, he will lose their home. This later novel points to the corruption of human nature, thoughtlessness, and dissipation caused by hunting money. (Copeland, 133-134)

Women in the Regency era represented a financially dependent unit. Living off the income of their father or husband. Some could become governesses and tutor young ladies. This work did not pay well, but at least the woman had a partial sense of independence. Money, as it is today, reflects everyone's status. (Copeland, 118)

Edward Copeland in the chapter “Money” in the *Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen* elaborated on the individual incomes per year. The lowest example presented is one hundred pounds same as two hundred, with which one can get by, but the man or couple must live very modestly. Double the fortune allowed essentially the same life. Five hundred represented an acceptable fortune. This is also the amount possessed by a few characters from Austen's novels like Elinor and Marianne Dashwood’s income. Still, five hundred pounds was not enough for a larger family to live well, they had to humble themselves and could not own more expensive material things. Jane Austen herself already knew what to buy with such an amount and how to manage it. Subsequently, the British gentlemen were around one thousand pounds, when could they procure more employees or means of transport with a calm that situation. Then the amount of wealth will jump by another thousand. A very familiar amount to readers of Austen's novels. Two thousand was the annual income of Elizabeth Bennet's father. A single man looking for a bride would certainly have no shortage of suitors, so the gentleman's life situation had to be considered. Elizabeth's father had obligations to the six women in his house and as his fortune could not fall to either of them, each of the daughters felt the insecurity and social pressure that they would have to marry well. It would be difficult for them to marry a man who owns less wealth than the one with whom the girls grew up. (Toran)

They must have been familiar with such a fact at an early age. It may seem, then, that life differences such as owning horses and carriages, clothing, or having servants between £100 and £700 per annum were hard to find. Bigger differences occurred with amounts ranging in the order of thousands. In *Pride and Prejudice*, two very good friends Darcy and Bingley were worth quite different amounts. Bingley earned probably five thousand less than Darcy. (Copeland, 136-140) However, it cannot be clear enough to the reader how the money was earned. The man did not have to work with his hands, rather he focused on his land, which he rented out and, above all, invested a lot. The men did not have cash with them. “Thus, Mr. Darcy’s £10,000 a year implies £200,000 invested. This amount ranges in value depending on the method of calculation from \$19,725,520 to \$328,737,820 today.” (Toran)

During the 18th century happened many financial changes and a few years before the beginning of the new century brought little harvest and the people had nothing to eat, at least the poor. Even though these people had the right to claim their benefits in court,

which means their entitlement to food, people in higher authority took that benefit away from them and poverty has not been solved somehow. Jane Austen did not bring such facts to the attention of today's readers, because at that time it was a matter of course that people knew about them. It was understandable that the poor saved money and could not, for example, afford more clothes, more employees, or other luxuries. On the contrary, those who squandered money, despite the economic situation, could not understand the livelihood of the poor. (Toran) A very used term in the 19th century connected to farming was pseudo-gentry. - decent-earning people from the city, who unfortunately did not own land, and therefore their position was the same as people who lived outside the city since the largest amount of money revolved around land ownership, these families had to cling to someone who owned the land. (Copeland, 144) The bad financial situation also resulted in many debts. They may find themselves in a situation such as Mr. Wickham from *Pride and Prejudice* when he inherited several thousand pounds, he threw them away imprudently. Such a man subsequently became a greedy person and cheated rich prospective girlfriend. But not all men inherited and had to earn money. The other way to earn money and gain the admiration of society was to go to war and survive. (Copeland, 143)

Money played an important role in quality of life just as it does today and in all of Austen's novels we deal with the discrimination of the lower classes, and most of the time it is also the discrimination of the main heroines, whose parents did not have much wealth. Dashwood sisters were humiliated by their sister-in-law, Anne Eliot's father squandered money recklessly. Only Emma Woodhouse owned thirty thousand pounds inheritance, which made her the richest young lady in Austen's world. No character ever humiliated Emma and it may have been precisely because of her fortune. (Copeland, 142) But we will deal with Emma's character in the chapter itself.

3 Emma Woodhouse

3.1 Emma's difference from other Austen heroines and her position in society

The novel *Emma* was published in 1816 as Austen's last novel during her life and without the author herself realizing it, she made a magnificent finish of her career. Emma differed so much from other previous heroines and from the structure of the previous novels. The previous three novels' amendments (*Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Mansfield Park*) followed the same language and content structure. Jane Austen's characters in these three novels: Marianne Dashwood, Fanny Price, and Elizabeth Bennet were involved in difficult family situations (poor parents or parents recently died). And even though they foolishly dreamed about big love, their life stories resembled family drama rather than romance. Emma in contrast did not experience unhappiness. The Dashwood sisters lost their father, Fanny Price had to live with her uncle because of her financially strained family, and Elizabeth Bennet experienced social disgrace only because of her parents and her younger sister's unexpected wedding. Perhaps that is the reason why Austen established Emma, a contradictory creature, who does not have these insecurities. Even though Emma's mother died when Emma was five years old, which is perhaps one of the few pieces of information the reader can learn about Mrs. Woodhouse to find out, the novel represented a new genre to Austen full of irony and comic situations. Emma does not need a sense of security in the form of a husband, because of the existence of her loving father, who makes her feel safe. At the same time, Emma displays coolness toward men, who could potentially propose to her. (Shannon, 1-2)

At the very beginning of the novel, the reader got to know Emma as a very lovely young lady. The reader can already imagine her superiority in the household, her sister left, and her mother died. The father does not hold the role of head of the family and does not appear in the foreground. (Austen, *Emma*, 1) Austen made a radical move when she decided to build the story on the causticness and self-confidence of the main character. The author herself even declared that no one would like Emma, but Jane Austen adored her. Austen said: "I'm going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like." (Shannon, 1)

Emma differs from the other female characters in that she keeps the arrogance inside herself except for being the victim of arrogance. She belongs to high society, whereas Austen's other heroines do not belong. In Austen's novel arrogance and pride became one of the noticeable characteristics of the upper classes. In other words, the nobility and the rich got on their high horse. During her growing up, her family did not suffer, and little Emma was raised to be too good for others and most importantly good for England, who was too small in her eyes to appreciate a girl like her. At least, her haughtiness over other characters, for example, Harriet (their relationship will be discussed in the second subchapter) infers such an inference. When the author introduced the character Emma, her words give the reader the feeling that they see her as a noblewoman and that there is no one more charming than her, and therefore she would easily charm even a foreigner, for example. "Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever and rich seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence and had lived with very little to distress or vex her." (Austen, *Emma*, 2) "Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her way and a disposition to think a little too well of herself." (Austen, *Emma*, 3)

Emma knows their opinion of her very well and it's simply a natural human reaction when someone tells you are amazing, you get used to compliments and think that you belong to a higher class than you are because your confidence grows up. (Shannon, 2, 9)

She was involved in another's life and tried to solve their problems. According to her, other people miss an intuition about the need for love and help, and because of that, she presented herself as a protector or teacher, as someone who is needed in other's life. With this haughty behavior of hers, she will not help anyone in the end. This statement could be confirmed by Harriet Smith, a close friend of Emma, which is based on manipulation from Emma's side. She played her like a fiddle. Emma tried to convey to Harriet that she was the one who can teach her how to be elegant and sophisticated. (Copeland, 56-57)

John Wiltshire explained in his chapter in *Mansfield Park, Emma, Persuasion* in the book *Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen* that Emma's acting represents a very deliberate tactic of Austen's writing and embodies the snobbery of the upper classes. Specifically, Emma's condescension over others, teasing, and the assumption that everyone would be better off with Emma around and having her as their close friend.

