
Women's Roles in England at The End of The 18th Century : Reading Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice

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Abstract

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* reflected the English society, especially the destiny of women during Victorian ages. Money used to rule the world, in terms of shaping and labeling people into social classes. As a male-centered society, women were the basis of the family, but they did not have voice or vote. Their options were pretty limited by the rules code imposed by the people. Role of women were really different from the thing we can observe today. In *Pride and Prejudice*, we can see many types of women: single or married, rich or poor. All of them shared the similarities: facing the gender discrimination in life. Moreover, women did not have any options at that time, and the maxim goal or dream that they expected for their lives was to get married, if it is possible with a wealthy man in order to have a comfortable life. Unfortunately, marriage was a market, it was based principally in economical arrangements where women did not have chance to decide for themselves.

The heroine of the story, Elizabeth Bennet, is the leading character in the innovating process to gain rights for women. With the finest personalities of a young woman, Elizabeth attracts and inspires the readers by her own inner strength in a not-for-woman society. The main purpose of this thesis is to analyze the great orbit created by Elizabeth to other women as well as to examine their miserable role, which helps people think about women situation nowadays. Things have changed positively and show us that there were noble and brave women that wanted a change, and that women after all are strong... they are the basis of the family and the basis of

the society. Jane Austen, despite of all the historical events that England was going through, still encourages women to fight and overcome. She proves herself as one of the greatest female writer of all time.

Keywords : Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen, Elizabeth Bennet, Victorian Era, women rights.

บทคัดย่อ

เรื่องสาวทรงเสน่ห์ “Pride and Prejudice” สะท้อนให้เห็นถึงสังคมอังกฤษ โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งชะตากรรมของผู้หญิงในยุควิคตอเรีย เงินมีอำนาจมากแก่ของการกำหนดและการตีตราคนไปสู่ชนชั้นทางสังคม ในฐานะที่เป็นสังคมที่ผู้ชายเป็นใหญ่ ผู้หญิงเป็นรากฐานของครอบครัว แต่ผู้หญิงก็ไม่ได้มีสิทธิมีเสียงใดๆ ทางเลือกของพวกเขาก็ถูกจำกัดด้วยกฎระเบียบที่กำหนดโดยผู้คน ในปัจจุบันนี้ บทบาทของผู้หญิงเหล่านั้นแตกต่างจากสิ่งที่เราเห็นเป็นอย่างมาก ในเรื่อง Pride and Prejudice เราจะเห็นผู้หญิงหลากหลายประเภทคือ โสดหรือแต่งงานแล้ว เป็นคนรวยหรือคนจน พวกเขาทั้งหมดเผชิญสิ่งที่คล้ายกันคือ การเผชิญกับการเลือกปฏิบัติทางเพศ นอกจากนี้ ผู้หญิงก็ยังไม่มีทางเลือกใดๆเลย ณ เวลานั้น และเป้าหมายหรือความฝันสูงสุดที่พวกเขาคาดหวังไว้ในชีวิตก็คือการได้แต่งงาน ถ้าเป็นไปได้พวกเขาก็อยากจะแต่งงานกับผู้ชายที่มั่งคั่งเพื่อที่จะมีชีวิตที่สะดวกสบาย แต่น่าเสียดายที่การแต่งงานนั้นเป็นตลาดอย่างหนึ่งซึ่งเป็นข้อตกลงทางเศรษฐกิจที่ผู้หญิงไม่มีโอกาสในการตัดสินใจด้วยตัวเองเลย

อลิซาเบธ เบนเน็ต ซึ่งเป็นนางเอกของเรื่อง เป็นตัวละครนำในกระบวนการสร้างสรรค์เพื่อสิทธิสตรี ด้วยบุคลิกที่ยอดเยียมที่สุดของเธอ อลิซาเบธดึงดูดและเป็นแรงบันดาลใจให้กับผู้อ่านด้วยความเข้มแข็งภายในใจของเธอเองในสังคมที่ไม่ใช่สังคมสำหรับผู้หญิง วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์หลักเพื่อวิเคราะห์ขอบเขตที่อลิซาเบธสร้างขึ้นให้กับผู้หญิงคนอื่นๆ รวมทั้งเพื่อศึกษาบทบาทความทุกข์ยากของพวกเขาส่งช่วยให้ผู้คนคิดถึงสถานการณ์ของผู้หญิงในปัจจุบัน สิ่งต่างๆมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงในเชิงบวกและแสดงให้เห็นว่ามีผู้หญิงที่มีเกียรติและกล้าหาญที่ต้องการการเปลี่ยนแปลง และแสดงให้เห็นว่าผู้หญิงมีความเข้มแข็ง ... พวกเขาเป็นรากฐานของครอบครัวและสังคม แม้ว่าจะมีเหตุการณ์ต่างๆทางประวัติศาสตร์ที่ประเทศอังกฤษกำลังเผชิญ แต่เจน ออสเตน ยังคงส่งเสริมผู้หญิงให้ต่อสู้และเอาชนะ เธอพิสูจน์ตัวเองว่าเธอเป็นหนึ่งในนักเขียนหญิงที่ยิ่งใหญ่ที่สุด

