

HOLY CROSS UNIVERSITY

DIPLOMA PAPER

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**Two different images of Mr. Darcy as portrayed in
“Pride and Prejudice” Jane Austen and “Bridget
Jones’s Diary” Helen Fielding.**

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Introduction

The subject of this project is the character of Mr Darcy who appears in English literature over many years. I chose this character because he both intrigues and interests me because the way his complex character makes women feel confused.

The aim of this study is to explore the fascinating personality of this main male character.

Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy is the hero from *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and recreated in contemporary world as Mark Darcy in *Bridget Jones's Diary* by Helen Fielding. Both these men obviously have a lot of in common being created from the same template as it were. They are proud and it is pride that so vastly affects and distorts their lives.

It should be stated that there are two kinds of pride portrayed in the novels. The first one being good because it is natural to be proud of positive deeds or the love of our relatives. The second is, however, one of the worst seven deadly sins. It is the kind of pride that paralyses and leads us to cruelty. People who are too proud do not work in peace with their consciences and do only what is right because it could be otherwise seen as their weakness.

Chapter One

Author's style

1.1 Jane Austen's style.

Jane Austen in her novels: *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Sense and Sensibility* and *Persuasion* wanted to depict English society of her times. Her main idea was the fastidious analysis of human character both with its faults and assets mixed together in everyday life. The outline of her novels is forthright and with infinitesimal action. Her approach towards the writing style enabled her to present ageless values which many other novelists did not manage to achieve in those times. Her sophistication and humour enabled her to create a gallery of slightly stooge-like characters like – Mrs. Bennet in *Pride and prejudice* or Mr. Woodhouse in *Emma*¹. The way she used words makes reading a real pleasure - her natural flow of words reflects true life². She could use words as a tool, sometimes creating the

¹ Le Faye, Deidre. *Jane Austen: The World of Her Novels*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2002.

² Amis, Martin: "Jane's World," *The New Yorker*, January 8, 1996, pp. 31-35.

impression of “wasting” them or sometimes in a compact way in order to make the dialogue more natural.³

In *Pride And Prejudice* she proves what it is to know oneself and the decisions concerning love and marriage cannot be made without knowing one’s self. Her novels exert an influence on the readers forcing them to contemplate on their current decisions and moral values even if most of her works have happy endings. For example, in *Pride and Prejudice* the main character - Elizabeth Bennet shows a strong animosity toward Mr Darcy, a rich man upper class gentleman. She is the personification of prejudice, while he is a unambiguous symbol of pride. The novel presents a subtly complexed plot in which the main characters become aware of their true life desires which slowly results in their marriage.⁴

³ Burgess, Anthony. English literature. p. 175

⁴ Ronald Carter, and John Mcrae. The Penguin Guide to literature In English: British and Ireland, United Kingdom March 2001. p. 121.

1.2 Helen Fielding's style.

Helen Fielding is a British writer and journalist. For a number of years she has been working as a television and newspaper reporter in London. She travelled around Africa, India and South America. She made her debut with the novel *Cause Celeb*. However, real fame came with the novels *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*.

Still, what is her style of writing? The writer often touches the topic of women who remain lonely. Women, who are lonely, yet still seeking a life partner. A series of mishaps which are connected with newly met men happen all the time. The picture of the contemporary world is not unknown to Helen Fielding. In her novel she portrays all of what is known to people, for example, Bridget, the main protagonist of *Bridget Jones's Diary* is friends with Sharon, a feminist, and a homosexual – Tom. The plots raised in the novel are characteristic for many women who live alone. They are not always seeking for a stable relationship which finishes with marriage, but a friend can always be of use.⁵

In *The Edge Of Reason*⁶, the main character of the novel lives in a regular relationship with a mature man, Marc Darcy. And again she

⁵ Garner, Dwight. "Inside The List", The New York Times, July 15 , 2007.

⁶ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*. Macmillan Press , 2004.

falls into mishaps which make the reader smile. The beautiful and seductive protagonist tries to seduce Mark. She always manages to have her way. The action of the novel does not allow the reader to get bored. There often appears a smile on their faces, however, Bridget becomes close to the reader who does not want her to get hurt.

