

CONVERSATION AND COMMUNITY BUILDING IN *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*

Sisi Han

English Literature, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Hangzhou Normal University
Corresponding author: 24486165@qq.com

Abstract

The thematic research on Jane Austen's novels has been widely carried out, including marriage, gender, morality, politics, etc. The conception of community is also an important theme for her novels are set in a period when the notion of community is conceived and reinforced in the West. It is a transitional age that witnesses the change from the 18th century when the feudal aristocracy controls the agricultural economy to the 19th century which is dominated by the middle class as a result of the Industrial Revolution. However, the theme of community has not got enough critical attention and its research is sparse. Thus, this dissertation seeks to explore Austen's contribution to the conception of community in *Pride and Prejudice*. Austen's imagination of community is effectively displayed in *Pride and Prejudice* and conversation serves as a key approach. The Community is built at two levels, namely, familial level and social level. By means of conversation, a family bond based on mutual affirmation, which is the core of community building, is forged; and a community of spirit, the highest form of community, is established among social interactions outside families in two social spaces—Meryton and Pemberley. A stereoscopic vision of a community built by conversation emerges when the three levels are closely intertwined.

Keywords: *Pride and Prejudice*; Community Building; Conversation

Introduction

Jane Austen's works have long attracted critical attention from critics and scholars, fruitful in quantities and various in viewpoints. Apart from the biographical study, major themes that have been investigated include morality, marriage, gender issues, politics, etc. The research on *Pride and Prejudice* is of no exception. What deserves special attention is a theme that has come in sight of critics in recent years, i.e. the idea of community. Concurrently, most exploration into this new theme is devoted to *Pride and Prejudice*, which, however, remains inadequate.

According to Raymond Williams, the etymology of "community" is very close to "comunete" (old French) and "communitatem" (Latin), which refers to the "community of relations or feelings" (Raymond, 1985: 75). Ferdinand Tönnies

interprets “community” in his work *Community and Civil Society* by stating that “Community means genuine, enduring life together, whereas Society is a transient and superficial thing. Thus Gemeinschaft (“community” in German) must be understood as a living organism in its own right, while Gesellschaft (“society” in German) is a mechanical aggregate and artefact” (19). What Jane Austen constructs and imagines are exactly those “living organisms” with “relations and feeling”. Furthermore, Tönnies subdivides the development of community into different phases, i.e. “the three pillars of community – blood, soil and spirit (or kinship, neighborhood and friendship)” (Tönnies, 204). Jane Austen exactly portrays the daily details of the families, neighborhoods, and friends through her superb disposition of conversation.

The age, when Jane Austen composed her novels, was well known as a transitional period from the old to the new, from downward Feudal aristocracy to upward middle classes, and from agriculture to industry. The transition led to the anxiety of modern cultivation. Intellectuals around the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries imagined and built communities in their works. Jane Austen’s works, which share the same historical period with the development of community, are the realistic representations of her imagination and building of community.

Literature Review

Though community is not a new idea in sociology, its recent adoption in the study of Austen’s works helps to expand the research scope of “three or four families in the countryside” to a broader awareness of communal organism. In “Community and Cognition in *Pride and Prejudice*”, William Deresiewicz analyzes with the first sentence of this novel as the starting point, which is in fact nothing more than one of the fixed opinions of the community: of communal expectations, communal conventions, and communal activities. Taking the changes of collective knowledge about Mr. Darcy, Deresiewicz further considers that the community “functions as a set of cognitive processes, or in other words, mental habits” (Deresiewicz, 2009: 114). Zhou Qin also focuses on Mr. Darcy and presents his consciousness of community in the context of the ball and points out that Darcy plays a role as the adhesive among all different classes and breaks his narrow conception of community by virtue of this. Chen Fangfang seems to suggest the idea of community in a more positive way by arguing the formation of community in *Pride and Prejudice* in two aspects: the values of different classes and the comparison of four marriages. Yin Qiping applies two examples from *Pride and Prejudice* in his essay to show how “elements of conversation have always been part and parcel of the imagined communities under the pen of English writers” (Yin, 2016: 40), which combines conversation, as the most striking feature of Austen’s work, with the idea of community.

