

学生英语文库



JANE AUSTEN

# PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

傲慢与偏见



天津大学出版社 外语教学与研究出版社

THE WORLD'S CLASSICS



JANE AUSTEN

*Pride and Prejudice*



*Edited by*

JAMES KINSLEY

AND

FRANK W. BRADBROOK

Oxford New York

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

**傲慢与偏见**

**AOMAN YU PIANJIAN**

[英] 珍妮·奥斯汀著

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**外语教学与研究出版社出版发行**

(北京市西三环北路十九号)

**华利国际合营印刷有限公司印刷**

**新华书店总店北京发行所经销**

**开本 787×960 1/32 12 印张**

**1991年2月第1版 1991年8月第2次印刷**

**印数: 10001—25000 册**

\* \* \*

**ISBN 7—5600—0761—9/H·317**

**定价: 4.80 元**

**(取得重印权限国内发行)**

**Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP**

**Oxford New York Toronto  
Delhi Bombay Calcutta Madras Karachi  
Petaling Jaya Singapore Hong Kong Tokyo  
Nairobi Dar es Salaam Cape Town  
Melbourne Auckland**

**and associated companies in  
Beirut Berlin Ibadan Nicosia**

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**Introduction, Notes, Bibliography, and Chronology  
© Oxford University Press 1970**

**First published by Oxford University Press 1970**

**First issued as a World's Classics paperback  
and in a hardback edition 1980**

**Paperback reprinted 1980, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987 (twice)**

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**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

**Austen, Jane**

***Pride and Prejudice.***

**I. Title II. Kinsey, James III. Bradbrook, Frank Wilson  
823.7 PR4034.P72**

**ISBN 0-19-281903-2**

**Printed in Great Britain by  
Hazel Watson & Viny Limited  
Aylesbury, Bucks**

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## 本书内容介绍

本书是英国著名女作家珍妮·奥斯汀(Jane Austen 1775—1817)的代表作。主要叙述一对青年绅士和淑女的爱情故事,由于一方的傲慢和另一方的偏见,波澜迭起。

贝内特夫妇有五个待嫁的女儿,没有子嗣,依照当时法律,他们死后家产须由远房内侄柯林斯继承。因此怎样把五个女儿嫁给有钱人家,就成了贝内特太太最大的心事。有个名叫宾格利的未婚阔少爷,租赁了贝内特家附近的庄园,同两个妹妹及朋友达西住在那里。不久,宾格利就和贝内特家温柔美丽的大小姐珍妮相爱了。达西对聪明爽朗的二小姐伊丽莎白有好感,但因在一次舞会上出言不逊而伤害了伊丽莎白。青年军官威克汉告诉伊丽莎白,他是达西庄园已故总管的儿子,老庄主生前许诺给他重报,却被达西无端剥夺了。由此伊丽莎白更加鄙视达西的为人。达西看到贝内特太太庸俗无知,三个小女儿轻浮浅薄,劝说宾格利中止与珍妮的关系,结果四人不辞而别。这事进一步加深了伊丽莎白对达西的偏见。

伊丽莎白应邀到新婚夫妇家作客,不期遇见前来探望凯瑟琳夫人的达西。达西为伊丽莎白的谈吐气质所倾倒,向她提出求婚,但言词之中流露出傲慢与屈尊之意,被伊丽莎白愤然拒绝。伊丽莎白指责他不应该破坏宾格利同珍妮的关系,对威克汉无情无义。事后达西写信为自己辩白,并告诉伊丽莎白威克汉是个品行不端的花花公子。伊丽莎白看信后,为自己对达西的偏见所羞愧。

后来伊丽莎白随舅父舅母出游,途经达西的庄园,

他们进去参观，意外地遇上了突然回来的达西，伊丽莎白感到很不自在。但达西一扫过去的傲慢，热情、真诚地接待了他们。正当此时，伊丽莎白接到家信说，妹妹莉迪亚与威克汉私奔了！全家焦急万分，却束手无策。没想到达西暗地里找到了两人的行踪，并出资促成婚事及安排了他们的生活。