Simply, Emma thrives on the idea that she is something more than others, smarter, prettier, richer. (Wiltshire, 66)

With this behavior, Emma tries to cover up her shortcomings, especially in love relationships. Because she has a distorted view of the world, she also has certain ideas about marriage, it represents only a convenient deal for her, certainly not love or mutual affection. We can infer from the situation that Emma is looking for a suitable husband for Harriet. She does not consider that she even might love the suitor Robert Martin, a farmer. Emma does not know his character well enough, but he does not belong in her circles, so she excludes him from the list of suitors for Harriet. Unfortunately, this novel shows the reader a completely inexperienced character who has no idea about the true values of love. The reader cannot blame her for such a thing, her father did not introduce her to a partner life, and no one else was able to. If she grew up with her mother or stepmother as well, she would at least see how her parents treat each other and how they share the love. (Hughes, 4-7)

Even though, Emma's sister Isabella lived in Woodhouse's house until her marriage, she had not seen her daily for a long time and Emma did not have an everyday female role model in her life. Emma had to educate herself and find a way how to appreciate love. She has never been in love and has no one to explain to her how love works. The first milestone when she encountered her image of love occurred at the moment when Mr. Elton proposed to her, even though he should have proposed to Harriet. In that situation, she realized that all his interest was directed at herself, which ended with Harriet's marriage. How could he possibly be that brave and naïve to think that Emma would say yes? All he cared about was Emma's dowry and wanted to get rich. Thus, confirming Emma's view of a marriage of convenience the second milestone came with a growing interest in Mr. Knightley. When she heard about his eventual marriage with Jane Fairfax, a young pretty lady, she became jealous of Jane for becoming his wife, and as told in the novel on page number 343, she realized that she always wanted to come first to him. Marriage should not be concluded based on financial and economic advantages but rather on real feelings. On the feelings which Mr. Knightley had evoked in her. (Hughes, 4-7)

During the novel, Emma makes progress and achieves consciousness. Austen got to her stereotypical character development. We cannot say unequivocally that Emma was

so different from the other heroines. Again, Austen created Emma as a self-sufficient beautiful lady, who did not need a man, and yet at the end of the book she sits next to Mr. Knightley, a landowner, and they smile at each other in love. The way Emma changed for the better shows us that she was truly Austen's heroine, while all her other main heroines developed and changed. If we were to compare all the main heroines from all her novels and look for the strongest and most developed, Emma would stand on the imaginary pyramid. She was upper class; her father had a lot of money. Society adored her - men wanted to have her as a wife and women at least wanted to be friends with her. She excelled at manipulation and easily got her way. At the same time, it is the only novel that bears the name of the main heroine, which shows us her superiority and importance throughout the book. (Paris, 69)

In other novels, the reader may also notice that, for example, Elizabeth Bennet was content with her place in society in the lower classes and had to put up with nasty remarks about her sisters that they allegedly only wanted money. Through characters from previous novels, the reader only got into the minds of women who were not financially secure. Emma thus transported the reader to the opposite position of society. She did not have to worry about the future, she did not have to look for a groom and deal with gossip about her life. (Paris, 70-71) This is proved by Mr. Weston's (her brother-in-law) and Mr. Knightley's (her old friend) speech: "Pretty! say beautiful rather. Can you imagine anything nearer perfect beauty than Emma altogether—face and figure?" "I do not know what I could imagine, but I confess that I have seldom seen a face or figure more pleasing to me than hers. But I am a partial old friend." (Austen, *Emma*, 30) Men discuss her only on good terms and Emma did not have to deal with who and when said something nasty about her, she lived a carefree life, her biggest worry being whom her friend Harriet would marry. (Paris, 80)

While previous heroines deal with much more serious issues. The upcoming marriage, which they must pass due to their status. They cannot think about staying home with their parents as Emma did. Emma's character had certain privileges that other heroines did not have, behind which money stood. Jane Austen allowed at least one of her heroines to experience a rich life, and thanks to that Emma's social position moved high. As mentioned in the second chapter, money indicated the well-being of Mr. Woodhouse had a lot of money and thanks to it he was able to live well with Emma.

Except for well-being, Emma also abounded in beauty, and she met two essential requirements for a bride. Money and beauty go with attention from men and the lady became automatically attractive for society. Emma introduced the idea deal of the potential bride and perfect lady. (Paris, 81)

3.2 Social Interaction with Other Characters in the Novel

3.2.1 Miss Taylor and Mr. Woodhouse

The first close character, introduced in the novel is Anne Taylor, later Mrs. Weston, the woman who raised both of Woodhouse's daughters. Mr. Weston was married, but his wife unfortunately died. Miss Taylor was the light that brightened every day of the Woodhouse family and that was exactly what Mr. Weston needed because his wife died. In the presence of Mrs. Weston, Emma felt harmony and peace. Mrs. Weston is one of the few people who knows Emma and can speak to her soul, after all, she has been her mother for a long time. Therefore, she was very devastated that they would not see each other so often and at the same time felt betrayed when Mrs. Weston traded her for her husband. However, as already mentioned, it was Emma who was responsible for their wedding, deep down she wanted to arrange a married life for her beloved tutor, which would not have been waiting for her in the Woodhouse family. (Austen, *Emma*, 3)

By being Mrs. Weston moved in with her husband, Emma reminded herself that married life, as directly stated in the novels, involves a melancholy change when a woman mourned her former home, something Emma wanted to avoid. (Austen, *Emma*, 385) Naturally, Mrs. Weston's relationship with Emma was not just friendly but from their relationship, it is felt that Emma respects older ladies, specifically those who treat her nicely. However, Mrs. Weston had never been stricter, and therefore at the Woodhouses, it did not happen that she might reprimand Emma for anything. Mrs. Weston got married after Emma introduced her to Mr. Weston. The wedding influenced Mr. Woodhouse, who would prefer if his close friend Mrs. Weston never married. He argued with his daughter about Anne's bad decision. (Austen, *Emma*, 2-9) "Poor Miss Taylor!—I wish she were here again. What a pity it is that Mr. Weston ever thought of her!" (Austen, *Emma*, 4)

Mr. Woodhouse presented himself as a selfish man because he thought just about his pleasure. Emma stood up for Miss Taylor, even though she had a huge hole in her heart. When she argues with her father, the reader can notice from the very beginning of the novel she introduces herself as a fearless and forceful daughter, not thinking about words that could hurt her father, on the contrary, he agrees with them. According to Emma, Mr. Woodhouse cannot recognize the seriousness of the situation and therefore did not realize when he spoke inappropriately. By being able to direct her father's speech, she showed herself as the mistress of the house. (Austen, *Emma*, 2-7) The reader can conclude, he did not like changes, especially when his lovely ladies left the house (Miss Taylor and Isabella, his daughter). Therefore, Emma claimed that she would never get married, and her father did not count on a possible engagement. Emma proved to be a considerate daughter, she declined to leave her father and otherwise stayed in his house with Mr. Knightley, Emma's close friend, and husband, who could be very helpful. Mr. Woodhouse later did not want other people to leave him, just like Emma, who took the departure of her governess very hard and liked to be sure in life that someone would be there for her. (Austen, *Emma*, 385-6)

They shared an understanding and respectable relationship, and it seems that they feel comfortable next to each other and that their time together makes them both happy. But Emma does not know about farming and renting land, which in most cases was the main income of gentlemen, and cannot engage in conversation with her father and his friend. They lack a common interest that they could discuss during, for example, tea. (Copeland, 57) It can be deduced that Mr. Woodhouse was the closest person to Emma. For that reason, the nearest means of manipulation. Emma manipulated many people to achieve her interest. She refused her father's suggestion of Mrs. Weston's misfortune, which Mr. Woodhouse said awaited her. However, we could argue that it was not manipulation but rather love for the father. And that Mr. Woodhouse took his daughter's advice. Like any father, his daughter is the best in his eyes. After he saw Emma's drawing of Harriet, he is possessed by Emma's talent. No one would draw better. It helped her ego go higher with these flatteries and created an idea that no one could match her. (Austen, *Emma*, 38)