Evidently, the application of the idea of community in analysis of Austen’s works has started and invites more examination. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the idea has not yet been fully discussed, especially from the perspective of conversation as Austen’s prominent achievement. Yin undoubtedly has introduced this point in his essay; yet,

he does not further comprehensively elaborate the relationship between conversation and community in the novel due to the limited length. Therefore, this thesis aims to have a close exploration of the relationship and tries to show how an ideal community is built by means of conversation in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Research Method

The research of this thesis is based on the knowledge of the critical survey of Austen's works, and two key concepts— "community" and "conversation". The etymology of the first concept has been discussed above. According to *Oxford English Dictionary*, the earliest meanings of conversation are "living or having one's being in a place or among persons" and "consorting or having dealings with others; living together; commerce, intercourse, society, intimacy" (Vol.III: 868). By definition therefore, since conception, conversation is closely connected with a sense of living in conjunction with others. And this connection lasts until Austen's day.

Discussion

From Blood to Spirit: Families in Conversation and the Core of Community

Family is "the group of persons consisting of parents and their children" and "in wider sense, the unity formed by those who are nearly connected by blood or affinity" (*OED*, Vol. V: 707). The relationship of kinsfolk is regarded as the "strongest and most readily nurtured" seed of community (Tönnies, 22). And the progress towards community building is a process of developing from "community by blood" into "community of place" and finally into "community of spirit" in turn (Tönnies, 27). As we can see, Jane Austen takes "family" as an important unit in her novels, and centers on three or four families in the countryside. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen not only depicts Elizabeth as a protagonist with the awareness of improving the decorum of her family of origin to a family as well as forming a new family dynamic based on mutual affirmation. In this way, spiritual bond—the core of community—was intensified in family life. Conversation played the role as an implementation method in the process of approaching better decorum or forming a new family.

The Bennets' Family Approaching Better Decorum

Family, as a community by blood, contains the relationships between the couples, parents and their child, or between siblings as brothers and sisters. The members in a family keep the genuine, enduring relationship on the basis of a sense of balance. Parents nourish, care and instruct the child, and enjoy the authority and benefit of obedience, respect and maintenance in return. If the balance is broken, the family will encounter problems or crises. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the Bennets lacks decorum due to incompetence by the parents in educating their children, possibly as a result of their own lack of decorum. Fortunately, Elizabeth is strongly aware of this and has the foresight and ability to lead her family to be one of better decorum. Elizabeth uses conversations to communicate with her parents and siblings, and her aptitude to this allows her to affect their manners. In the party held in Netherfield, Elizabeth even has a strong feeling that "her family made an agreement to expose themselves as much as they could" (Austen, 112). Lydia's trip to Brighton directly leads to the disaster of elopement. In order to advise her father not to let Lydia go, Elizabeth has a classic and

important conversation with her father, with the risk for being hated by Lydia. From the conversation, Elizabeth presents well her understanding of community building from the following aspects.

Firstly, Elizabeth uses a series of words to present Lydia's "unguarded and imprudent manner" (Austen, 247). Lydia's defects could be divided into two parts, manner (behavior considered as imprudent, dissipated, idle...) and mind (spirit featured as ignorant, empty, uncontrolled...). Mind, taking manner as its outward reflection, is regarded the essential quality for community building. Secondly, Elizabeth noticed, "in this danger Kitty is also comprehended. She will follow wherever Lydia leads" (Austen, 247). All the features of manner and mind are more general evils with an adverse impact on the spiritual bond of family. Thirdly, she also notices that mind and manner could be cultivated and amended under proper instructions. Elizabeth asks her father to take the responsibility to check Lydia's improper mind and to teach her the long-term pursuits of life with the expectation of amendment soon. Finally, Elizabeth explains that the reason for suggestion was not for her own sake and without any personal resentment. Elizabeth instead views the problem with an awareness of the benefit to her whole family. Furthermore, her use of "our importance, our respectability in the world" (Austen, 247) reveals her idea of the core of community building, that family would take part in community building as a collective and then the decorum of a family appeared to be of essence to her.

With the understanding of the importance of family in a community, Elizabeth does not cease in her attempts to affect family members. However, as a daughter, she has strong affection for her father and enough respect for her mother to her own decorum when she tries to persuade them. With this in mind, Elizabeth is more nuanced in her attempts to affect her parents. Although her attempts are not accepted or understood well each time, Elizabeth keeps on correcting them for better decorum. Linearly, Mrs. Bennet finally becomes a "sensible, amiable, well-informed woman for the rest of her life" (Austen, 404). Kitty too, improves her temper, and becomes "less irritable, less ignorant, and less insipid" (Austen, 405). Elizabeth's aware, astute, and subtle efforts through conversation help to improve the spirit of family members, resulting in a Bennet family with a vastly better decorum.