Helen Fielding's female characters have quite complex mentalities and exuberant imagination. Eventually, Helen Fielding's novels find the way to a wide spectrum of readers who want to read an interesting and humorous book. The novel does not have to contain any sophisticated plots, they must be understandable for everyone.⁷ Women reach for such a kind of book to identify themselves with, for example, a character like Bridget Jones.

Helen Fielding touches topics that are close to every woman. She knows their mentality very well. She presents various types of men beginning with, for instance, typical womanizer, homosexuals, and those who treat women with respect.

The language that Fielding uses is simple and comprehensible.

Academic vocabulary is not needed to understand what she is writing about. However, it is the writer's assumption. Having been a TV and newspaper journalist, she meets different people. She knows their

⁷ Michiko Kakutani. "Books Of The Time; No! Really? Her Mr. Right Is... Osama Bin Laden?", The New York Times, June 4, 2004.

expectations and way of thinking, thus she writes using easy language, understandable for everyone.⁸

⁸ http://bridgetarchive.altervista.org/fielding_biography.htm 01.06.2009

Chapter Two

Darcy & Darcy

2.1 Characteristic of Fitzwilliam Darcy

Mr. Darcy, the character of *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, is a complex personality. Elizabeth Bennet and her friends, who are the main source of information about Darcy, judge him severely. As a result, the reader is made to acquire their subjective and highly critical point of view. More objective information is delivered in the course of the action when the reader is able to understand him more accurately. Mr Darcy appears to be a gentleman and a man of honour. Socially shy he is often perceived as rude. Nevertheless, he gradually learns to behave more courteously. Being aware of his own shyness he asks Elizabeth

'not to sketch my character at the present moment, as there is reason to fear that the performance would reflect no credit'.⁹
(Austen 54).

⁹ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 54. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001

From now on, to satisfy his wish, his character and actions are closely observed.

Elizabeth Bennet is prejudiced against Darcy from the very beginning of the novel and presents him in a very unfavourable light. She describes him as 'a most disagreeable, horrid man, not at all worth pleasing'

and 'he is ate up with Pride'.¹⁰ (Austen 12).

She searches for other examples of Darcy's negative features in his every action perceiving his social failures as s lack of respect.

The narrator does not alleviate the opinion either. It is stated that

'he was discovered to be proud, to be above his company, and above being pleased'.¹¹ (Austen 7)

The narrator expresses here the opinion of the people at the table making the reader accept it as a fact. However, there are also hints suggesting that the observations are not quite right. The first of them is presented by Jane who says that

'he never speaks much unless among his intimate acquaintance. With them he is remarkably agreeable'.¹² (Austen 12).

¹⁰ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 12. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001

¹¹ Ibid, page 7.

¹² Ibid, page 12.

However, these few clues seem far too tenuous to change the already held, unyielding opinion about Darcy's pride and unpleasantness. The moment when the reader may start liking him is effectively devastated by Wickman's tale of mistreatment experienced from Darcy. Consequently the readers are sustained to believe that he has a bad character as previously stated.

In fact, Darcy's character is much more complex than all of what the narrator suggests at the very beginning of the novel. He considers himself to be a true gentleman whose honesty, morality and responsibility cannot be questioned.

'Disguise of every sort is my abhorrence' ¹³ (Austen 107)

Claims Mr. Darcy. He does not allow miss Bingley to slander Elizabeth. Additionally, he admits to Mr. Bingley that he had kept Jane's presence in London secret. He could have remained silent about it, however, his honor orders him to say the truth despite the fact that his honesty might be misunderstood.

A sense of morality is a very important part of Darcy's personality. He can be unforgiving when he realizes that he has been deceived. In the conversation with Elizabeth he is questioned whether he is as stable in

¹³ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 107. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001

making judgments. Later his character is insulted again. However, it was enough to realize that behind the offence there is Wickman, to turn his anger toward him.