3.2.2 Harriet Smith

Harriet, an average girl with a distant parent, (her parents are not revealed to the readers) mysteriously captured Emma. Perhaps, because Harriet acted a little bit like Miss Taylor and could therefore take her vacant place, both emanate a gentle and fragile aura and also calm nature, and both are good listeners. Emma and Harriet are not equal, one had the upper hand, Emma certainly. Shortly after they met, Emma is addressed as Miss Woodhouse while Harriet is no miss for Emma. Obedient Harriet with no social position rather reminded Jane Austen's other female heroines, who respected higher-ranking people, in this case, Emma. Also, the relationship is based on mutual admiration. Emma can value Harriet's fairness and dedication. (Austen, *Emma*, 19-27)

Society cannot mark their friendship as genuine or respectable. Young Harriet would hardly bring something to develop Emma's personality, at least Mr. Knightley and his companions thought so. But these are more prejudices that come naturally when someone comes from a low class. Making these jokes about Harriet's subordination made Emma answer for her in the company of Mr. Elton, the local vicar. Emma appreciated Harriet's beauty and wanted him to agree with her. Emma's companion cannot be hideous. (Austen, *Emma*, 30, 34)

Harriet's naivety and ignorance can be judged by the reader when she asks for advice on what to write in a love letter and whether her decision to spurn Mr. Martin, which she longs for, was right, only because he made money from farming. In the case, Harriet would marry him, Emma would lose her dear friend again, as she had with sister Isabella and Mrs. Weston. Subconsciously and perhaps even consciously, the main character needs security in the form of a close friend who will follow her. Their conversation turned to the idea of Harriet having her choice of groom since she got interested in Mr. Martin. Yet, her groom was already chosen- Mr. Elton. There was a pleasant conversation on page 25 about Mr. Martin led by Mr. Knightley, what a real gentleman Mr. Martin was. Unfortunately, Emma admired that Harriet refuse him through the letter, which Mr. Knightley found strange. (Austen, *Emma*, 42, 48)

Back to Emma and Harriet's relationship, Emma even admits that she wants to have Harriet as her support for a while. Emma declared: "If I had set my heart on Mr. Elton's marrying Harriet, it would have been very kind to open my eyes; but at present, I only want to keep Harriet to myself." (Austen, *Emma*, 54) Emma herself confirmed with

this sentence that she needed someone to walk beside her and needlessly rejected Mr. Martin, who would certainly have been able to take care of fragile Harriet. At the same time, her matchmaking passion prevails in her, about which she is convinced works based on Mrs. and Mr. Weston's happiness. Even though Harriet would like to marry Mr. Martin, Emma starts to talk Harriet into thinking that she should start trying Mr. Elton, since on page 9 Emma briefly mentions Mr. Elton that there is no suitable woman for him in Highbury, when she meets Harriet, she immediately thinks that she is the suitable partner for him. Emma will also contribute to her idea later based on Elton's taking Harriet's portrait into his house. If he had no interest in Harriet, why else did he desire her likeness so much? But he longed to own Emma's creation and did not care what the painting represented. (Copeland, 56-57).

However, the romantic line does not play out between them, because Mr. Elton dreams of other women (especially of Emma). When it is revealed that he does not want to marry Harriet, the ladies' relationship deteriorated. During their conversation about Mr. Elton's new wife, Emma did not hold back and admitted that they fit together. The reader got a detailed description of her and therefore can infer that she and Mr. Elton have similar natures, which means not positive. Also, he needed to marry for money and that's why the wedding was rushed. Emma still supported Harriet, who would be better for him. But Emma thought that she would be more obedient and a little naive and therefore would listen to him at his word and did not see the independence in Harriet. (Austen, *Emma*, 260-263)

As mentioned above, Emma did not have the sense to know if the two were compatible, so she naively thought that Harriet and Mr. Elton were a perfect match. Harriet and Emma's relationship was not accidental, Harriet came into Emma's life just as Mrs. Weston left her. The arrogance of the main character is perhaps not better manifested in any relationship, but Harriet would hardly admit it. During their conversations, Emma even expresses herself in such a way as not to sound like she wanted to control her. All the while, Harriet gets labeled poor Harriet, so she never got appreciation from Emma. In the end, they both found happiness, and both rejoiced at the success of the other. Their friendship was rather superficial but also based on real feelings.

3.2.3 Mr. Knightley

Emma and Mr. Knightley's introduction in the scene was more reminiscent of a sibling relationship with his nudging and funny comments, probably because his brother married Emma's sister Isabella and therefore, they knew each other for many years. Mr. George Knightley did not see Emma as a perfect subject as others did. However, he elevated Emma above Harriet for example in the knowledge of literature or the drawing. Also, during his conversation with Mr. Weston, Emma's personality got many flatteries her cleverness. He claimed that Emma has picked up the most sense from the Woodhouse family, which as Mr. Knightley professed was why she acted so haughty. He liked to interject Emma's education into most conversations with other gentlemen, perhaps appreciating good qualities. (Austen, *Emma*, 6)

Mr. Knightley and Mr. Weston had a conversation about the new friendship of Emma, Knightley cannot understand why Emma should be friends with a girl with no background, in contrast, Weston thought that they could learn many things from each other. However, it is not the case that Knightley only considers others to be abounding in a sense. He gave the impression of a great mind and his actions evoked preparedness. The fact that conversations between Emma and Knightley revolved around who was right proved another connecting character trait they shared was pride when each of them asserted their opinion and they did not let the other interrupt their speech. (Austen, *Emma*, 28)

Their conversation dealt with Mr. Martin, who turned out to be a decent man for marriage according to Knightley, Emma claimed Mr. Martin was no match for Harriet. At that moment Knightley became angry, for he saw nothing in which Harriet was more capable than Elton. The only thing they both knew about her was that she had a fair amount of beauty and intelligence. But her parents had not shown up until that moment, and neither of them could have guessed whether she had become a simple orphan. They were arguing about Miss Harriet's wedding when Knightley claimed that Mr. Elton would never marry a poor girl, Emma argued that she could tell when someone was in love, and she thought Elton was. (Austen, *Emma*, 49-|50) While Emma talked to herself and pondered about Knightley's nature and perhaps wondered if his speech about Mr. Martin did not hide the truth: "Mr. Knightley, he is not a trifling, silly young man." (Austen, *Emma*, 172)

Both received compliments from other characters like Harriet and Mr. Weston and looked up to them as the cream of society. Quite possibly, the main heroine picked up several qualities from Mr. Knightley during her adolescence. (Austen, 7-29) Emma and Knightley moved in the same social circles and society adored them. Mr. Knightley, a friend of everyone, was treated as a charming gentleman, and Emma, a lovely, educated lady. Mr. Knightley seemed to be judgmental. Harriet was pretty, but she could offer nothing more. When the readers look at the matter as a whole, they will find that he was wrong, because he admitted it, and because of that Mr. Knightley can be considered a realist. Emma lived with the idea that Harriet could easily marry someone above her class. She did not want to face reality and rather fantasized. This was a stereotypical issue of men and women rather than an exception – men saw the world as black and white and women in color. (Austen, *Emma*, 47-51)

The marriage presented a distant affair for both. Mr. Knightley did not focus his interest on specific women and expressed himself too much in others' courtships, especially Harriet's. No one blamed him for not being interested in women, after all, he had a large fortune and was the richest character in the novel. Nor did Emma desire the opposite sex, she turned her interest to Harriet and tried to find her a husband. But at least she felt like getting involved in other people's lives. (Austen, *Emma*, 120-125)

Against Mr. Knightley, who thought everyone should take care of themselves and gossiped about Harriet and despised her person before Mr. Weston. He was moving in the right place at the right time. he maintained many contacts and therefore had immediate access to news, for example when the news about Mr. Elton's future wedding surfaced, Mr. Knightley already knew. In most cases, he judged according to how he lived and was unable to empathize with the role of another person. His character did not care about social position, but more about education and a sense of perception (case of Mr. Martin, who did not have a higher social position, but Knightley saw his inner side full of kindness and bravery). (Austen, *Emma*, 130-141)