Marriage between Elizabeth and Darcy: A New Family Based on Mutual Affirmation

In Jane Austen's novels, marriage is always an important theme. *Pride and Prejudice* is no exception to this. Through marriage a man and a woman establish a new family to live together. According to Tönnies, "the sexual instinct" is not the guarantee for a permanent relationship." Thus the relationship between a *married couple*, regarded independently of family networks and related social forces, must be maintained chiefly by accommodation to each other, if the relationship is to be moulded into one of permanent mutual affirmation" (Tönnies, 23). The relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet sheds light on the daughters' attitude towards marriage. Elizabeth realizes with pain that the attraction for physical beauties was not reliable and would fade away easily. "Respect, esteem, and confidence" would vanish with "weak understanding and illiberal mind" (Austen, 252). Thus, her intention in marriage is not

done so merely for the sake of sexual instinct or money. Her marriage to Mr. Darcy was important for community building, and the mutual affirmation–mutual understanding and respect–that are required in community building are strongly emphasized. While Jane Austen’s novels “do in fact combine elements of sentimentalism and realism both in style and ideology”, her heroines are “poised between their desire for happiness and their sense of duty towards the community” (Todd, 174). Elizabeth is one of the heroines. And conversation gives her a major push to construct her new family through a process of misunderstanding, communicating and finally reaching mutual affirmation.

The misunderstanding between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy derived from an incidental overhearing. Mr. Bingley asked Mr. Darcy to dance her, but the suggestion was refused coldly by the latter saying “she is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me; and I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men” (Austen, 12). Mr. Wickham aggravates this prejudice through his conversable trick to mix the truth with deception. Her prejudice remains even after the two become acquainted with each other.

The process of mutual affirmation is achieved windingly through conversation, direct verbal communication and letter. Mr. Darcy soon finds her figure to be “light and pleasing”, and her manners to bear an “easy playfulness” (Austen, 26). In his attempt to know her more through “conversing with her himself”, Mr. Darcy “attended to her conversation with others” (Austen, 26). In this sense, Mr. Darcy took conversation as a means for knowing others. The affirmative situation was that both of them were willing to talk, communicate and debate their ideas and opinions sincerely. Despite the communication of thoughts, they also approach mutual affirmation through introspection and confession. When Elizabeth talks to Colonel Fitzwilliam about Mr. Darcy’s performance at the first assembly, and accuses him of ignoring the girls without partner. Mr. Darcy’s reply, “Perhaps I should have judged better, had I sought an introduction”, indicated his self-criticism and introspection, and he further self-exposed that he is “ill qualified to recommend myself to strangers” (Austen, 190).

His first marriage proposal has often been regarded as the turning point for their relationship, and whilst it brings them unpleasant experiences it also provokes further introspection. In the proposal, Mr. Darcy expresses his strong affection to her with a “sense of her inferiority” (Austen, 204). Elizabeth is hurt by his language and refuses him with resentment. When she reads Darcy’s subsequent letter for the first time, Elizabeth considers that “his style was not penitent, but haughty. It was all pride and insolence” (Austen, 219), but she gradually “felt anew the justice of Mr. Darcy’s objections” (Austen, 246).

It takes a long time for Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth to affirm their affection for each other for different reasons, among which “mortification” plays an important role. Mr. Darcy changes his impression of Elizabeth much earlier than Elizabeth changes hers of him. When Mr. Darcy discovers his feeling of affection for the first time, he has a parallel feeling of mortification. As Mr. Darcy struggled to control his affection, the feeling of