The ideal example of Darcy's sense of responsibility is the issue of the Lydia – Wickman affair. Due to the fact that he had not revealed Wickman's character he feels obliged to resolve the matter. He pays off Wickman's debts and persuades him to marry the youngest miss Bennet. What is more, doubting in Jane's feelings for Bingley he convinces the friend to quit the courtship. Yet, when Elizabeth makes him aware of her sister's honesty, he tries to correct the mistake. Joseph Wiesenfarth observes that 'he sees to it that Bingley returns to Netherfield and consequently to Jane'.¹⁴

Nevertheless, the question why many protagonists of the novel see Darcy as disagreeable arises. Such an impression is partly due to Darcy himself: 'I was given good principles, but left to follow them in pride and conceit'¹⁵ (Austen 202)

he admits. Another factor making him unpopular is his social unease. At the Netherfield ball, Darcy asks Elizabeth to dance but he remains silent.

¹⁴ Wiesenfarth, Joseph. "The Plot of *Pride and Prejudice*." *The Errand of Form: An Essay of Jane Austen's Art*; 60-85. Literature Resource Center. Gale. Spartanburg Technical Coll. Lib. Discus. 6 February 2006.

¹⁵ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 202. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001

Annoyed Elizabeth inquires of him:

'It is your turn to say something now, Mr. Darcy'.¹⁶ (Austen 52)

This statement is not the interpretation of his shyness but rather, as Marcia McClintock Folsom

her comment is intended as a reproach to him for what she thinks is his failure to meet the requirements of common civility'¹⁷.

His inability to communicate successfully is also shown in his complementation of Elizabeth's enjoyment of reading. He tries to present her as a perfect example of a lady, however, he introduces such high standards that no one could match them.

Darcy undergoes a transformation throughout the novel. It is actually his pride that drives the change. He knows that he is unpopular among people but he is not aware of his rudeness. He proposes marriage to Elizabeth insulting her and her family in the process, while simultaneously expecting to be accepted. That is why, he is devastated when she rejects the offer claiming that he had not "behaved in a ... gentleman-like manner".¹⁸(Austen 107) This situation shows him to realize

¹⁶ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 52. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001.

¹⁷ McClintock, Marcia. "Pride and prejudice: past, present, future." *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal* 22 (2000); 115. Literature Resource Center. Gale. Spartanburg Technical Coll. Lib. Discus. 6 February 2006.

¹⁸ Ibid, page 107.

how improper his behaviour had been. He is ashamed and decides to change. The transformation is clearly visible when Elizabeth and the Gardiners visit Pemberley. As Dvora Zlicovoci noted in “*Reversal in Pride and Prejudice*”

’The great courtesy, warm hospitality, and attentions showered on Elizabeth and the Gardiners are clear evidence that Darcy has taken to heart Elizabeth's strictures regarding his presumptuous, ungentleman-like behavior’.¹⁹

Through the greater part of the novel Darcy is criticized for what can be ascribed to his rudeness. Nevertheless, he would like to be perceived as a gentleman. He is not aware of his offensiveness. The clash between his actual personality and rudeness becomes the basis of both Elizabeth and the reader’s prejudice.

¹⁹ Zelicovici, Dvora. “Reversal in Pride and Prejudice.” *Studies in the Humanities Journal* 12, no. 2; 106-14. Literature Resource Center. Gale. Spartanburg Technical Coll. Lib. Discus. December 1984.

2.2 Characteristic of Mark Darcy.

Mark Darcy is a tall man, over 180 cm. His characteristic feature is dark, slightly wavy hair. He wears a sweater with diamond shapes in different hues of yellow and blue. Mark Darcy likes wearing white socks, red braces and moccasins. He is liked by women, however, he is not completely aware of it.

‘He turned round, revealing that what had seemed from the back like a harmless navy sweater was actually a V-neck diamond - pattern in shades of yellow and blue – as favoured by the more elderly of the nation’s sports reporters.’²⁰

He is not talkative. This fact is expressed quite often in the novel. He is a known lawyer who graduated from the University of Cambridge. He does not lose his temper easily. His characteristic features are: calmness, unchanged face and typical English phlegmatic temper. His behavior is driven by logic and self-control. He cannot be encouraged to commit a folly.

