

篇名：

傲慢與偏見的分析

(The Analysis of Pride and Prejudice)

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I. Introduction

Pride and Prejudice is one of the Jane Austen's masterpieces. The book is wildly popular all over the world not only because of its impressive characters but also because of its unique writing skills.

Jane Austen released this book in 1813 and became a published writer. However, her works didn't bring her lots of fame and excellent reviews until 1940s. During Austen's career, Romanticism had a greater influence than Neoclassicism, but she refused to accept it. Rather, she broke with the convention on writing skills in 19th century.

Nowadays, many people have pride and prejudice. When someone appears to correct you, whether to accept the advice modestly or to ignore it, varies accordingly. However, we all intend to leave good impression on others. Thus, the interaction between the surface impression and personal prejudice sounds more complicated, yet interesting. "First impression" was the original name of Jane's book, but she then found the title "Pride and Prejudice" was more appropriate.

The book was about two main characters—Elizabeth and Darcy. One was proud and the other was prejudiced. The two kinds of personalities seemed profound and difficult to express, but the author made it fascinating. She was good at using irony between the lines in the book. Besides, the novel contains a variety of themes, including marriage, financial status, and social status. However, the emotions won't be perceived if you just scratch the surface. Since, the plot is so fascinating. That it appeals to a wide audience from then on.

In that century, the Napolenic Wars broke out. Women were not allowed to receive education. Because of lack of professional skills, women needed to get married and depend on their husbands for financial support. However, Jane Austen didn't marry during her life. Without marriage lives, how could she successfully express her concept of love to readers? Why social status influences a person's live so much? Those questions arise our intense interesting, we will talk over the severity of first impression and misunderstandings. Besides, we will dig into the Darcy's letter, which plays an important part in the book, too.

II. Thesis

A. The Author

The author of *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen, was born in England on December 16, 1775. Her father was a country clergyman. She had four brothers and a sister. Inspired by her parents' encouragement, she was fond of reading books and writing. Though the family was poor, her parents still valued education and religious principles. Owing to lack of financial resources, Austen had little formal schooling. She broadened her mind and prepared herself to be a writer by reading lots of works of William Shakespeare, Joan Milton, Henry Fielding, Samuel Johnson, Samuel Richardson and so on. She finished her first novel in 1787, whose name was "Sense and Sensibility". However, the book wasn't published until thirty-five years later.

"Pride and Prejudice" was written between October, 1796 and August, 1797. When she finished the book, her father submitted it to London bookseller Thomas Cadell. But the publisher rejected to publish it. It was not until January 28, 1813 that the book was published. The success of two novels inspired Austen to write continuously. She then wrote "Mansfield Park" and "Emma". Also, "Northanger Abbey" and "Persuasion" were published after her death. She suffered from some diseases for the rest of her life. Her final novel, "Sanditon", remained unfinished when she died, in 1817.