“mortification” too prevents Elizabeth from forgiving his pride easily, as she admits “I could easily forgive his pride, if he had not mortified mine” (Austen, 21). It was as Wolfson discussed, “‘Mortification’ is Austen’s keyword for the death of self-esteem and social credit, the agony of pride” (Wolfson, 118). The experience of mortification lasts to Mr. Darcy’s first proposal. With Elizabeth’s refusal and accusation, Mr. Darcy is astonished with “an expression of mingled incredulity and mortification” (Austen 208). When later, they finally make clear their feelings for each other, they talk about the first proposal and Mr. Darcy’s the letter replied to her refusal. In fact, Elizabeth has a self-reflection not long after receiving the letter from Mr. Darcy. She realizes her feeling was “blind, partial, prejudice, absurd” (Austen, 223). Mr. Darcy also admits to Elizabeth, “you taught me a lesson ... By you, I was properly humbled” (Austen, 387-88). This conversation well reveals the role of “mortification” had played in realizing their defects, in cultivating them to be a better person with self-awareness, and in leading them to a new family based on mutual understanding and respect.

With the description of the process of the Bennet approaching better decorum and of a new family between Elizabeth and Darcy based on mutual affirmation, Jane Austen aims to emphasize on the importance of conversation in shifting a community by blood to one of spirit which is normally regarded as the core of community.

From Meryton to Pemberley: Communication and a Conversable Community

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the change from Meryton to Pemberley does not merely refer to the moving between two places, but indicates the significance that lay on the shifting from community of place to community of spirit. By establishing the connection between Meryton and Pemberley through conversations, Austen attempted to portray a space in this novel as a deep community with a “structure of feeling”, which was “the culture of a period” and “the particular living result of all the elements in the general organization” (Williams, 1961: 64). Furthermore, it is “the deep community that makes the communication possible” (Raymond, 1961: 65). Through the conversations in Meryton, assemblies, and Pemberley, the dialectical relationship between conversation and deep community is explored effectively. In other words, Austen tries to represent a conversable community, in which all members are equal and beyond class, and everyone can communicate with each other in a proper way, uniting both candour and politeness.

To Stop in Meryton: Reception of the “Strangers”

Neither an individual nor a family can absolutely be isolated from the environment they are living in, they will always be in contact with their neighbors. Neighbourhood refers to “a community; a certain number of people who live close together”, and “a district or portion of a town or country, freq. considered in reference to the character or circumstances of its inhabitants” (*OED*, Vol. X: 309). The pronunciation of Meryton is often regarded as a combination of “merry” and “town”. In this sense, Meryton is not simply a community of place where the individuals and families have coexisted and been acquainted for a long time, rather, it can be arguably portrayed as a community of spirit where all members can share mutual merriness. Meryton was a relatively simple but stable community, in which conversation had a very important

role. However, Meryton is not a genuine community of spirit due to the implicit concept of hierarchy and the inauthentic dissemination of information. Mr. Bennet offers a classic summary for the neighborly relationship in Meryton. "For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbours, and laugh at them in our turn" (Austen, 381). News and gossips would be talked and communicated in an unbelievable speed. Such communication is obviously inconsistent with that advocated by a deep community of spirit.

In fact, whether in a community of places or in a community of spirit, the most community members are strangers to each other because they "never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them" (Anderson 6). So the attitude to strangers seems to be very important for community building. *Pride and Prejudice* begins with the news about the coming of a stranger, Mr. Bingley. Subsequently, along with the coming of other three major characters, Mr. Darcy, Mr. Wickham and Mr. Collins, the reception ways of the strangers and the implicit concept of hierarchy are elaborated gradually. Judging from the local neighbors' attitudes and conversations, they are willing to accept the strangers as their members. The major part of Chapter one is devoted to the conversations between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet about the coming of Mr. Bingley. Instead of direct communication, the information is spread on the basis of Lady Lucas's changeable "second-hand intelligence" (Austen, 9). The neighbors in Meryton not only exchange the news and gossips, but also pass comments on the strangers. They spread the information of Mr. Darcy "within five minutes" (Austen, 11), kept their admiration only "for half the evening" (Austen, 11) and turned to judge him all together (Austen, 11). For Mr. Wickham, "all Meryton seemed striving to blacken the man who, but three months before, had been almost an angel of light" (Austen, 308-309). In the interaction between the local residents and the strangers, Meryton is portrayed as a conversable and communicative community with all kinds of talking, news, gossips, reports, etc. Because of inauthentic dissemination of information, Meryton is not qualified in effective communication.