Mr. Knightley's role in Emma's life seemed to be originally protective and kind of peeked behind her back. His presence quite often pleased Mr. Woodhouse and they discussed work and friendship matters. Perhaps it is because they spent so much time together that he had taken on fatherly instincts from Mr. Woodhouse. (Austen, *Emma*, 130-141)

Mr. Woodhouse and Mr. Knightley lived without wives and concentrated on Emma. She grew up in an environment where the father did not need any woman, as did Mr. Knightley. Therefore, when the rumor arose that Miss Fairfax, an adorable orphan lady raised by her grandmother, might be his fiancée, Emma almost exploded with rage. (Austen, 184) The reader can understand her reaction in three ways: she did not want him to be the next person to leave her for marriage like her older sister and Miss Taylor did and that would only prove, she claimed him not as a lover, but as a close friend. The second understanding evokes Emma's view of George (she was unable to call him by his Christian name) as a saint, with whom no one would simply keep up in life, mainly Jane Fairfax. The second theory was even admitted by George during his dialogue with Emma. (Austen, *Emma*, 237)

In his words, Miss Fairfax has flaws that cannot be overshadowed by her beauty. Beauty fades away, but one takes knowledge and education to the grave. That was why Mr. Knightley clung so much to scholarship. The last one lies in the possibility of Emma's secret love for George, which manifested itself at the very moment when she heard about the possible wedding. (Austen, *Emma*, 237)

Emma's awareness of feelings for Mr. Knightley came when Harriet dreamed of marrying him. At that moment resentment awakened in Emma. She was the only one of all ladies who suited him. The necessity arose in her that Harriet renounces the idea of marriage with George. Emma began to realize that he got the upper hand over other men and that he had equally high demands. Her heart came alive and opened to the idea of loving George Knightley. Confused but at the same time happy, the main heroine reached the final lesson, which she had been missing all along – the lesson of love and was having an internal monologue with herself. (Austen, *Emma*, 340)

His aloofness towards women has created a sense of needing to be the one for him, and Emma wanted to feel like a unique human. Yes, he can appreciate women's qualities like Jane Fairfax's beauty and smartness, but throughout the book, he did not set his sights on one lady, nor court anyone. His character represented impregnability, and the woman who would marry him was expected to win, in the sense that she was given what no other. And Emma longs for such a victory deep down. And if George asked for her hand in marriage, she would say no. Her father's presence must not be neglected. (Austen 341-4) Even so, George proposed to Emma and she cannot keep quiet and confesses to her father

about George's proposal, and he reacted negatively. After all, she promised him that she would not marry and spend her life with him. However, Mr. Woodhouse accepted their engagement. Emma was truly blinded by her innocence of any affection from George's side because if she had not, she would have discovered his love for her long ago. (Austen, *Emma*, 352-6)

Jane Austen ended their love story with a moving speech from Mr. Knightley when he decided to live with Emma and her father. He did not dare to tear apart the last relationship that was left to Mr. Woodhouse with his daughter. He loved Mr. Woodhouse and his happiness was important to George. (Austen, 356) Time has shown that the main character had her eyes closed the whole time. Friends turned fiancés and their negative qualities disappeared thanks to the other. George has had a big impact on Emma since she was a child. He clung to education and became a great scholar, as mentioned he played a bit of a fatherly role, and that's why Emma became so educated. As for the impact of Emma on George. Because of the feelings he has for Emma, his otherwise perfect concentration partially disappears. In doing so, however, he shows the reader as a functioning person, capable of human qualities such as the occasional loss of control.

3.2.4 Jane Fairfax

Jane Fairfax, the young, elegant lady, was often compared to Emma Woodhouse. Both abounded in beauty, youth, loyalty, and knowledge. In this case, it is not a close relationship as it was in the previous ones when perhaps the two ladies would share a friendship or family relationship, but rather the analysis of their relationship focuses on the rivalry between them. Emma recognized Jane's beauty, but she certainly did not agree that Jane could be considered a superior young lady. For a young lady in Regency England, the biggest competitor during courtship was another prettier, more educated, and richer lady. Although Emma did not want to get married, she wanted to maintain her reputation as the best match for a man. Because as mentioned, outside of her good qualities' cleverness and self-confidence, she had qualities like arrogance and dominance, perhaps because she indulged in a bit of pampering. (Austen, *Emma*, 72,87)

Jane received attention from society mainly due to her charm and cleverness. Everyone knew about the unfortunate death of her parents. Her grandmother and many

educated people who appeared in her presence contributed to her upbringing and she could be proud of her knowledge of various occupations as an adult. Emma struggled to understand why she hated Jane so much. Probably because she was secretly jealous of Jane and bear the thought of a woman being around her who could not possibly be more charming than Emma. There was no other charming lady near her who could receive the same compliments on beauty and intelligence as Emma. She behaved politely in society, but when Jane was mentioned or even entered the room, Emma immediately changed her demeanor. She did not want to talk about her. (Austen, *Emma*, 130-135)

They would probably make a good friendship. Compared to Harriet and Emma's friendship, it would be an equal relationship and maybe that's the kind of friendship Emma longs for and felt sorry that Jane was not trying to make friends with her. But the reader must understand their situation. Both represent a very good match and a great demand in the marriage market. However, Emma had a large dowry compared to Jane. Both grew up without a mother and were raised by another woman (Jane by her grandmother and Emma by Mrs. Weston). Quite possibly, Emma was jealous of the presence of Jane's grandmother, who was still with her and could still help Jane, for example, married life surely awaits her. Which is no longer the case with Mrs. Weston, the governess. (Austen, *Emma*, 130-135)

Jane Fairfax also trained to become a governess to raise money. The work of a governess in the 19th century supported many ladies who, for example, had not yet found a suitable husband or whose families had no money. It also meant that the woman in question had achieved the required intelligence to do the job. She had to teach the little girl in question in all directions like literature, science, and social customs, and go through puberty with her, for example. (Kirkham, 163)

Jane fell in love with Frank Churchill, son of Mr. Weston and they got secretly engaged. They shared a love for music. There are several signs in the book that reveal their love. For example, Frank bought a piano for Jane and through this gift pointed out their common interest. The piano is also meant to represent the love that Frank feels for Jane. Unfortunately, Emma failed to recognize that the gift Jane received was a true expression of love because Frank sent some signals to Emma herself and to Harriet, or so Emma thought when she flirt with Frank and he complimented her back. Emma's assumption that he was more interested in her than in Jane was correct. Jane as Frank's

secret fiancée felt heartache when he flirted with Emma. Frank did not flirt with Jane that much and it could be heartbreaking for her to see Emma and Frank together. Because of Frank's compliments, Emma did not see Jane as an adversary in Frank's heart. (Copeland, 57) While in the case of Mr. Knightley, Emma feared that the rumors of their possible engagement might be true. Emma and Jane found themselves in the same situation where they were afraid that they might lose their lover's interest. (Austen, *Emma*, 398)

Jane and Emma got both happily married and their dispute was only from Emma's side. But her jealousy of Jane added some humanity to Emma's character. She felt threatened and overpowered by Jane. Popularity with men who could become future husbands became the biggest interest for girls at that time. But the moment when each happily married, they became ladies with similar values. The end of the novel does not allow the reader a glimpse between Jane and Emma, but they appear to have grown closer and found common ground. During the last mention of Jane, Emma hopes Jane will be happy with Frank. (Austen, *Emma*, 398) In this way, Emma releases her rival feelings. Even though Jane Austen portrayed Emma as a singular heroine, she had the same priorities as other ladies of the time, as evidenced by her resemblance to Jane Fairfax. Both crave male attention, both have achieved high education and grown into a beauty, and both are afraid of being replaced (their loved men would be taken by other women). The existence of the character Jane Fairfax proves Emma's human side, Jane awakened real emotions like anger or uncertainty in her.