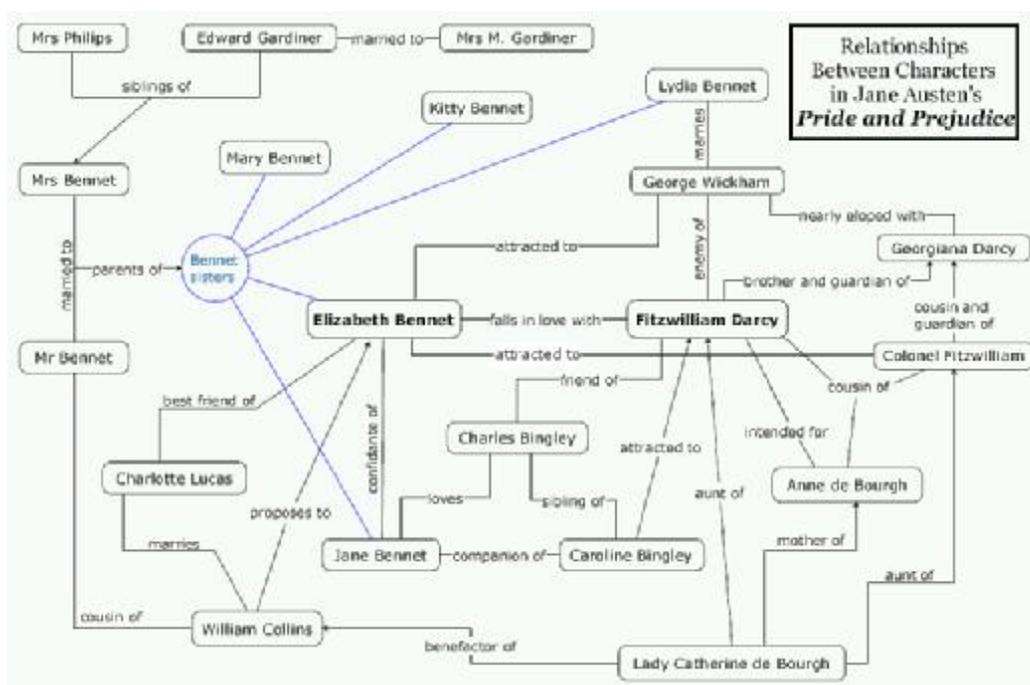
B. The Theme

In *Pride and Prejudice*, it seems that Austen wants to convey what she thinks and what the society problem is. There are a lot of emotions between the two protagonists in the disordered 19th century. Jane Austen creates two different personalities, Darcy and Elizabeth, to express what she thinks. Darcy is too proud of himself. He can't trust others and try to find the shortcomings of others. However, Elizabeth always puts her prejudice on those who she teases. They argue with, criticize and even slander each other. That they keep commenting on each other unexpectedly attracts these two young people to put more attention on him or her. In the end, they find out that they have a lot of misunderstandings. They broke those social status and solve all the misunderstandings together. It's a good ending to a love story. But *Pride and Prejudice* is not just romance. The meaning hidden behind is that Darcy changes his former expression which annoys Elizabeth at first and tries to open his heart to whom he has never shared his true feelings with. Elizabeth accepts Darcy because of his sincerity. The process of their interaction is the most interesting part in the book.

C. The Characters

In her book, she chooses several characters who have double relationships with each other.

Picture: Relationships Between Characters in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pride_and_Prejudice

1. Elizabeth Bennet

She is the main character of the novel. She is energetic and wise. Although she is not the most beautiful girl of her family but she is the smartest. She and her sister, Jane, are very close. She's her father favorite daughter because she has her own thoughts. At first, she has blind with her prejudice. Finally, she realizes that Darcy is the true gentleman but Wickham is not. She regrets what she has done and changes her attitude toward Darcy.

2. Fitzwilliam Darcy

He is very rich and handsome. Many girls hope to marry him so that they can make their social status equal. Because of his attitude, most people think he is conceited and rude and so does the Bennet family. But after Elizabeth gives him a flat refusal, he keeps her words in mind and tries to change himself. When Elizabeth realizes what he really is and what he has done for her, he wins Elizabeth's heart.

3. Charles Bingley

He is also the good-looking, gentlemanlike and humorous character of the novel. He is Mr. Darcy's friend. However, they have different styles. He is very popular. Many people adore

him. But he has no definite views so he always asks for Darcy's advises.

4. Jane Bennet

She is Elizabeth's favorite sister. She is deemed a beautiful girl by all the people but she is very humble. Also, she is very innocent because she thinks everyone is good. It is very easy for her to believe others.

5. Mr. Wickham

He is Darcy's friend in the childhood. He is a person who is quite attractive and good-looking. He understands how to win woman's heart, so many ladies are crazy about him. He is good at hiding his true face to everyone. He even makes Elizabeth misunderstand Darcy.

6. Lydia Bennet

She is the youngest daughter of her family. She is interested in parties and romance. Her behaviors make her family shameful; however, she doesn't realize that. She even has no shame for that. She considers that her marriage with Wickham will make her sister jealous. She never knows that her marriage is paid by Darcy.

D. Analysis of interpersonal relationship

The followings are discussions of interactional misunderstandings, social status and marriage.