คำสำคัญ : สาวทรงเสน่ห์ (Pride and Prejudice) เจน ออสเตน อลิซาเบธ เบนเน็ต ยุควิคตอเรีย สิทธิสตรี

Introduction

1.1 Jane Austen

Jane Austen (16 December, 1775 – 18 July, 1817) was an English novelist of romantic fiction; she was best known for her social commentary in novels and a position as one of the most favorite writers in English literature. Austen's writings are valuable because of her biting irony as well as social reflection. Her novels are considered literary classics, bridging the gap between romance and realism and became popular during the second half of the 18th century and a part of the transition to 19th-century realism. As a woman, Jane Austen spent most of her lifetime thinking about women's social position and claimed for women's right to work and attempted to define the value of women in society; therefore, her effort to eliminate the male-dominated society can be seen in many of her novels. Moreover, Austen was not so innocent to pursue her dream in a normal way; she did it with a wholehearted and certain plan,

Her feministic strategies are reflected in two ways, narrative content and characterization. In narrative content, Austen concentrates on women's routine life, love and marriage. She is at her best in writing about young girls, because she understands them astonishingly well. So she neglects the narrative modes used by male writers of her time who concerns much about important historical events. In characterization, Austen always makes the female figures main characters of her novel, and makes them the centers of the stage. She describes women as what they really are and advocates a new idea of love and marriage. With her sensible female narrative strategies, Austen effectively gets rid of the control of masculine discourse and establishes feminist narrative authority. (Wang 1828)

2. Historical setting : England at the end of the 18th century

When Jane Austen was on the track of literary career in 1780s, Europe was in the midst of the Victorian Era. At this time, England was experiencing a pax Britannica, which gave them permission to increase and expand economy, government, and population actively. The Industrial Revolution created a huge wealthy middle class that earned property by purchasing new wealth rather than inheriting it from previous generation. Later on, the gender balance shifted, and there were more women than men, gave men more options to choose the kind of women they wished to marry. During this dark time, women were conceptualized as delicate products; they were

romanticized in every sense of the word. Their identities were made to satisfy an uncomfortable social mold, and their bodies made to fit into uncomfortable clothing. Women had very few rights. A woman, no matter what her wealth or social standing, was looked on forever by the government and by society and being defined as a second-class citizen. They were just equipped a few years of mainstream education, were banned from obtaining any but low-paying jobs, were looked on with disparagement if they stayed single, and obeying men was usually their choice. Only in the absence of a male heir were women given substantial property. But a single woman with wealth was still looked upon with disapproval. All in all, there were very few options open to women but to marry.

Throughout the history of humankind, the themes about women have been one of the most controversial not only in literature, but also in society. In *Pride and Prejudice*, which was being penned in 1811, Austen exemplifies the lack of rights of women in the Bennet family. Mr. Bennet's property covers almost entirely in an estate within two thousand a year, which cannot be possessed by his daughter. Unfortunately, it belongs to heirs male, on a distant relation. The property laws, as well as many other laws, always favored men,

The patriarchal society as depicted by Jane Austen in the character and conduct of her novels clearly reveal the discrimination meted out to the women who comprise a major section of the society. Austen has always been considered a writer who writes on domestic issues. (Nandana 3)

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the roles of women putting among English society at the end of the 18th century through Jane Austen's eyes. This paper mainly focuses on the main character in *Pride and Prejudice* - Elizabeth Bennet with her elite and good qualities to portray an outstanding woman in a society lack of justice. More than that, Elizabeth's attitude toward other characters and her personal idea about marriage are also valuable materials for me to understand the female's misery in the past. Those details all direct to Jane Austen's women and answer the question about the real roles of English women in that male-centered society.