4 Elizabeth Bennet

The main character of *Pride and Prejudice*, the second novel by Jane Austen published in 1813, Elizabeth Bennet, some experts claim represented Jane Austen's alter ego. Austen introduced Elizabeth as a complex character and became one of the most favorable and feminist-influenced characters not just in Austen's era, but even now. Growing up with four sisters provided her with the necessary company and thus she could adopt social manners. Her father was not of the highest circles, and since he had no son, all his daughters had to marry well, preferably for love. Their suitors would not receive any high dowry. At the same time, each of the daughters had to make do with little (e.g. clothing). The fact that each of them behaved differently was already a question of their character. Elizabeth, the second eldest, filled the role of the daddy's girl, as the eldest Jane, on the contrary, is the mother's favorite. (Paris, 96-97)

Due to the father's attention, as I will later argue, Elizabeth has created a certain image of her future husband, for example, he should be devoted, kind, and loving. The two oldest sisters are most compared, Jane, a beautiful elegant young lady, and Elizabeth, polite, forceful, and not afraid to speak up. After all, she knows very well that men and rich ladies rule society and she will never be that. Even so, she never ceases to be amazed at the behavior and questions of these groups of people. *Pride and prejudice*, two strong human traits, are surprisingly hidden even in this otherwise positive character. But it could have been the result of social scorn when Elizabeth refuses to be like the others at all costs. (Paris, 99) Compared to Emma Woodhouse, who received a traditional education, Elizabeth received a liberal education, she did whatever she like. However, got more education in terms of marriage and social mores. Emma wants to be praised by society, and Elizabeth longs for recognition not only of herself but of women in general.

4.1 Limits of Family and Society

Mr. and Mrs. Bennet had a different view of their daughter's happiness. Mr. Bennet's estate did not earn too much money compared to another gentleman, but he was satisfied with that and dreamed about real love for his daughters. Mrs. Bennet, unfortunately, did not. She raised five daughters, and she cared about a rich suitor of her daughters. Elizabeth's parents are very far from each other, and they unwittingly influence

their daughters as well, at least Elizabeth, who can ask herself whether marriage is a question of love or just a way of life. During the entire book, the reader cannot come across a scene where the parents would perhaps treat each other warmly or hug each other. Also, Mrs. Bennet addressed her husband as Mr. Bennet, which of course could be out of respect for him, but it still did not feel natural. Unfortunately, none of their children were born as sons who could inherit Mr. Bennet's fortune and take care of his mother and sisters. That is why mistrust and fear of the future arose in Mrs. Bennet. For a family to function and for a marriage to function, mutual respect was needed when the spouses no longer loved each other, in the case of the Bennets. Respect turned to contempt, which made it visible even outside the private family environment. If an individual behaves aloof towards his own family, it will be difficult for him to share something deeper with strangers. (Sherry, 3-4)

In the first pages of the novel, Mrs. Bennet had a conversation with Mr. Bennet about a new neighbor who would be suitable for one of her daughters. Whereupon Mr. Bennet replied that all his daughters are common except Elizabeth, which upset his wife, and the husband took a dig at her by declaring that her nerves were his old friends and that he had been seeing them for the last twenty years. Mr. Bennet mocked his wife and did not want to go to his neighbor just because his wife wanted him to, but eventually, he went to visit their new neighbor. (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 6)

Jane and Elizabeth, the two eldest, were pressured to marry early because that was what tradition said. Jane was favored over Elizabeth, she was the one who received compliments about her beauty and education, even though Elizabeth had taken more sense of life. A young woman cannot rely on herself her whole life, she must get married and later rely on her husband. Younger sisters have time for themselves and can educate themselves, e.g. with books, but they would also like to be a part of society, as participating in social events represented the mundane and normality. Each person, despite working for himself or herself, was a part of the circle of society, and fit into a certain pattern. Elizabeth did not fit into this circle, at least not voluntarily. (Sherry, 3-4)

In the novel, she appears on her own and possesses qualities that were out of the norm like ferocity or fearlessness in communication, when someone objected to her family, she immediately spoke up. A reader might call her a rebel. But even she did not escape the pressure of society and ended up with Mr. Darcy, who is her exact opposite

with his quietness and withdrawn nature. With his quiet and smooth demeanor, his personality reached other dimensions compared to Elizabeth. (Sherry, 3-4)

Another theory, on the other hand, holds the opposite idea, that Elizabeth was the one who represented higher circles in the novel and belonged to society. This means that she towered above all gentlemen and their wives, who attended social balls. The richest people belonged to the higher circles, but here the theory ranks bright and educated people, like Elizabeth, in the higher circles. Her uniqueness would refresh a potential new wave and as a young lady standing up for herself, she would stand at the head of the corrupt society she so despises. Elizabeth possessed the trait of sociability, and if anyone in the novel closed his true side to himself, it was Mr. Darcy, who, according to the previous theory, should be the rule of society. His participation in the company turned out to be rather forced and therefore, in contrast to Elizabeth, he stands outside our circle. That is, he moves only in his own - higher society. (Sherry, 5)

It could be said that everyone chose their destiny. Austen's novels depict great differences between the lower and upper classes, but it was not the rule that when a son was born to a rich lord, he was necessarily proud and exalted over others. Here, the reader could observe how each character managed their development and pressure from parents and society. Kindness, a quality very rare among the upper classes, was shown in only a few of the heroes of the novels, for example, Bingley's sisters or Lady Catherine's acting haughtily over Elizabeth. These characters reject development and undermine those who stand for it, such as Elizabeth. An opinion with which they do not agree, they quickly swept it off the table and refuse to discuss it. For example, in women's education, on this subject, Elizabeth had a conversation with the two women mentioned. Both women do not want to accept Elizabeth's version, i.e. that women should have the possibility of higher rights, they limit themselves, and development, both personal and otherwise, cannot occur. Austen may seem to have divided the novel into the world of the good and the world of the pretentious, and their roles will not change, but each of the characters must come to their senses. (Sherry, 6-7)

But if these theories were true, the reader might pause at Darcy's personality change. For almost the entire duration of the book, he does not show his emotions, so no one could have guessed that he fell in love with Elizabeth. He danced passionately with her at balls and invited her for walks or visits, which would normally evoke courtship.

And yet, it is conducted unconventionally. His character does not represent one of many and differs from others, and therefore even a proposal for a hand in marriage could not take place traditionally. Despite all the rules and traditions, Jane Austen tried to create unique characters that could convey something deeper to the reader and Elizabeth held the role of a heroine who is not afraid to speak up and evoke positive emotions in people. (Sherry, 10)

The character of Elizabeth suffered several limitations throughout the novel. The origin of a poorer family could not immediately bring recognition and success. Money represents power and has been a standard of living for many. Women could not earn an income and therefore their life depended on the wealth of their fathers and later of their husbands. For them, freedom was a privilege and an unattainable dream. (Sherry, 11) So we can conclude that the main heroines of Austen's novels possessed the biggest flaw for society, namely their gender. Besides, Elizabeth herself did not come from a rich family, she had no brother, her sisters did not abound in intelligence, and her fate was already dictated by life itself. As a woman, she could change the limitations of life only by marrying, ideally, a rich husband. Elizabeth had all the makings of a single life that she would surely have happily led, but Jane Austen could not have given Elizabeth this ending, as it would have outraged many readers. Therefore, Elizabeth, a feminist icon of women's novels, ends up as a happily married lady, with Mr. Darcy as her husband. The reader can debate their relationship, whether Elizabeth was able to get her way or was tamed.