1. Misunderstandings

We all know that the first impression plays an important role in social interactions, according to a psychological professor in Complutense University of Madrid of Spanish— Maria Avella, first impression consists of movement, posture, appearance and facial expression. Besides, women are more prejudiced by first impression than men because they are perceptual. For instance, a person who likes to ask personal questions, criticize others or talk only about herself will give people a bad first impression. If you want to give others a good impression, you have to watch out for how you look and smile all the time. Besides, you should keep quiet or change your intonation at right time. To sum up, first impression is hard to clear up, that's why some people aren't popular because of their poor social interaction.

In this book, there are a lot of misunderstandings between the two main characters, Elizabeth and Darcy. Maybe the environments they grow up in are so different that they develop different personalities and add their perspectives to each other. The misunderstanding can't be easily cleared up. In the story, no matter what Darcy does for Elizabeth, she always regards it as an insult. What's worse, later, she has a crush on Wickham who knows how to win lady's hearts. Later, whatever Wickham says to her, she always believes with all her heart. Because he and Darcy have some arguments at earlier times, he takes every chance to slander Darcy. That strengthens Elizabeth's prejudice against Darcy.

As to Elizabeth, she always thinks her thoughts are right. If someone opposes her or offends her, she has hostility to them. It takes her a long time to get rid of her prejudice against Darcy till she reads Darcy's letter which explains all the things including his pride and the misunderstandings between them. When we have some misapprehensions, we should calm down first instead of being manipulated by our emotions. Then, try to communicate. The function of communication is beyond our imagination. This way, we can clear up each other's misunderstandings that result from first impression.

2. Social status

In 18th century, social status plays an important role. The status will decide a man's influence in the society. The influence also affects a person's personality. If your status is lower, you are despised by others. Social status also causes a restriction of jobs and education. That's why people always think about the importance of social status. So the poor wants to improve their social status by marrying off a wealthy family. Besides, many wealthy families tend to have a marriage between families of equal social rank instead of one of love. They want to well match. In the book, social status is not only illustrated Darcy and Elizabeth, but also illustrated Mr. Bingley and Jane, Wickham and Lydia, Mr. Collins and Charlotte. The marriage between Darcy and Elizabeth is not accepted by Darcy's relatives because they have different ranks. That's why Mr. Bingley's sisters refuse to accept Jane, too. However, Darcy and Elizabeth, Jane and Bingley love each other not because of their social status but because of their personality. That's different from most people at that time. Through their struggle and reaction, we can realize the significance of social class relationships. Both positive and negative, there is no denying that social status dominates people's daily lives at that time.

3. Marriage

Jane Austen wants to share her attitudes on the importance of love with readers. She thinks the marriage should be based on true love instead of superficial feelings, pressure or wealth.

Through the book, she shows us the marriage of three couples who married for different reasons, proving true love is central to a happy marriage.

Lydia and Wickham

The marriage between Lydia and Wickham is doomed to failure from the start. Their marriage is not based on the ground of love but on appeal. Poor Lydia, she still believes Wickham will love her forever. The poor girl will never know the truth that her marriage is made up of money supported by Darcy. Such couples like Mr. Collins and Charlotte, Mr. Wickham and Lydia represent marriage for superficial purposes. Jane Austen tells us they will be miserable with their married life. They will never result in happiness, either.

Jane and Bingley

The marriage between Jane and Bingley finally has a happy ending. Because Jane is afraid of being hurt, she hides her feelings to Bingley. That's makes Bingley confused, so he asks for his friend's advice. Unfortunately, Darcy and Bingley misinterpret Jane. They think Jane doesn't have the same feeling as Bingley's. After Bingley leaves, Jane spends more efforts talking to him and explaining to him. Because of their family social status, she was despised by Bingley's sister. That makes it hard for her to see him. Afterwards, he comes back from London. This time, many misapprehensions are cleared up. Their love is also based on love. We can imagine that both Mr. Bingley and Jane, Darcy and Elizabeth will own a happy marriage in the future.