2 : Women's Roles in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain

Being considered as the “weak half” in society, Britain women in early nineteenth-century were treated unfairly. The thing that called our attention was the women's living standard, as we can observe, it was completely different from nowadays. In Jane Austen's time, there was no way for the young women of poor classes to strike out on their own or be independent. Most women could not get money by an official job in society, except by marrying for it or inheriting. The eldest son generally inherited it because he was the heir. Women became kind of the “attachment”, they have to depend on the men to earn their lives, on every category, include literature,

In the development of the entire world, there is a conception in human's mind for a very long time that man is a hero, a magnificent object to be admired. Woman only depends on man. So man will never admit woman's intellectual superiority, or even their equality and their possession of a normal human equipment of thought. This conception also has an effect on literature. In the long history of literature, man has taken relatively priority in this area. The readers ignore the books which were written by females. (Wang 1827)

In *Pride and Prejudice*, women are portrayed through the different characters that inhabit the novel. Jane Austen's women characters are multidimensional; they are not paper cutouts. Her women possess different characters with value systems. She is saying women are not one dimensional, not just decoration on a man's arm, but valued members of society. Being a woman in that male-centered society was a misery, and being a poor woman was more disastrous. The lives of the poor gentry are so much different than the lives of the rich gentry. Their options in life, their approaches to courtship and marriage are unable to compare. When money is a standard for people to base on and judge others, women who are born in lack-of-money circumstances become low creatures with many requirements to deal with.

1. Behavior Requirements

Even in modern time, women are usually viewed strictly and unfairly. Society has set up stereotype behaviors for women, being something women cannot ignore

if they want to be appreciated. And it is something that is still happening nowadays, society tend to apply more etiquette rules on women. It is a pity for women of Jane Austen or women in real life who are born sensitive,

Women decide the larger questions of life correctly and quickly, not because they are lucky guessers, not because they are divinely inspired, not because they practice a magic inherited from savagery, but simply and solely because they have sense. They see at a glance what most men could not see with searchlights and telescopes; They are at grips with the essentials of a problem before men have finished debating its mere externals. They are the supreme realists of the race. They are the possessors of a rare and subtle super-logic. (Wang 1827)

2. Education Requirements

Due to the male-focused society at that time, a woman's formal education was limited because her job opportunities were limited - and vice versa. Society could not accept a woman taking over a profession such as medicine or the law and therefore did not offer her the chance to do so. In fact, middle- and upper-class women had few avenues open to them for a secure future. In other words, lacking of good education, women gradually became kind of slave for men. Jane Austen once mentioned in her novel named Persuasion about the importance of education, which gave the men the tool to control the society,

Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything. (552)

Moreover, another form of employment a woman could take was considered unacceptable and would most likely irrevocably harm her social standing. In short, every job for women requires at least a fundamental education and an incomparable stamina. Any skills or accomplishments those are not purely decorative. No calculus. No economy. No critical thinking. Only things that will help her attract a dude. The real meaning of "female accomplishments" is they can sing and draw as good as possible

to catch and please the eyes of male,

For women of the “genteel” classes the goal of non-domestic education was thus often the acquisition of “accomplishments”, such as the ability for needle work, simple arithmetic to draw, fine hand writing, sing, play music, or speak modern i.e. non-Classical languages generally French and Italian. Though it was not usually stated openly, the purpose of such accomplishments was often only to attract a husband; so that these skills then tended to be neglected after marriage. (Nandana 2)

The title of accomplishment in the eyes of women varies from one woman to another, as well as between social classes. To Mrs. Bennet, a woman has reached a status of accomplishment when she has found a suitable man to wed, when the narrator suggests that the business of her life was to get her daughters married. On the other hand, to Elizabeth Bennet, accomplishment is based on wit and freethinking. She learns to take on better manners when she is faced with people of higher social standing, such as the Bingleys. To Lady Catherine, a woman of high social standing, accomplishment means knowing one's place in society and acting accordingly. Accomplishment, therefore, is solely a symbol of status to Lady Catherine. Because the Bennets are of a lower class, she knows they will act differently, and she calls attention to these dissimilarities to make the girls feel humiliation.