Towards others he is well-mannered, polite, however, without unnecessary effusiveness. It can be freely said that he is a gentleman.

‘Wait a minute, said Jude. You don’t mean Mark Darcy. Do you? The lawyer?’

²⁰ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones’s Diary*. Page 13. London: Picador., 1997.

Yes. What – do you know him as well?

Well, yes. I mean, we've done some work with him.

He's incredibly nice and attractive.²¹

What is Mark Darcy like? He is not able to show his feelings. It may be claimed that he would fit queen Victoria's times. Inside, various thoughts, passions are accumulating but he is both afraid and unable to express them. While meeting a woman he cannot demonstrate his feelings or tender gestures. He can effectively fight to protect human rights, simultaneously being unable to help himself to deal with such subtle matters as feelings. Nevertheless, outside, Mark Darcy puts on a mask, his face is expressionless whereas inside he still struggles with dilemmas²².

Darcy can go to an other part of the world to fight for a political prisoner to be released. It can be said that he is a man destined to achieve great things and to execute far-reaching plans. He can be easily offended and as a result he quickly clams up. It is difficult then to regain his confidence.

Nonetheless, the affection he is bestowed on by Bridget can change him. Mark sees a human not a woman in her. This strong feeling can be the cause of the certain change, however, not strong enough to be ready

²¹ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Page 104. London: Picador., 1997.

²² Salber, Cecilia. "Bridget Jones and Mark Darcy: Art Imitating Art... Imitating Art." *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-line*, Winter 2001. Accessed 8/05/2009 <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol22no1/salber.html>

to commit a folly. He loves honestly but not the way which women appreciate in lovers of novels and films.

He can be relied on. He can keep his word because he was taught to do so.

‘What are you going to cook? He said. Are you good at cooking?

Oh, you know... I said. Actually, I usually use Marco Pierre White. It’s amazing how simple it can be if one goes for a concentration of taste.

He laughed and then said. Well, don’t do anything too complicated. Remember everyone’s coming to see you, not to eat parfaits in sugar cages.

Daniel would never have said anything nice like that.²³

He is not the type of man who can harm or offend anybody.²⁴

²³ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones’s Diary*. Page 259. London: Picador., 1997.

²⁴ Salber, Cecilia. “Bridget Jones and Mark Darcy: Art Imitating Art... Imitating Art.” *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-line*, Winter 2001. Accessed 8/05/2009 <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol22no1/salber.html>

Chapter Three

Darcy's Love.

3.1 Mr. Darcy In Elisabeth's Eyes

The symbolism of the title refers to Mr. Darcy's pride caused by his upper class origin, wealth and property in opposition to Elisabeth Bennet's prejudice in her attitude to his person.

A young and wealthy bachelor Mr. Bingley moves into the Netherfield Park estate, situated not very far from The Bennets' property. This news electrifies Mrs. Bennet who sees in this fact a chance for the marriage of one of her five daughters. The opportunity for establishing society relationships comes soon during an annual public ball in the nearby townlet of Meryton where Mr. Bingley appears with his two sisters, brother-in-law and his friend Mr. Darcy – who is also a rich bachelor.²⁵

‘Five minutes after his entrance, of his having ten
thousand a year’²⁶

²⁵ Aymler, Janet. *Darcy's Story*. Page 4. HarperCollins Publishers, New York 2006.

²⁶ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 15. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001.

Mrs. Bennet's dreams seem to come true – Mr. Bingley is really interested in Jane – the oldest and most gorgeous of her daughters. Unfortunately, her second daughter – Elisabeth does not attract Mr. Darcy's attention. Asked by Mr. Bingley to dance with her, he refuses describing her appearance as only "tolerable".