4.2 Icon of Feminism

Jane Austen became famous for being great at portraying their character. Austen created characters that many women identified with, that is, the characters were human, and they had their faults. Elizabeth, a loving daughter, and sister did not represent a fully positive character, her characteristics are, for example, prejudice, which makes her rank among the rest of society, thereby acquiring for the reader the humanity that is needed when imagining the character. Straightforwardly she handled all communicative situations when Elizabeth defended women and opposed people who only saw women at home as housewives. (Paris, 98-9)

When Mr. Darcy comes with a list of qualities and knowledge that a young girl should have and know, which includes knowledge of music, dancing, painting, the need to have a unique walk, and manner of speaking. "A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages, to deserve the word; and besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions, or the word will be but half-deserved." (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 30) Elizabeth defends herself. "I am no longer surprised at your knowing only six accomplished women. I rather wonder now at your knowing any. I never saw such a woman. I never saw such capacity, taste, application, and elegance, as you describe united." (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 30)

She stood out among the other girls. Elizabeth knew how to behave. She bowed to Darcy and tolerated him. On the other hand, she does not like injustice. She can stand up for her sister and herself. She accepts allusions to her poverty without erupting in rage, in most cases. The heroine, who abounds in the pride of her sex, could not marry a simple gentleman. In short, it was not enough for her to be satisfied with just a little, because her pride demanded someone educated and suitable for her, that is, to respect women. Elizabeth also tried to reason with the men who were on the opposite side, especially Mr. Darcy and Mr. Collins. She did not lack manners, therefore she knew that she would have to marry one day, if only because her father could no longer take care of her financially after his eventual death, which is general knowledge. Mr. Bennet liked her best of all his daughters, and as the only man in the household, he formed an idea in her head of how a man should treat her. At the same time, he claimed that his other daughters were not intelligent and not unique. But a big part of her dreamed of another world where she and other women could have free decisions about the direction their lives would take. (Paris, 98-9)

The first great joy and success for Elizabeth occurred when the engagement of Jane and Mr. Bingley, a good friend of Mr. Darcy. Bingley did not despise women, he fell in love with Jane at first sight, but he was influenced by his sisters, who rejected his interest in Jane. Which certainly seemed submissive, and the reader can find his personality independent. Elizabeth would not have put up with such a thing, but Jane was just as easily influenced and thus Jane and Bingley shared much in common. Her sister's joy also meant Elizabeth's joy, the same as her sister's suffering. During Jane's illness at

Mr. Bingley's house, Elizabeth did not feel like herself. She also suffered when Lydia, her other sister, escaped and humiliation awaited her. (Paris, 100)

When Elizabeth's friend Charlotte accepted a proposal from Mr. Collins, Elizabeth's cousin who is to inherit Mr. Bennet's fortune, and proposed to Elizabeth himself, Elizabeth felt resentful. Elizabeth completely lacked any interest in Mr. Collins. For Charlotte, she wanted a loving man and not a spiritual one. Love had to go aside for her when of the proposal and Charlotte had to focus on her successful future, which she would have with Mr. Collins. The romantic side of Elizabeth had a hard time understanding this. But the reader could see this side only exceptionally, mostly, the romantic soul in her had been lost during some scenes, rather Elizabeth embodies that prejudice that unites society. Charlotte was several years older than Elizabeth and still single, so she had to take an important step. Elizabeth forgot one important fact, they are both different, and they both had a different ideas of the future, and she is not the one who should control Charlotte and talk her into life. (Paris, 104-15)

She saw herself as a pioneer of women's rights, the problem was that she expected other young women to be the same and therefore able to change the setting of society together. She fought for the true love of other ladies at all costs. Charlotte, as Elizabeth wished, should not have married Mr. Collins because he completely blocked her potential. Sister Lydia was not to be foolish and blinded by love and fall into the clutches of Mr. Wickham who thought only of himself. (Paris, 120)

The main character of the novel hides a much more complex analysis. We could also assume that behind Elizabeth's behavior stand the upbringing of her parents, especially her mother. The unfortunate marriage of the parents brought unfortunate childhood. Her mother was supposed to be her biggest influence, helping her daughter with preparation for marriage life, understanding life's values, and so on. (Paris, 118-9)

Unfortunately, Elizabeth did not find this role in her. Mrs. Bennet caused fear of potential marriage and motherhood. What if she only married a man for his status and was never happy with him? And what's worse, she did not respect him and just took advantage of him. Furthermore, in her situation, she can hardly think of children. Since Elizabeth had the closest relationship with her father, she could easily be Bennet's dream son. Also, because she picked up several boyish habits like being the leader of her siblings, and standing up for her family, does not care about dirty clothes if there was an important

thing to deal with. She naturally assumes that other men should be as humble as Mr. Bennet. (Paris, 118-9)

The moment when Elizabeth's honor could have suffered the most took place with Lady Catherine, who had fixed ideas on women's education. A Young woman should play the piano, draw, and be raised by a governess in her opinion. How else could a mother manage to raise five daughters and why all of them visited society? When Lady Catherine discovered the nonexistence of Bennet's governess, Mrs. Bennet as a mother instantly fell into her eyes. Elizabeth, like a good daughter, began to defend her mother. The mother wanted to take her daughters to social events, but the father denied it. Also, Elizabeth refused to admit her age because it does not matter to her after all. (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 115-6)

"Lady Catherine seemed quite astonished at not receiving a direct answer, and Elizabeth suspected herself to be the first creature who had ever dared to trifle with so much dignified impertinence." (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*,116) Elizabeth was not thrown off by Lady Catherine's words when she tried to point out Elizabeth's age. Elizabeth was aware that she was in the company of an important person and her confident demeanor had largely gone by the wayside. Lady Catherine's words seemed to predominate in her conversations. Of course, she had reached a much older age, and Elizabeth felt the same respect for her as she did for her parents. The manipulation by Lady Catherine may have worked on other people, but Elizabeth is undaunted. She saw no reason why she should promise her grace never to marry Mr. Darcy. Yes, she did not care at that moment, but it was the principle itself. She refused to make promises under pressure from someone of a higher social status. At the same time, she saw no reason why the arranged marriage of Mr. Darcy and Lady Catherine's daughter should ever take place and condemned the Lady who still goes along with such antiquated practices. Elizabeth could take care of herself and did not want to be the subject of anyone's conversation. Therefore, she resolutely escorts the lady away from their house. (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 237)

Even though Elizabeth had a huge determination in supporting herself and her sister, she could easily subordinate to the demands of others, she wanted to feel loved and beautiful. Unfortunately, Mr. Darcy did not make a good first impression when he blocked one of those wishes. We can conclude that she stood for the recognition of society and

the feminine pride (pride of her sex) inside her was rather caused by the misunderstanding of her parents and therefore other people. We can speculate that Darcy's courtship of Elizabeth would have greatly pleased him had he not disrespected her at the first event. He may not have realized that in praising the beauty of the elder Jane, he automatically claimed that Elizabeth is not pretty. "You are dancing with the only handsome girl in the room," said Mr. Darcy, looking at the eldest Miss Bennet. (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 11) She was always used to second place after Jane, only just for her mother. The fact that even a man has labeled her like that, affected her. Men do not judge knowledge at first sight, but they notice beauty and elegance at first sight. (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 11)

The first request for a hand in marriage is rejected, as Elizabeth's pride will not allow it. It was Mr. Darcy who ruined Jane and Mr. Bingley's engagement. Elizabeth, who fought all the time for her sister's happiness, was therefore unable to enter marriage with the destroyer of fortunes. It was only later that his heroic act of saving her sister Lydia from scandal helped Elizabeth overcome this sense of betrayal. Despite the rejection of the request, Elizabeth's self-confidence must have grown greatly. Mr. Darcy fell in love with her, not her sister Jane, or any rich lady. So, by all accounts, she was not such a bad match. (Paris, 126-9)