Elizabeth and Darcy

The marriage between Elizabeth and Darcy is successful although Elizabeth never thinks she will marry him at first. They argue and quarrel with each other. Because of the letter, they finally realize what the problem is. The reason why they can't accept each other is that they are too care about their shortcoming. They change and acknowledge their mistakes. They try to get to know one another and develop their relationships gradually. Their love is not based on appearances. Darcy loves Elizabeth not because of his physical desire but because of her personality. Jane Austen represents her belief through Darcy and Elizabeth. She tells us we should know our partner's true personality before we decide to spend the rest of our life with him. This way, we can achieve a happiness marriage.

Jane Austen used her characters to express the love. She hopes we can agree with her conception. We should throw our immediate physical attractions and financial desires in order

to lead a live of happiness.

E. The key turning point – Darcy’s letter

Darcy’s letter is at the core of our essay. We are going to analyze the significance of the letter.

1. Analysis

Darcy’s letter plays an important part in the book and also has a great impact on Elizabeth. It not only cleans up the misunderstanding between Darcy and Elizabeth, but also explains all the misconceptions in the book. The letter astonishes Elizabeth very much. The thought that she has prejudice against Darcy is broken totally. Maybe the reason why he wants to explain everything is the failure of engagement. He thinks their misunderstanding has become so serious. If he doesn’t take action, Elizabeth will never know the truth. Though the letter is direct, what he says is correct. He explains about his behavior and motivation, and hopes Elizabeth can understand.

He interprets two things in the letter. The first one is about detaching Mr. Bingley from Jane. He apologizes for his unwitting mistake. It symbolizes he finally faces his pride and improves himself. The second one is about injuring Mr. Wickham’s fame and property. At the end of the letter, Darcy gives Elizabeth his relative’s name and hopes she can find out who is telling the truth. On account of the letter, Elizabeth finally knows who Darcy really is and begins to have some good opinions toward him. She even realizes that Darcy does a lot of things for her. On the other hand, she realizes Mr. Wickham is like what she thinks before and she even realizes she’s blind with her prejudice. The letter makes Elizabeth know all the things made up by her bias. “The letter” changes both of them and paves the way for their love. Finally, we can’t help thinking about if Darcy hasn’t handed the letter to Elizabeth, they will not get married and won’t get a chance to know more about each other.

2. Opinion

It goes without saying that all their changes are attributed to the letter. Writing letters is a good way to express our thoughts more personally and intimately than we can do in person. It is less intimidating as well. In the book, the letter replaces face-to-face conversation. Through the letter, we realize the importance of communication. If a person can’t have a chance to explain, he will be trapped in each other’s misunderstandings, and these problems will become serious and won’t be solved forever. That’s why Darcy changes himself into a friendly and easygoing man.

III. Conclusion

Pride and Prejudice is one of Jane Austen's monumental achievements. Without a doubt, it attracts both past and present people alike.

A. Influence

It was not until 1939 that critics and scholars started to explore Jane Austen's novels. They study the development of characters and themes, the structure of episodes and sentences, and even every word she chooses. Laura Dabundo, a professor of English at Kennesaw State University, says her novels deal with passionate but realistic people whose world are changing, and people who conduct their lives in the context of their friends, families and national cultures that nourishes and sustains them. This shows that Austen is indeed an excellent writer, having a great impact on later generations.

B. Growth

We learn the importance of growing environment, marriage, social status, communication and first impression in the book. Growing environment can affect a person's personality and thinking pattern. A happy marriage should be based on true love. We have to tolerate and understand each other before establishing close relationship. It is fortunate that social status doesn't play an important role nowadays. People can choose whoever they want to marry.

There are many ways of communication, but using letters is the gentlest way. It is sincere, besides, it won't hurt anyone's ego. Most important of all, we can't decide a person's true colors by their appearances and manners at first sight. It will lead to a lot of misunderstandings. Sometimes, we should listen to others' opinions and ask for help. However, on hearing some viewpoints, we should observe instead of being convinced so quickly. It is incredible that a novel can contain plenty of themes, no wonder it's indeed a masterpiece.

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