'He looked for a moment at Elizabeth till, catching her eye, he
withdrew his own and coldly said, *She is tolerable;
but not handsome enough to tempt me*'²⁷

These words are heard by Lizzy the third daughter who quite naturally, also is not friendly towards Mr. Darcy.

Mr. Darcy's reluctance to dance and his isolation from the rest of society alienate everybody who perceives him as too proud of his position and wealth.

The relationship between Jane and Mr. Bingley increases, especially when she is invited by Caroline Bingley to dinner and having got a cold during a visit has to stay at her for a few days. Visiting ill Caroline, her sister Elisabeth watches with approval, perceiving Mr. Bingley as a man who can give her sister happiness. At the same time, Elisabeth attracts Mr. Darcy's attention who becomes interested in her behaviour.

An army regiment comes to Meryton. One of the officers – young and attractive George Wickham bewitches all the local ladies and among them – Elisabeth. Wickham appears to be a son of a former Darcy's land

²⁷ Ibid. Page 16.

agent and tells, firstly to Elizabeth and then to the others, about Mr. Darcy's despicable behaviour. Mr. Darcy has not allowed him to receive the sum of money bequeathed to him by Mr. Darcy's father.

Elizabeth leaves to her friend Charlotte living with her husband Collins, a clergyman at a village presbytery in Rosings. She meets there a local lady, Catherine, who appears to be Mr. Darcy's aunt and Collins's protector. Mr. Darcy arrives to Rosings as well, accompanied by his cousin and friend, colonel Fitzwilliam. One day, accidentally, Lizzy learns from the colonel that his fellow Mr. Darcy has talked Mr. Bingley out of a relationship with an unsuitable young woman. Elizabeth immediately puzzles out that Fitzwilliam is talking about her sister.

The relationships between the mansion and presbytery increases, and one afternoon Mr. Darcy proposes to Lizzy unexpectedly. Elizabeth is intensely agitated by this and the form of Mr. Darcy's proposal to her which begin from the accusations towards her family, rejects the proposal and tells Mr. Darcy what she really thinks about him²⁸

‘In such cases as this, it is, I believed, the established mode to express a sense of obligation for the sentiments avowed, however unequally they may be returned. It is natural that obligation should be felt,

²⁸ Fox, Robert C. "Elizabeth Bennet: Prejudice or Vanity?". *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962.

and if I could feel gratitude, I would now thank you.

But I cannot.’²⁹

Next day, Mr. Darcy finds Lizzy walking in the park and gives her a letter with his explanations. The heaviest accusation – the voiding of his father’s last will - appears to be completely untrue. What is more, Mr. Darcy reveals to her that Wickham tried to seduce his sister. Gradually, Lizzy begins to understand that Mr. Darcy has been right in other matters as well and she has not realized it. Lizzy leaves Kent with mixed feelings.

The Gardiners invite Lizzy for a holiday in shape of a tour around Derby County. When the opportunity occurs, they also plan to visit Mr. Darcy’s estate in Pemberley. They do not meet the owner and are shown the mansion by a house-keeper. Then it appears that Mr. Darcy returns from London one day earlier and an unexpected meeting makes Lizzy quite embarrassed.

The next day Mr. Darcy introduces to Elisabeth his sister and they both invite the whole company to dinner. His continuous attention towards Lizzy confirms his feelings to her, and finally she begins to return his affection. However, their relationship is disturbed by an urgent message from Lizzy’s home. She receives a letter which says that her younger sister Lidia has left home, apparently eloping with Wickham.

²⁹ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 155. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001.

At the same time, surprised by Mr. Darcy's sudden appearance, Elisabeth tells him the whole truth, realizing that it definitely will bury their relationship.

Lizzy returns home, her father leaves with Mr. Gardiner to London in order to find his daughter. Suddenly a new message comes. Lidia gets married to Wickham who is to receive money from uncle Gardiner. Lidia and Wickham visit the Bennets' house. Lidia carelessly tells Lizzy that, in fact, it was Mr. Darcy who had found them in London and gave money to their marriage. When the young couple leave, it appears that Mr. Bingley has returned. He comes with Mr. Darcy next day. The relationships are started again. Mr. Bingley asks Jane to marry him and his proposal are accepted by her and her parents as well. However, Mr. Darcy's evident reserve does not let Elisabeth have the certainty that he will follow his friend.