最后，宾格利和珍妮恢复了感情，伊丽莎白对达西的偏见也涣然冰释，有情人终成眷属。这两对情侣美满地结为伉俪。



## 作者小传

奥斯汀(Jane Austen 1775—1817)是英国女小说家,出身于乡村牧师家庭。她从未受过正规的学校教育,但家庭的读书环境对她才华的发展有着决定性的意义。她生活圈子虽然狭小,但兄弟姐妹众多,加上亲朋往来,使她有机会以女性特有的敏锐和细致观察来描写人们之间的感情关系,有闲阶级恬静舒适的田园生活以及绅士淑女的爱情和婚姻,从而成为英国第一个描绘日常平凡生活中平凡人物的小说家。她著有小说《理智和感伤》、《傲慢与偏见》、《曼斯菲尔德花园》、《爱玛》、《诺桑觉寺》和《劝导》等6部。

《傲慢与偏见》是她的代表作之一。作者通过几个乡镇中产阶级少女对终身大事的处理,表达了作者的婚姻观:既反对为金钱而结婚,也反对把婚姻当作儿戏,比较强调感情对于缔结理想婚姻的重要性。小说情节曲折,富有戏剧性,语言清丽流畅,机智幽默,是奥斯汀小说中最受欢迎的一部。

18世纪70年代以后,英国文学中有约40年没有出现第一流的小说作家和作品,充斥社会的是一些庸俗无聊的作品。奥斯汀以自己的创作嘲讽了这类流行小说,又以高超的艺术技巧反映了18世纪末19世纪初尚未受到资本主义工业革命浪潮冲击的英国乡镇中产阶级的日常生活场景,给当时小说创作吹进了朴素的现实主义清新之风,在英国小说史上起着承上启下的作用。与此同时,评论家们也赞赏她能于平凡而狭窄有限的情节中揭示生活悲喜剧的精湛技巧。

奥斯汀一生的作品均以笔名发表。直至作者病逝后的第二年,其真实姓名、身份才为世人所知。

## INTRODUCTION

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MOST novel-readers agree that *Pride and Prejudice* is a masterpiece, rivalling *Emma* in general popularity, yet there is still uncertainty about how it came to be written. A memorandum by Jane Austen's sister, Cassandra, states that *First Impressions* (the initial title of the novel) was written between October 1796 and August 1797; that is, when Jane Austen was exactly the same age as her heroine. To this extent, the original novel may have had something of the intimacy of autobiography, though the title suggests that it may have had burlesque elements, similar to the skit called 'Love and Friendship', which Jane Austen had completed in June 1790, at the age of fourteen. It was probably also written in the form of a novel-in-letters, as was *Elinor and Marianne*, the first version of *Sense and Sensibility*, which was written before *First Impressions*. The fact that Jane Austen's father compared *First Impressions* with Fanny Burney's *Evelina*, when he offered his daughter's first completed attempt at novel-writing to the publisher Cadell in 1797, tends to confirm the view that it, also, was written in letter form.

In a letter to Cassandra, dated 8 January 1799, Jane Austen writes, 'I do not wonder at your wanting to read *First Impressions* again, so seldom as you have gone through it, and that so long ago.' Later, in the same year, she writes to Cassandra, playfully suggesting that a friend, Martha Lloyd, intended to publish *First Impressions* from memory, and that one more perusal would enable her to do it. This suggests that the original form of the novel may have had something in common with the numerous juvenile pieces of Jane Austen that were dedicated to various members of the family, and served as a source of general amusement like the amateur theatricals,

charades, and conundrums which the family also enjoyed. In 1800 a novel in four volumes by Mrs. Holford, entitled *First Impressions*, was published. If Jane Austen were to attempt to publish her story, the title would have to be changed.

There is no further mention of the novel in Jane Austen's letters until November 1812, when she informs the same Martha Lloyd who had been such an enthusiastic reader over thirteen years ago, that *Pride and Prejudice* has been sold to Egerton for £110. Jane Austen would, by now, be almost thirty-seven years of age. In January 1813, she writes to Cassandra describing how the book was read aloud immediately to a certain Miss Benn, who did not know, of course, who had written it, and then she describes the book in a way that seems to indicate that Cassandra was not familiar with the final form that the novel took: 'The second volume is shorter than I could wish, but the difference is not so much in reality as in look, there being a larger proportion of narrative in that part, I have lop't and crop't so successfully, however, that I imagine it must be rather shorter than S. & S. altogether.' (In fact, the first two novels that Jane Austen published were approximately of the same length.)