Elizabeth's character had to develop, just like Emma Woodhouse did. When she discovers that Darcy has been acting for the Bennet family's best interests all along (making sure Lydia and Wickham get married), Elizabeth felt an inner turmoil. She realized that she had judged without reason and that her pride would suffer. She had to admit to Darcy's credit and the fact that she wouldn't have been able to do something like this on her own. The negative feelings stirring in her had to find their place and let gratitude surface. Admitting to herself that she is not a person who could do everything by herself caused the greatest sympathy and experience with the character of Elizabeth. (Paris, 126-9)

It may seem that Elizabeth was the most determined character. That despite her diverse family background, she became a person that neither of her parents were. The mistake she made quite often was trying to change the person she was with. Charlotte should have been determined like her, Jane is more cunning, and Mr. Darcy should not have had the pride that Elizabeth herself had. But the ladies were not a threat to her, while

Darcy was. He was like her in many ways, and she tried to change the mistakes she tried to make in him. (Paris, 129-131)

Elizabeth showed herself as an advocate for her sisters and their welfare. She dreamed of a world that would appreciate women's values and give them a proper place in society. The heroine could not have ended up unmarried, otherwise, she would not have become such a popular character of her time. Marriage was every woman's duty, and after her marriage to Mr. Darcy, she became a common lady. She fought for the interests of her family and did not understand why her father's wealth should determine whether they were popular or not. Jane Austen also clung to her family by never marrying, having no one but her mother, sister, and brother to look after her. But the reader can see the importance of family in her other novels. (Paris, 129-131)

Probably the reason Elizabeth became such a celebrated heroine lay in her position at the end of the book. From a simple second-born daughter with a decent upbringing and the idea of a woman's position, the author portrayed our heroine in a new role. She brilliantly dominated the conversation with Mr. Darcy when asking for her hand in marriage, which gave her courage, and at the end the reader saw in her a determined woman, standing up for her interests, while also getting a happy ending in the form of marriage to Mr. Darcy, who came from a completely different class. The worlds of high and low society came together. (Paris, 129-131)

Comparison of Emma Woodhouse to Elizabeth Bennet

Nature

Emma Woodhouse and Elizabeth Bennet both represented a part of Jane Austen. A big link in the analysis of both characters was irony, which they both used quite often. Like other Austen's characters, the age of heroines is around twenty. Their personality was formed based on their social and family background. Emma grew up without a mother. Her female role model was Miss Taylor, who got married at the beginning of the novel. Emma has lost touch with women and has been searching for him throughout the book. From her relationship with her father, we can infer that she would love her mother just as much. It is devotion to family that we can identify as one of Emma's positive qualities. The same characteristic belongs to Elizabeth. She had the closest relationship with her father and her older sister.

Both also gained a lot of sense. Emma became famous for it. Everyone praised how educated and smart she was. But the fact that she cleverly manipulated people was no longer seen by others, or rather they did not want to see it. The rest of the characters represent unequal companions for her. She towered over them. Elizabeth showed her intelligence only in conversations when someone upset and provoked her. Neither of the daughters had a governess, but she did not need one. She also understood how love works and that mutual respect is not enough in marriage. A great analogy for these characters would be named after Austen's next book – *Sense and Sensibility*. Elizabeth, who is a romantic soul at heart and does not stand for marriage without love. Emma, who relies on her intelligence.

Both stand out from the crowd and have created drama in their respective walks of life in either positive or negative ways. They knew the norms of behavior, therefore neither of them is an outright freak. Mainly, the reader can find fault with them, Elizabeth was too judgmental of the upper classes without trying to fully understand them and Emma was too introspective. Negative traits shape their character and make them seem human and believable to readers. The company spoke very directly and loved as strongly as it hated. Behavior towards the lower classes could be called bullying today. Elizabeth caught unkind hints very often, compared to Emma, who only received compliments.

"Jane Austen, whose novels *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* served as the feminist manifesto of the Victorian Era. To reveal the inadequacy towards females during her time, Austen has created works where Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse became the embodiment of feminist spirit." (Albaraak, 6)

The reader can only speculate how it would have turned out if the main two heroines met in the same room when they were not yet married. Quite likely, there would be an exchange of views about marriage that would upset Elizabeth. Emma would believe he was telling the truth that love was only a vague idea. They would spice up the conversation by talking about their fathers and sisters. Surely Emma would see Elizabeth as a possible competitor and treat her as she did Jane Fairfax. But that's why they are the heroines of their novels, we cannot say which heroine was simply more groundbreaking or who loved her family more.

Marriage

Both married socially important and respected men. Mr. Darcy and Mr. Knightley possessed large fortunes. Elizabeth's fate was predestined for marriage, family situation, and no son, it would be difficult for her to live with her parents as an unmarried person. For that reason, she was under a lot of pressure all the time. Elizabeth's world is run by men, they are the ones who can work, who own the money. She does not want to admit that, like every woman, she has lost and must submit to men. Jane Austen portrayed Emma's world a little differently. Jane Austen portrayed Emma's world a little differently. Emma appears as the highest-ranking in the book, therefore she was blinded by male superiority. (Albarrak, 3)

"Women in the Victorian age were forced to marry as soon as possible to simply survive in society. It is important to remember that there were no jobs for women or any chance to improve their financial position by themselves." (Albarrak, 3) *Pride and Prejudice* even started with an assertion about the importance of marriage. Elizabeth had to become a good match because society expected it of her. Unfortunately, a young girl does not become a good match just because she is pretty. Elizabeth's sister Jane married because of her beauty, but no one could argue that she was the most suitable wife for Mr.

Bingley. As her sister Jane's engagement approached, the eyes of others began to slowly turn to Elizabeth. Added to this was the fact that her other sisters were already attending society, and as Lady Catherine expressed in horror, it could not be possible for the younger would marry before the older daughters. At that moment, she supports her sisters and said that the younger ones should not limit themselves only by having older sisters. That situation will happen.

The younger Lydia married Wickham, who had previously taken a liking to Elizabeth. A scandal did arise, but not because Lydia might have married before Jane and Elizabeth. The pressure disappeared; the family was happy that Lydia's wedding went well. The Bennets have since expected their daughters to marry sensibly and not cause a scandal. Elizabeth does not have to get married this year or next year, especially to find happiness, which she found very quickly. According to society, Emma has a lot of time compared to Elizabeth, there is no Lady Catherine who would suggest a hasty marriage just to avoid social exceptions. Emma did not have to worry about the future she was not even expected to enter the wedlock.

The main person who always stands up for the main heroine of a marriage is the parent, she had promised her father that she would never marry, she loved him so much. If she had not fallen in love with Mr. Knightley, she might have ended up alone, but it would be probably okay, her background and her father's wealth would have allowed her to be in that position. However, if Emma had lived and never married, she could not legally inherit her father's property. Perhaps his first daughter's husband would inherit it. Even though Emma also had an older sister and took the place of the second-born daughter, Isabella was seven years older, and Emma was not worthy of socializing when she married. Instead of focusing on her interests, Emma focused on the interests of other women.

First Emma found Mrs. Taylor's man, and later she tried to do the same with Harriet Smith. The reader sees her running away from the influence of marriage through matchmaking. Emma already knew she chose Mr. Knightley very well, so their marriage could not bring discoveries. Readers may find their age difference strange. Mr. Knightley was born a full sixteen years earlier. Compared to him, Mr. Darcy may seem like a young man full of vigor, because he shared a seven-year age difference with Elizabeth. The romantic side certainly prevailed in Elizabeth. Rather, Emma saw marriage as an

obligation that she could not choose. Of course, for today's readers, the idea of forced marriage (if a woman does not marry, she will have nothing) is quite ridiculous. Jane Austen's readers are mostly women, so they cannot fully understand the actions of the main characters. It was completely understandable at the time. Even though Jane never married, she had a romantic soul, she wanted to give her heroines a life that she never had.

