

## Thesis abstract

This study explores Jane Austen's renowned novel *Pride and Prejudice* from the point of view of its film adaptations, focusing on five adaptations. Each adaptation interprets the novel differently and embodies a different reading of the novel. The study concentrates on the analysis of the film adaptations of Jane Austen's novel but also evaluates what has changed over time in the perception, understanding, and appreciation of the characters and their actions, through the changes made in each adaptation. While it is apparent that each film adaptation differs from one another and from the novel itself, the questions of why these changes have been made and what purpose they serve will be addressed. The primary focus is on the heroine, Elizabeth Bennet, and on the hero, Mr. Darcy, how their personas have been portrayed in each adaptation and as a result how the expectations of the viewing public are met and created by the film industry. The deployment of characters as well as the portrayal of key moments in the novel are investigated to show the changing perception of the position of women in society, romantic relationships, social and family life.

The First part of this study deals with the critical reception and public response of the Hollywood film version from 1940. The Second part of the study analyzes the mini-series adaptations, mainly the 1979 and the 1995 BBC mini-series. The Third section analyzes the 2005 full feature film and the 2012 YouTube adaptation. This Third section also presents the cult of Jane Austen with regards to other contemporary adaptations, which are loosely connected to the original novel by having borrowed characters and themes from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (*Bridget Jones's Diary*) or develop story lines and themes from the novel (*Lost in Austen*). In the analysis of these phenomena film criticism and theories on film adaptation have been taken into account because film relies on different devices than those of the novel; film has other confinements and resources to reproduce the ironic voice of the narrator, the inner thoughts of the protagonists and the overall depiction of these characters. The visual aspects illustrated by camera work, actors' gestures and other sensory aspects such as those created by sound techniques are examined. The aim of this study is to address the changes and omissions in the various film versions and to understand how they reflect on today's society, to convey the importance of the film adaptations and how these reworked versions shed new light on the classic novel.