What happened to the *First Impressions* of 1796-7 to transform it into the *Pride and Prejudice* that was sold to Egerton in 1812? What revisions were made by Jane Austen to her favourite novel between the ages of twenty and thirty-seven? Presumably, there must have been radical alterations if the original was in the form of letters. It is also difficult to believe that any publisher would reject a novel bearing the faintest resemblance to the final form of *Pride and Prejudice*, though, of course, there is the possibility that the manuscript may have been returned unread.

Dr. R. W. Chapman first put forward the view, in his edition of *Pride and Prejudice* (1923), that substantial revisions to the novel were made during 1811 and 1812, and that there is a precise chronological order of events in the novel, based on the calendars of those years. Unfortunately, there are no

letters from Jane to Cassandra between 6 June 1811 and 24 January 1813 to supply supporting evidence. The absence of any reference to revision in the five letters to Cassandra written in April, May, and June of 1811 implies that Jane Austen was busy then putting the final touches to *Sense and Sensibility* ('I can no more forget it, than a mother can forget her sucking child', she wrote to Cassandra on 25 April 1811). Presumably, however, the new title that Jane Austen gave to the novel-in-letters *Elinor and Marianne* followed a change in the title of *First Impressions*. For 'pride and prejudice', apart from its source in Fanny Burney's *Cecilia*, was a phrase used by many writers. If so, it is likely that Jane Austen began important revision of *Pride and Prejudice* before 1809, when she probably began the final rewriting of *Sense and Sensibility*. Cassandra, in her memorandum, states that *Sense and Sensibility* was begun in November 1797, and Jane Austen's nephew J. E. Austen-Leigh confirms this in his *Memoir*, but there is no evidence that the novel was known by that title then.

Dr. R. W. Chapman's theory about the use of the 1811 and 1812 calendars in the finally revised version of *Pride and Prejudice* has been generally accepted, with the corollary that the revision was a very thorough one, and that the work as we know it is primarily the work of a lady aged about thirty-six rather than of a girl of twenty or twenty-one. But the theory has recently been challenged. In an article, 'The Time Scheme for *Pride and Prejudice*',<sup>1</sup> Ralph Nash maintains that the available evidence will support equally well, and probably better, a hypothesis of revisions by the calendars of 1799 and 1802, the events of the first autumn in the novel reflecting the calendar of 1799, and the events of the spring and the summer reflecting the calendar of 1802. Chapman himself had noted, in connection with the mention of the Peace of Amiens in the final chapter of the novel, the possibility of a revision between March 1802 and the resumption of hostilities.<sup>2</sup> But Mr. Nash believes that the major revision was before *Pride*

<sup>1</sup> In *English Language Notes*, v. 3, March 1967.

<sup>2</sup> *Pride and Prejudice*, Appendix, 'Chronology of *Pride and Prejudice*', p. 407.

*and Prejudice* was prepared for the press in 1812, and 'that the novel as we have it represents essentially early work'. This view is confirmed independently in a recent contribution to *Notes and Queries* by P. B. S. Andrews,<sup>1</sup> who contends that there is 'possible evidence for some re-working in 1799' and 'positive evidence for probably substantial rewriting in 1802'. It was in Bath, in 1802, he maintains, that Jane Austen 'undertook the main conversion of *First Impressions* into the *Pride and Prejudice* we know'. A further point made is that 'it seems to me incredible that the gay and young-in-heart *Pride and Prejudice*, and the mature and bitter *Mansfield Park*, can really be simultaneous productions of the same stage in the author's development. Yet, according to Austen-Leigh's *Memoir of Jane Austen* (1870; ch. 6), *Mansfield Park* was begun in February 1811 and nearly finished by February 1813, though not published till 1814.'

There can be no doubt about the connection between certain characters and situations in *Pride and Prejudice* and parallels in the juvenile writings of Jane Austen written c. 1787-93, when she was between the ages of eleven and eighteen.<sup>2</sup> In 'Volume the First' of the juvenilia, there is a novel called 'The Three Sisters', where a Miss Mary Stanhope writes triumphing over her sisters Sophy, Georgiana, and 'the Duttons', in much the same way that Lydia Bennet triumphs over her sisters, when she finally succeeds in marrying Wickham. Her mother is as determined that Mr. Watts will marry one of her daughters as Mrs. Bennet is that hers will marry somebody.<sup>3</sup> The materialistic attitude of Miss Mary Stanhope towards marriage is an exaggerated, burlesque version of Charlotte Lucas's, and the same underlying materialism is mocked even in the romantic lovers and friends of *Love and Friendship* in 'Volume the Second'. Both 'Love and Friendship' and 'Lesley Castle' ridicule the romantic idea

<sup>1</sup> *Notes and Queries*, N.S., xv, September 1968.