Development

The heroines had to go through personality development, as they have gaps in certain fields. Elizabeth found fault in others, especially Mr. Darcy or Mr. Collins, and even her friend Charlotte. But she should primarily look for faults in herself. Elizabeth jumped to the conclusion (she judged high society people based on the few sentences she exchanged with Mr. Darcy when he claimed that Sister Jane was only courting Mr. Bingley for his money) and abounded in perhaps too high self-confidence, which the reader can notice in the scenes where she defended her sisters that they did not need a governess because they picked up wisdom and feminine manners naturally or from their mother.

She tried to justify her person because, in his opinion, he is educated and did not need someone else to educate him. She cannot accept her faults and they were therefore stuck in the book for a long time. Making a first impression had become a very common human trait, but it was more reserved for the upper classes, to which Elizabeth did not belong. She saw herself with her intelligence in the upper classes. Mr. Collins was an evil man to her, only because he was to inherit Mr. Bennet's fortune and had already outlived her. She did not even really know him she did not even give him a chance. Her pride would not let her.

A big paradox in the development of the character was the fact that Elizabeth's personality and view of higher society were changed by a man, specifically one whom she had previously despised. The moment she learned that Darcy had paid Kitty's dowry so that Wickham would marry her and not cause a scandal, Elizabeth's light dawned. Her

biggest lack of prejudice against people she did not know was disappearing and she could think more clearly.

Emma had to go through a very similar development since they shared properties like pride and high confidence. Emma's self-confidence was supported by nice comments from, for example, Mr. Weston, that according to him, she was a very pretty and educated girl, Emma's self-confidence seems to have grown justifiably. However, we cannot consider it as healthy confidence but rather as overconfidence or the synonym, in this case, pride. In her case too, a man was involved in the change of character, as revealed in the third chapter.

The biggest development came when Emma was able to overcome her pride and decided to give her heart to the only man, except her father. Love opened her heart and made her a less selfish person. Referring that Emma was able to be happy not just for herself, but for both her friend Harriet and her rival Jane Fairfax when they find their husbands. However, unlike Elizabeth, Emma's social status did not change thanks to her husband. Emma and Mr. Knightley were in the circle of the same social class, i.e. higher. Therefore, we can evaluate the development of Emma's character only from the character side. With her extroversion, Emma was ahead of her time, which she realizes, and throughout the book, she cannot come to terms with the fact that she was born at the wrong time. Her intelligence, imagination, talent for example in painting, and the fact that marriage was only an economic matter for her were not common in a young lady. Emma could not travel to another time, so she had to accept her existence in the Regency era, what had happened, again after confessing her love for Knightley. (Albaraak, 5)

Social Position

As we discovered through our second chapter, money ruled society and thanks to them, an ordinary man can become respectful, and a normal-looking lady can be seen as a perfect match. That is where we can find our heroine's biggest social difference, their dowry, and their child's position, meaning if they have siblings because the only child could attract a large amount of attention from parents. This factor could be observable between Emma and Elizabeth. With four sisters Elizabeth got less attention than Emma

with one sister, who was however already married. Elizabeth was her father's favorite, but we cannot forget that he had estranged other daughters to look after. If two of them had a problem at once, one had to be solved first and then the other. When Elizabeth started to have feelings for Darcy, her younger sister Kitty just ran away with Wickham. Bennets did not cause a scandal and needed to arrange Kitty's wedding. Emma owned his father's full attention, even though the existence of her sister Isabella. The reader does not meet her that much, which just proved that Emma represents an important character in his father's life. Therefore, we can easily compare the family status and behavior of family members as well, which merged into social status.

Elizabeth's mother, who did not present in society in her best way, made it obvious that her daughters should primarily marry gentlemen with a lot of money, instead of kind and handsome men with huge hearts, simply because she did not want the same life for her daughters as she had. The reader can easily get Mrs. Bennet's perspective. Unfortunately, Regency society acted unearthly, it was not common for women to be so clear about what they wanted. Of course, mothers introduced their daughters to suitors with interest. However, they still tried to moderate their behavior and not go crazy with potential suitors' daughters, which is not the case with Mrs. Bennet, who started to be obsessed with Jane's suitor Mr. Bingley. (Albaraak, 5)

The novel *Pride and Prejudice* third chapter started when Mrs. Bennet got a satisfactory description of Mr. Bingley she so longed for. At the same time, Mrs. Bennet she showed much of her dissatisfaction with her husband, and the woman was supposed to be devoted to her husband. Elizabeth, as her mother's daughter seems to catch her habits – dissatisfaction and disobedience. Also, respect for Elizabeth was formed based on the behavior of her parents. With father's not richest dowry or mother's rudeness, even the prettiest face or humor with which she could dazzle would not help her. (Albaraak, 5)

This respect for parents can be seen in Emma, just simply because of Mr. Woodhouse's money and gentleman's manners like devotion to his daughter, kind demeanor to Emma's governess Miss Taylor, later Mrs. Weston, or high-level conversation with men like Mr. Knightley, when they conversed with each other about the lands they owned. Also, the Woodhouse family did not have many members and Mrs. Woodhouse died many years ago when the story began. The reader did not know much about her, at least she and her husband love each other, and her death left a big hole in

Mr. Woodhouse's heart. Moreover, older Isabella lived a happy life with her husband and, as a married woman, thereby supporting the reputation of her family.

Emma was located in a patriarchal society, all her life she knew Mr. Knightley, who did not settle down and did not marry, and in him, she had a role model, therefore, when she decided not to enter into marriage, we can see precisely the influence of Knightley, who proves with his lifestyle that he does not need a second half to live. And since she lived surrounded by men, no woman in her company would push her into marriage because of her decision. This just goes to show that Emma did not have to worry about getting married or not. Her father had provided for her well, and at worst she had a married sister who could take care of Emma financially in her old age.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was the analysis of the social position of Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse by Jane Austen. First, the work dealt with getting to know the author, her life, and her passion for writing. When analyzing literary characters, it is very important to first get to know the author at least briefly, because sometimes the author mirrors his characters, especially when Austen wrote about her familiar surroundings, English society in the 19th century. However, Austen never got married, which made her different from her heroines. The second chapter introduced the reader to the time in which both novels take place and bring to light the position of women. Unfortunately, many readers of Jane Austen today do not fully understand how the times in which the novels were set worked and what money was worth. That is why my second chapter dealt with the Regency era and we looked closely at the economic situation and the importance of money.

The following emerged from the work: Emma Woodhouse proves her superiority in society just by the fact that the novel in which she appears is named after her. With her beauty, education, elegance, and demeanor, she presents everything in her way and exactly as Mr. Darcy described in the novel *Pride and Prejudice* (the quote is on page 40) when he speaks about graceful walking, being able to sing, dance, and communicate. A woman who meets all the mentioned points has the right to have her place in society.

However, Emma can offer much more. Even though from her behavior we deduced her superiority towards her friend Harriet Smith, she has great respect for her family, specifically for her father, governess Mrs. Weston and husband Mr. Knightley, who is many years older. If we were to place Emma on a scale from the lowest to the highest society, she would probably be a little below the highest limit, since we are still talking about a woman. Since money became the greatest measure of social status as we found out during the analysis, for that reason Emma, Austen's heroine with the most wealth, achieved a higher status than Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's social position was a little more complicated. The first sub-chapter of the fourth chapter dealt with the limits of society and the family, where the reader learned that the social status of children developed according to the social status of their parents. The Bennets not being among the fashionable circles, and therefore even their five

daughters cannot be respected. However, Elizabeth proved through her direct and confident demeanor when she argued with Mr. Darcy or Lady Catherine (both arguments presented in the fourth chapter), that her parents' past should not affect her life. Compared to Emma, Elizabeth was often mocked. But she was able to defend herself, and because of her development during the book, we can evaluate her social position more from a moral point of view. If we forget the fact that she married the richest man in the book.

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