Jane Austen reveals her understanding of a conversable community of spirit through the reception of the strangers, through covering all possible social strata like aristocracy, bourgeoisie, clergyman and loafer, in a relatively stable community. Through the reception of the strangers, it provides a negative example in communicating, both internal and external. However, Meryton, as a community of place, still takes an important role in approaching a community of spirit because it offers the opportunities for assemblies, through which the mutual understanding and respect are established.

To Attend Assemblies: Conventions and Concern for the Benefit of All

Assembly means "a gathering of persons for purposes of social entertainment. (The public assembly, which formed a regular feature of fashionable life in the 18th century... Private assemblies corresponded in some respects to the modern 'reception' or 'at-home')" (*OED*, Vol. I: 706). Furthermore, from the point of view of community building, many scholars, such as Tönnies and Arnold, have advocated the

importance of conventions. "Positive prescriptions and rules of all kinds can be recognised as conventional, although their origin may be of quite a different character, so that convention is often used as a synonym for tradition or custom" (Tönnies, 63). Different assemblies in *Pride and Prejudice* witness common experiences. Through the assemblies, Jane Austen gathers the people from different classes together to provide them with opportunities to know, communicate, and understand with each other.

The balls were conspicuously an important kind of assembly for both the characters in the novel and the people at Austen's age. The Netherfield ball was not merely a dancing party for matchmaking, but a lesson Austen provided with her dialectical idea of the way towards deep community through the conversations and interactions among Elizabeth, Mr. Darcy and Mr. Collins. According to Cottom's study, "the dance floor also regulates speech", and "conversation is almost always a matter of aggression and appeasement in Austen's novels—in the contemporary colloquialism, characters are always being 'talked down'" (Cottom, 83). When Mr. Collins discovers Mr. Darcy is in this assembly, he expresses to Elizabeth his exultation and will to introduce himself to Mr. Darcy. However, Mr. Collins' scheme breaches the conventions because "addressing to someone without introduction (is) an impertinent freedom, rather than a compliment" (Austen, 107). There is a series of changes in the reception of Mr. Darcy: from "astonishment at being so addressed" to "eyeing him with unrestrained wonder", to a reply "with an air of distant civility", and finally the to the contempt that "seemed abundantly increasing" (Austen, 108). Through the combination of direct dialogue and free indirect discourse, Jane Austen conveys an implicit message that Mr. Collins' impertinent manner infringes the convention in courtesy. This impertinence does lie within Mr. Collins' self-display, performance of vulgarity, assumed familiarity where there is no intimacy, and communication where there is no mutual understanding.

Austen uses Elizabeth's visit to the Collins as an example to present her understanding of how to keep the balance between following conventions and expressing true feelings. That is the propriety in a conversation, giving consideration to both candour and politeness. When Mr. Collins used over formal words for parting civilities, "Elizabeth tried to unite civility and truth in a few short sentences" (Austen, 231) in her reply to his long speech, especially on the topic of marriage. When Mr. Collins self-evaluates that he and his wife "have but one mind and one way of thinking" (Austen, 231), instead of strong disapproval, Elizabeth keeps her propriety in conversation by saying "it was a great happiness where that was the case, and with equal sincerity could add that she firmly believed and rejoiced in his domestic comforts" (Austen, 231). With the balance between the truth and politeness in conversation, Jane Austen expresses her dialectical attitude towards whether or how to follow the conventions.

A Tour of Pemberley: Approaching the Community of Spirit

Moreover, through the conversations and interactions in Pemberley, Jane Austen endeavours to build a conversable community of spirit in Pemberley, and also further clarifies the relationship between conversation and a community of spirit.

During the tour of Pemberley, the housekeeper, lavishly disperses praise upon Mr. Darcy. To her, he is a good-natured master who she “could not meet with a better” (Austen, 263). She has known him since he was four years old and observed him as “the sweetest-tempered, most generous-hearted” (Austen, 263) boy. As a brother, he takes care of his sister so much that “whatever can give his sister any pleasure is sure to be done in a moment” (Austen 264). As a landlord, he is “affable to the poor” and “there is not one of his tenants or servants but what will give him a good name” (Austen, 263). As a master, he has “never had a cross word” (Austen, 262) and wins the housekeeper’s sincere respect. The housekeeper is regarded as “an intelligent servant” (Austen 265), and she understands Mr. Darcy’s personality, that “not like the wild young men nowadays, who think of nothing but themselves...To my fancy, it is only because he does not rattle away like other young men” (Austen, 263). The conversations of the housekeeper help to depict Mr. Darcy as a person who has no hierarchical discrimination. Mr. Darcy becomes warranting in all the compliments that his housekeeper adorns him with, as he has proved himself through behaviors and conversations.