<sup>2</sup> Published in *Minor Works*, ed. R. W. Chapman, rev. by B. C. Southam (1969).

<sup>3</sup> This and many other parallels, are pointed out by Q. D. Leavis in her article in *Serinity*, x, 1.

of 'first impressions' by caricaturing it: 'from the first moment I beheld him, I was certain that on him depended the future happiness of my Life', Miss Margaret Lesley writes to Miss Charlotte Lutterell, whose prosaic concern about food belies her romantic Christian name,<sup>1</sup> as Charlotte Lucas's does. One could hardly imagine Jane Bennet saying that. The mildness of her character controls and restrains her 'first impressions', just as the relationship between Elizabeth and Darcy comically reverses the conventions of romantic love. Burlesque and caricature have been replaced by more delicate criticism of romanticism which allows a certain degree of it to remain, untouched by irony.

Jane Austen's mock 'History of England' is written by 'a partial, prejudiced, & ignorant Historian', who pretends to support Mary against Elizabeth, and who is no more prejudiced than Elizabeth Bennet, when she supports Wickham against Darcy. 'Letter the second', from 'A Collection of Letters' in 'Volume the Second', is 'From a Young lady crossed in Love to her friend': 'next to being married, a girl likes to be crossed in love a little now and then', remarks Mr. Bennet, a victim of romanticism, with no illusions. In romantic love and friendship, thought, feelings, and actions coincide. 'Letter the fifth' celebrates love at first sight with satirical exaggeration: the minds of lovers are 'actuated by the invisible power of sympathy', 'true love is ever desponding', and the lover expresses himself theatrically. Compared with this, Mr. and Mrs. Bennet, the Collinses, Lydia and Wickham, even Elizabeth and Darcy, and Jane and Bingley, represent actuality. The criticism of romanticism for its unreality is replaced by an implied criticism of life for its betrayal of its romantic potentialities, except in the case of Lydia and Wickham, who retain something of the hypocritical pseudo-romanticism, which is essentially materialistic, characteristic of the lovers in the early burlesques.

'Letter the Third' in 'A Collection of Letters' contains the original sketch for Lady Catherine de Bourgh in Lady

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

Greville, who keeps Maria Williams standing out in the cold by her coach, as Charlotte Lucas is kept by Mrs. Jenkinson and Miss de Bourgh. One of the 'Scraps' in 'Volume the Second', called 'The Female philosopher', mocks the wit and humour which consist solely in 'Sallies, Bonmots & repartees', and contains a sketch of Mary Bennet in 'the sensible and amiable Julia' who 'uttered Sentiments of Morality worthy of a heart like her own'. 'Volume the Third' includes 'Catherine, or the Bower', in which there is a character called Mr. Dudley, 'who was the Younger Son of a very noble Family, of a Family more famed for their Pride than their opulence, tenacious of his Dignity, and jealous of his rights, was forever quarrelling . . . concerning tythes, and with the principal Neighbours themselves concerning the respect & parade, he exacted'. Mr. Dudley is a composite character, combining the roles of Darcy and Mr. Collins. In *Pride and Prejudice*, there is a suggestion, at times, as in Mr. Collins's proposal and Darcy's first one, of a common kind of pompous embarrassment in speech, which may be partly due to their common origin in this character.

One cannot 'explain' the achieved mastery of *Pride and Prejudice* by relating it to the earlier writings, which merely help one to guess what the original *First Impressions* may have been like. There is a difficulty presented by the relationship between the final version and 'The Watsons', a fragment of inferior quality written about 1804-5. Lord Osborne, in 'The Watsons', is another sketch for Darcy: he 'was a very fine young man; but there was an air of Coldness, of Carelessness, even of Awkwardness about him, which seemed to speak him out of his Element in a Ball room . . . he was not fond of Women's company, & he never danced'. He is contrasted with Mr. Howard, who 'was an agreeable-looking Man'. Mr. B. C. Southam considers that 'the basic situation of *The Watsons* is far closer to *Pride and Prejudice* than to *Emma*'.<sup>1</sup> It is hardly conceivable that Jane Austen would have repeated herself in an inferior manner, which is what one would have to assume

<sup>1</sup> B. C. Southam, *Jane Austen's Literary Manuscripts*, p. 147.