3. Elizabeth's rebellion

Like Austen, Elizabeth has inner strength. She does not value people and things just because society forced her to do so. She judges according to her own values. She is not socially self conscious or pretentious. She also has social skill and capacity, but she is not constrained by artificial social formalities. She has the sincerity to examine her own behavior and the capacity to change. She has the will, as well as the strength, to resist social pressure. She has high human values, and employs her good sense and strong will as she sees fit, thinking independently of her family, friends and neighbors. She definitely has critical thinking. There were three best moments in *Pride and Prejudice* that marked Elizabeth Bennet's rebellion for the evolution in changing

the female identity.

First, it should be her determining attitude against Mr. Collins' proposal, which later was proved to be absolutely correct. To Elizabeth, the idea of marriage with such a man is humiliating. Unlike numerous contemporary thoughts about female individuality, Elizabeth has the capacity to express her knowledge, freedom and solid character without in any way trading off on her femininity. She finds herself able to support her rights, speak her mind freely and ignore disregard social status. As one of the most famous heroines of all time, she is so feminine as well as very individualistic. Bunsom, Thanis, Sompatsu Vungthong, and Wareesiri Singhasiri have a summary about Elizabeth's outstanding difference,

Marriage is a significant factor of women's security. While the social and legal obligations during the Victorian era did not leave much choice for women, Austen created her female protagonist, Elizabeth Bennet, to be different. Her determination to marry for love separates her from the rest of the characters and her social settings. (122)

Second, her rejection to a "man with a large fortune", Mr. Darcy, whom she had not had any loving feelings. The way Elizabeth sees the rich people is very unique. She sees impolite, uncultured, selfish people where others see fashionable, wealthy folks. Much to his own amazement as well as hers, Darcy falls in love with Elizabeth passionately after some encounters and proposes to her. All that he had to offer would have conquered any other female's hearts in Elizabeth's place to nob their heads before he finished speaking. But Elizabeth turns him down without a second thought. She could never accept a man with no scruples and goodness, as she wrongly believes him to be, in spite of his fine estate, huge income, prestigious family and superior connections. She does not set her values based on the society's, or take decisions with an eye on society's approval.

And the last, it could also be the moment when Elizabeth expressed her mind outspokenly to Lady Catherine de Bourgh about her opinion in getting married. Elizabeth stands out against other normal women. While refusing a rich man proposal proves that Elizabeth is not an easy girl, standing on her feet to speak out her mind against a rich lady earns her respect from society. Darcy's aunt Lady Catherine is the

queen of her territory. Her imperialism, founded on the virtue of her wealth and status, is gratefully enjoyed or quietly accepted, but never challenged. Elizabeth stands her ground even when faced with the formidable Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Jane Austen has masterfully prepared the reader for Elizabeth's change of perception and revised estimate of Darcy. She is confident enough in herself to know that happiness will come to her and that she should not sell out to anyone.

Fortunately, Elizabeth was bravely against the male-centered society and determinedly married the guy she loved; she did not follow any route on which many other women, without critical thinking, yielded themselves up to. And that is the big difference of a heroine, From a feminist perspective, Jane Austen's emphasis on female personal space implies that intelligent women must secure privacy in order to remain independent, freethinking individuals within a patriarchal society. By linking privacy with mental growth, Austen takes part in a larger network of feminist literature in which private space is equated with female creativity and freedom from domestic duties. Therefore, Austen's examination of privacy serves as a critique of limitations on female intellectual growth. (Alafaireet)

In *Pride and Prejudice*, ball is a place for showing off "social status and hierarchy, sexual interests, wealth and taste, manners, decorum, social nouns." (Gay 140) While young lady attends the ball to display their beautiful appearances as well as some of their accomplishments to attract rich men; gentlemen considers ball as a women market where they can pick up a wife. Elizabeth intentionally comes to the ball for fun, not for the chance to dance with any men, which indicates a sign for future marriage. Comparing to other girls, she is unusual; however, putting her in this context, she is outstanding.

4. Elizabeth's markedly typical attitude toward marriage

Getting married is a very important step of human beings, especially women. S. M. Gilbert and S. Gubar writes: "By marriage the very being or legal existence of a woman is suspended, or at least it is incorporated or consolidated into that of the

husband, under whose wing, protection, and cover she performs everything, and she is therefore called in our law a feme covert” (1985: 292). Most of the characters in Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* go through this period, but not all achieve a happy ending, “Marriage did not guarantee a woman’s happiness ever after in the late eighteenth century.” (REENA 126)

Elizabeth Bennet may know that marriage is the key to happiness—or at least that’s what she hears from nearly everyone around her. As the second daughter of a middle-class gentleman who cannot pass his estate to a girl, Elizabeth is predicted to be poor forever if she does not marry a man who can provide for her. Most of the women in her case will look for a man with “good fortune” to have a better life later. Elizabeth has good appearance, nice qualities... She possesses so many things to get chance and change her life. But what happened? She does not so normal like that; Jane Austen’s main character cannot do the same thing as others do.