'Till she recollected that his being the intimate friend of Bingley, and her being the sister of Jane, was enough, at a time when the expectation of one wedding made everybody eager for another, to supply the idea.'³⁰

Lady Catherine visits Longbourn as well and asks Elisabeth to talk at privacy. She asks her decidedly if it is true that Elisabeth has engaged to Mr. Darcy. She also assures Elisabeth that her daughter's marriage

³⁰ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 281. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001.

with Mr. Darcy has been appointed. Having received no promise from Lizzy that she will reject Mr. Darcy's eventual proposal, lady Catherine leaves indignant.

Lizzy and Mr. Darcy meet and explain everything to each other. Mr. Darcy again proposes to Lizzy .

‘You are too generous to trifle with me. If your feelings are still what they were last April, tell me so at once. My affections and wishes are unchanged, but one word from you will silence me on this subject for ever.’³¹

She tells her father about Mr. Darcy's merits towards their family and persuades him that she really wants to marry Mr. Darcy not his fortune.

Now, neither Mr. Darcy' pride nor Elisabeth's prejudice stand on their way to happiness.³²

³¹ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 286. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001.

³² Cusk, Rachel: "Mrs. Darcy," *TLS*, October 29, 1993, p. 19.

3.2 Mark Darcy and Bridget Jones

Bridget Jones is a thirty-year-old woman a few kilograms overweighted with a strong tendency to abuse alcohol, smoking and to chat men up. She does not spare even her boss. Unfortunately, her contacts never end with a stable relationship. Bridget is really a lonely woman. Her mother wants to match her with a colleague from childhood, Mark Darcy. Loneliness troubles her and she cannot cope with it. Therefore she often lies down in front of the TV with a bottle of alcohol and a chocolate box. In such a way a vicious circle occurs³³.

‘... but even that is inadvisable since am fat, have spot on chin, and desire only to sit on cushion eating chocolate and watching Xmas specials.’³⁴

Nobody wants to notice Bridget and Bridget does not want to be noticed. At a certain point she decides to go out and demonstrate herself. She starts to diet and a little success gives her self-confidence. This is noticed by men.

‘Was trying to work on CV (in preparation for improving career) when Massager Pending suddenly flashed up on top of screen’³⁵

³³ Deirdre Donahue. "Following the lovable and loony 'Bridget Jones', USA Today, May 28, 1998, page 5D.

³⁴ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Page 17. London: Picador., 1997.

³⁵ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Page 22. London: Picador., 1997.

There is an infatuation, betrayal, slow maturing of the relationship, parting, return, fight for a woman and dramatic choice between two men.

Bridget finds true love in Mark Darcy. She has been a girlfriend of a worryingly perfect lawyer, Mark Darcy, for six wonderful weeks. That is why, nothing should destroy her happiness. However, it happens so. Despite the doubtful feeling of Darcy's, Bridget is endlessly asking herself about love, life and the right way of taking off lingerie.

Bridget is a universal figure. Everybody can feel that they do not fit the surroundings, that they are worse than the others, doomed to failure, convinced that they are to become an object of ridicule. Bridget is the personalisation of all of these fears. However, Helen Fielding's character is a girl full of charm³⁶.

In Helen Fielding's novel Mark Darcy is a person who is totally unable to show this feelings. He is emotionally disabled. Passions swirl inside him, but he cannot express them. He is a man who would fit queen Victoria's times. He can be acknowledged to be an emotional illiterate who is standing still like a pillar of salt. He cannot demonstrate tender gestures. He fights for humans' rights. He thinks of others but simultaneously he shuts himself in an emotional armour.