if the main revision of *First Impressions* had been carried out by 1802. On the other hand, there is evidence that Jane Austen tinkered with her juvenile works until she was well over thirty, for 'Catherine' in 'Volume the Third' has a reference to Hannah More's *Coelebs in Search of a Wife*, published in 1809, inserted. 'As an ironical study of an insufferable egoist much could have been done with *Coelebs*', Dr. M. G. Jones comments.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps *Coelebs* helped to heighten Jane Austen's sense of the comedy of Mr. Collins's search, though *Coelebs* 'was a single man in possession of a good fortune'. The novel is mentioned twice in Jane Austen's letters, together with *Practical Piety* (1811), one of Hannah More's didactic tracts. Jane Austen's attitude towards the Evangelicals varied from 'I do not like the Evangelicals' (1809) to 'I am by no means convinced that we ought not all to be Evangelicals' (1814).<sup>2</sup> The influence of their ideas may possibly be seen in the reformed character of Darcy and in the new seriousness and social consciousness of *Mansfield Park*.

Numerous parallels have been noted between *Pride and Prejudice* and the novels of Jane Austen's predecessors, Richardson and Fanny Burney in particular. Elizabeth Bennet's situation of social inferiority compared with Darcy, resembles Pamela's, Evelina's, and Cecilia's. Mr. Collins and Darcy propose to her in language that recalls Mr. B——'s in *Pamela*.<sup>3</sup> There is a connection between Mr. Elias Brand in *Clarissa* and Mr. Collins.<sup>4</sup> The theme of 'persuasion' in *Pride and Prejudice* appears to be related to the crude attempts at persuasion made by Clarissa's family in the first volume of that novel. The ancestry of Darcy as a 'patrician hero' has been traced to Sir Charles Grandison and to Fanny Burney's imitations of him.<sup>5</sup> The most important relationship, however, is that between Jane Austen's novel and Fanny Burney's

<sup>1</sup> M. G. Jones, *Hannah More*, 1952, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters*, pp. 256 and 410.

<sup>3</sup> See E. E. Duncan-Jones in *Notes and Queries*, N.S., iv, no. 2, and Henrietta Ten Harnael, *Jane Austen: A Study in Fictional Conventions*, The Hague, 1964, p. 81.

<sup>4</sup> Pointed out by B. C. Southam, *Notes and Queries*, N.S., x, no. 5.

<sup>5</sup> By Kenneth L. Moler, in *Jane Austen's Art of Allusion*, University of Nebraska Press (1968).



*Cecilia*. Here, in the words of Q. D. Leavis, 'What we have . . . is not simply a subject taken over for ridicule, or a realistic instead of a conventional treatment of a plot, nor is it the simple "borrowing" for a slightly different purpose. . . . It is the central idea of *Cecilia* given an elaborate orchestration as it were, sometimes guyed . . . more often used as an opportunity for self-exploration on the author's part.'<sup>1</sup> There are also important connections with Fanny Burney's *Evelina* and with *Camilla*.

However, consideration of the sources of *Pride and Prejudice* does not explain its brilliance. Jane Austen herself referred ironically to its epigrammatic style: 'the work is rather too light and bright, and sparkling; it wants shade; it wants to be stretched out here and there with a long chapter of sense, if it could be had'.<sup>2</sup> The famous opening sentence exemplifies this epigrammatic quality. It expresses the obsession of Mrs. Bennet, which we are ironically said to share, in the language and style of Mr. Bennet. The sentence represents the perfect marriage between content and style, which is characteristic of Jane Austen. It introduces the ensuing dialogue between husband and wife with the clarity of a musical chord which contrasts with the muddle of their conversation. The first volume of the novel closes with a similar dialogue between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet, and phrases from the opening sentence are echoed in the second chapter of the second volume (p. 125) and later in the novel (pp. 331 and 336).

The wit of the novel is sometimes identified with that of Mr. Bennet, though his is revealed at the climax of the story to be extremely misplaced. Nor can one associate Jane Austen's wit completely with that of her heroine, though here the resemblance is closer. Elizabeth has the same 'quick parts' as her father, contrasting with her sister Jane, as he does with his wife. All human characters are seen by the heroine as being inconsistent, though she does not realize, herself, until the end of the novel, just how inconsistent they are. She shares a fundamental scepticism with her father, but she is deceived

<sup>1</sup> *Scrutiny*, x, i, 75.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters*, p. 209.