Generally, Elizabeth’s attitude toward marriage is reflected through her rejection with Mr. Collins, her disagreement with Mr. Darcy’s first proposal and the acceptance to the latter one. First, Elizabeth’s refusal to Mr. Collins’ proposal in Chapter 19 of the novel is simply a must. This proposal is a typical example of his stupidity and lack of imagination. Collins takes Elizabeth for granted and impresses upon her that he is actually doing her a great favor by marrying her and tries to exploit her financial distress to his advantage. He tries to persuade Elizabeth that their marriage would help heal the breach between their families and also provide for Elizabeth’s mother and sisters in the event of her father’s death. Mr. Collins, like any rich men in England at that time, believes that their money is everything women need. However, he is wrong. By denying such a proposal like that, Elizabeth is forced to confront the reality that she has just missed a big chance to rescue her family if holding out for a marriage of love, and she may never marry at all. To which Elizabeth exasperatedly replies: “Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart.” (Austen 73)

Second, Elizabeth shows her pride in front of the most desirable man at that time, Mr. Darcy, by refusing his proposal. Mr. Darcy, as mentioned above, possesses such a large fortune, even Mr. Collins cannot compare, can hardly receive a reply “No” from any girls at that time but Elizabeth. At the very beginning in the novel Elizabeth says she will only marry for love, and while Darcy does declare his affection,

he ruins it all by saying that he loves despite her family's inferiority to his own; he loves her despite all his "endeavours" to "conquer" his love. She points out that his comments are insulting! "You chose to tell me that you liked me against your will, against your reason, and even against your character?" (Austen 125) She continues to point out Mr. Darcy's bad role in causing a breach between Mr. Bingley and Jane. And her final point of contention is his alleged injustices towards the poor Wickham. In her opinion, Darcy's behavior and treatment of her leave a lot to be desired, but it is also his behavior in regards to those around him. Her perception, false though it is, is that Darcy is an arrogant and mean-spirited man. Her final taunt is that there is nothing in his character that would even tempt her to say yes.

Third, the acceptance to Mr. Darcy's second proposal could be a true evidence for what Elizabeth always thinks about: marriage for love. She refuses him before and now turns upside down. People around might think that she regrets and reconsiders about Mr. Darcy's fortune, and she changes her mind because of money. Elizabeth is too smart to recognize those rumors but she does not care; because she totally falls in love with Mr. Darcy and no one can take her away from him. Everything leads her to this decision is very clear. After Elizabeth reads the letter in which Darcy explains the Wickham situation, she spends a lot of time berating herself for her actions.

A marriage needs "true affection", and Elizabeth does love Darcy, but that is not what matters. What is really important for the success of this marriage is that she respects him; they complement each other; and they can support themselves. The central couple of the novel, Elizabeth and Darcy, become intimately familiar before marriage. Such closeness they achieve by virtue of frequent, high-spirited, and honest interaction in different circumstances during a fairly lengthy time period. Through uninhibited fact and opinion extraction and the comparison of a wide-range of ideas, beliefs, and attitudes, Elizabeth and Darcy ascertain a big picture of each other's formation and mentality and establish a profound connection. Elizabeth and Darcy may not be exactly soul mates in the way we think about soul mates, but they certainly are life mates: they are both willing to work hard for their marriage and their family.

On the other hands, marriage between Mr. Collins and Charlotte is completely contrary. After Mr. Collins' rejection by Elizabeth, he immediately rebounds to Charlotte as a suitable substitute companion as if the world will disappear next day. He

makes “two marriage proposals in three days,” and seems uncaring of the nature of his spouse so long as she totally agrees with him. Charlotte speaks of marriage in a cold and detached manner using such phrases as “securing a husband” and “making alliances.” She values Mr. Collins as a financial provider and feels marriage will bring her immediate relief by furnishing economic security, material comfort, and social establishment, thereby “preserving her of want.” She gives up on a loving marriage and randomly picks out what she feels is the best course of action to secure a provident future, but actually she locks herself into an abominable future.