³⁶ Salber, Cecilia. "Bridget Jones and Mark Darcy: Art Imitating Art... Imitating Art." *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-line*, Winter 2001. Accessed 12/05/2009 <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol22no1/salber.html>

In the course of time Marc Darcy becomes a real help for Bridget. The girl needs somebody who would be of assistance every day, fulfilling the minor activities. He is destined to achieve great things and to execute far-reaching plans. He can go to the other part of the world to fight for a political prisoner to be released. However, he is not able to say anything in Bridget's defence when during one of the parties she makes a blunder. Mark's insensibility makes Bridget suspect him of infidelity. This situation makes Mark go into his shell. The most minor gestures and signs of feelings are the most difficult to demonstrate³⁷.

³⁷ Salber, Cecilia. "Bridget Jones and Mark Darcy: Art Imitating Art... Imitating Art." *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-line*, Winter 2001. Accessed 8/05/2009 <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol22no1/salber.html>

Conclusion

Features in common: Darcy and Darcy

Jane Austin's novel belongs to the canon of classic literature. *Pride and Prejudice* was read by many generations of United Kingdom citizens³⁸.

It may be claimed then that Austin's Mr. Darcy was a progenitor of Mark Darcy of *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Both characters possess many features in common. They both behave in a reserved way. They are not able to manifest their feelings towards women. Austin's Darcy lives in Victorian times in the 19th century whereas Mark is a 20th - century lawyer.

They are portrayed as unable to establish relationships with women. If they meet any of them, they cannot show her their interest and that puts women off.

‘ Mark you must take Bridget's telephone number before you go, then you can get in touch when you're in London. – said Una.

I'm sure Bridget's life in London is quite full enough already. – he said.’³⁹

³⁸ Irvine, Robert P. Jane Austen, Routledge, Abingdon, Oxford 2005.

³⁹ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Page 15. London: Picador., 1997.

Mr. Darcy is a reserved person. Mark Darcy is exactly the same.

‘It struck me as pretty ridiculous to be called Mr.Darcy and to stand on your own looking snooty at a party’⁴⁰

Nevertheless, at some point Mr Darcy decides to reject his pride and tries to win the beloved Elizabeth’s favour.

‘In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and I love you.’⁴¹

Love changes them fundamentally. Mr. Darcy becomes closer and closer to Elizabeth. Despite the fact that the first young aristocrat’s offer of marriage has been rejected he decides not to resign from her. The matters are similar in *Bridget Jones’s Diary*. Maturing feeling, parting and return. Mark Darcy is more and more interested in Bridget, seeing a charming woman in her. This has a parallel to Mr. Darcy of *Pride and Prejudice*. Both of them finally understand that living with someone is essential. The difference between them is stated by their women. Elizabeth is a respectable, young woman who considers her and her family’s honour to be the most important thing⁴². Bridget is quite different. She is frustrated. She behaves emotionally and unconventionally, making many blunders. She is a typical single

⁴⁰ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones’s Diary*. Page 14. London: Picador., 1997.

⁴¹ Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Page 154. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001.

⁴² Murphy, Olivia. “Books, Bras and Bridget Jones: Reading Adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice*.” *Sydney Studies in English* No. 31 (2005): 21-38.

woman who can chat men up and romance.⁴³

Mark Darcy must differ from Mr. Darcy. Mark lives in the contemporary world. He is not as proud as Mr. Darcy, however, he keeps his distance from various matters and this is what they have in common.⁴⁴

‘Jude just called me and we spent twenty minutes growling, *Fawaw, that Mr. Darcy*. I love the way he talks, sort of as if he can’t be bothered. Ding-dong! Then we had a long discussion about the comparative merits of Mr. Darcy and Mark Darcy, both agreeing that Mr. Darcy was more attractive because he was ruder but that being imaginary was a disadvantage that could not be overlooked’⁴⁵

⁴³ Fielding, Helen. *Bridget Jones’s Diary*. London: Picador., 1997.

⁴⁴ Salber, Cecilia. “Bridget Jones and Mark Darcy: Art Imitating Art... Imitating Art.” *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-line*, Winter 2001. Accessed 8/05/2009 <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol22no1/salber.html>

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, page 247.

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