Conclusion

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.” The opening quote of the novel is also the author’s outline of the most important themes the reader will face with, such as: marriage, class, and the most important one which pushed the novel forward: women. Gender differences are set in hierarchal opposition and women are usually subordinates for men. Women’s position is that of the “other”; or in another word, the unchanged outsiders.

1. Women’s status:

Women and men of the upper class in the 18th Century seldom married for love. On the contrary, they tended to marry strictly for financial and social motives. A gentleman of high rank would never think about marrying a woman from a poor family because she did not possess the social graces and dowry required to be into high class. The middle class, on the other hand, could marry someone they liked. However, women in this rank usually dreamt about a better gentleman. It was not appreciable for a middle-class woman to marry a poor man since her children would be raised in poverty, yet if her happiness depended upon it, her family was unlikely to intervene. In some case, there was no need to marry for social status or wealth due to the fact that the middle class possessed none of them. The father, usually the dominant household figure, would make decision about whether or not his wife could work outside the home or whether or not his children were to attend school. Divorce was extremely rare since widows had no viable means of survival. As a result,

a woman would seldom question or argue with her husband's decisions and instead, simply keep silent and live by his rules as a puppet,

Marriage did not guarantee a woman's happiness ever after in the late eighteenth century. A married woman could not own property, even what she herself might have brought as a dowry or inherited after she was married. Her husband could, and sometimes did, will his estate - including what had been the woman's own inheritance - away from her. Within the marriage partnership, only the man had the right to petition for divorce (in the case of a wife's supposed adultery) and the husband had absolute custodial rights over their children. (REENA 126)

Austen finds rigid class boundaries to be unreasonable and full of irony. Austen cannot do anything but accept the existence of class hierarchy; however, she criticizes the way it can harm society. Critic Samuel Klinger notes, "If the conclusion of the novel makes it clear that Elizabeth accepts class relationships as valid, it becomes equally clear that Darcy, through Elizabeth's genius for treating all people with respect for their natural dignity, is reminded that institutions are not an end in themselves but are intended to serve the end of human happiness."

2. Women deserve better lives

Austen is undoubtedly critical of the gender injustices happen in English society, particularly as perpetrated by the institution of marriage. She pursues her career with the need of changing the fate of women, not only because of the gender justice but also about the reward for their own strength. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen shows that women are just as intelligent and capable as their male counterparts. Jane Austen went against convention by remaining single and earning a living through her novels. In the novel, Elizabeth's happy ending reveals Austen's beliefs that woman has the right to remain independent until she meets the right man. Alafaireet totally agreed with Austen that intelligent female characters strive to preserve physical and mental privacy from men are excellent creation. Furthermore, Elizabeth seems to share her father's distrust frivolous women suggests Austen's uneasy relationship with her own gender.

Instead of exalting the value of tradition and virtue in her novel, Jane Austen defies it and makes a case for feminine rights. Her works are about women discovering who they are and this discovery is the most essential for a woman to truly live and love, regardless of her social position or the century in which she is born and brought up. (REENA)

The happy ending of Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy is a typical evidence of true love, which can inspire women later to fight for their happiness. “If a woman is partial to a man, and does not endeavour to conceal it, he must find it out.” These quotes reveal that women and men were fixed in their social class, fixed in their gender roles, and fixed in their familial relationship with the patriarch as head of household. Elizabeth and Darcy finally manage to share their true feelings for one another. Through this they are able to have a life together, a life which they both desire. Mr. Darcy turns out to be a much better man than Elizabeth could have ever expected.

The world has changed a considerable measure in the most recent 200 years and today’s ladies surely have numerous more stately choices than in those days. In the field of education, job and different methods of personality/identity improvement, ladies have achieved extensive flexibility and balance with their male partners. The ironic truth in the unstable opening sentence of Austen’s novel that a woman not possessing favorable fortune must be in need of a wife is not really a truth nowadays. Pride and Prejudice is such a novel which still conveys a major impact to the world,

Jane Austen has attracted a great deal of critical attention in recent years. The resurgence of Jane Austen, almost two centuries after her death, is partially due to the fact that Jane Austen’s writing transcends time and place. Although deep rooted in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Jane Austen’s novels hold universal truth and are still applicable to people today, showing people struck in a situation and coping with it the best way they can. (REENA)

Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is customarily known as a novel of manners. The story depicts life of the refinement in a little, rustic culture. This novel makes us think about women situation in nowadays, things have changed and show us that during time there were noble and brave women that wanted a change, and that women after all are strong... they are forever the basis of the family and the essential part of the society.

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