There is a conversation among Miss Bingley, Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy about Pemberley and its library through. Though it appears as a trivial talk and teasing, much is revealed through the different attitudes towards the “delightful library” and Pemberley. Indeed, Miss Bingley’s words further elaborate that the bourgeoisie class was full of enthusiasm about imitating aristocratic life-styles and distributions of estate, which, in that time, were regarded as representative of one’s status. Imitation of the aristocratic life-styles was prevalent among the bourgeoisie at that time, because a person and his belongings came to represent each other. However, regardless of Miss Bingley’s admiration in pretending to have a shared interest in books, or to her vulgar compliment through superficial suggestion to her brother, Mr. Darcy replies in a polite manner instead of being agitated. For Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley, they became friends on the basis of mutual understanding and attraction of dispositions rather than the aristocratic life-style or fortune. Their communication is on the premise of genuinely taking each other’s happiness into account. As mentioned above, communication is essential for a deep community building. Except with no hierarchical discrimination, Mr. Darcy’s transformation of manners is reflected in his reception of Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner, and further verifies that Pemberley is a community of spirit. When he suddenly comes across Elizabeth, he enquires after her family in terms “at least of perfect civility” (Austen, 265), and asks her to introduce him to Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner with civility and enters into conversation with Mr. Gardiner instead of walking away. When their conversation turns upon fishing, Mr. Darcy invites Mr. Gardiner to fish in Pemberley “with the greatest civility”, and even offers to supply him with fishing tackle” (Austen, 269). For Mr. Darcy, what are appreciated in keeping a good relationship are the mind and manner of others. There is the same reason for him to get along well with Mr. Gardiner or Mr. Bingley, that is, upon the basis of mutual understanding and respect.

At the end of the tour of Pemberley, not only Elizabeth refreshes her understanding of Mr. Darcy in the height that she has never ever felt, but also all the readers may

realize that Pemberley and Mr. Darcy are not merely a place or a person. Mr. Darcy, “as a brother, a landlord, a master”, many people’s happiness are “in his guardianship” (Austen 265). No matter which role he is, Mr. Darcy is a member of the community and participates in building a community of spirit.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the communities of place are arranged as shifting from Meryton to Pemberley with the contribution of conversations often taking place in assemblies. Jane Austen’s idea of a conversable community is fully revealed in the transition from the community of place to the community of spirit, as well as from the pride and prejudice to a community with communication.

Conclusions

In the eighteenth century, the demands for community were raised to extremely imperative situation, and scholars from every discipline presented the imagination of community in their works. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the discussions and presentations of the education, courtship, friendship and marriage of women actually reflect the transformational changes of the day. Instead of mere observation, Austen contributes her own understanding of community to its imagination and building, and uses conversation as a key approach. The community built in the novel at two layers with cumulative progression.

At the familial level, a family bond based on mutual affirmation is forged as the core of community building. Austen takes a family of origin and new established families through marriages as examples, and presents the core of community through the conversation and the progress to better decorum. At the social level, Austen takes convention as a balance to smooth the relationship outside family members, and as the means to fulfilment of mutual understanding. Through the mobility in two social spaces –Meryton and Pemberley, Austen dialectically presents the process to the highest form of community, a community of spirit.

The community Jane Austen imagined and formed is not still and close, but is floating and energetic. It is a conversable and stereoscopic one. Concerning the development of plots and portrayal of characters, conversation plays an important role as the means of presentation. Rather than its function for the novel, conversation contributes to community as an exorable and audible template for all the members. Thus, conversation and community building in *Pride and Prejudice* require more attention.

References

- Anderson, Benedict. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso Press.
- Arnold, Matthew. (2006). *Culture and Anarchy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Austen, Jane. (2015). *Pride and Prejudice*. Beijing: China Astronautic Publishing House.
- Bayaer. (2017). *Struggle and Surrender – An Analysis of Women’s Status in Pride and Prejudice*. (Published Master’s thesis). Hebei Normal University, Hebei.
- Bloom, Harold. (2005). *Novelists and Novels*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers.

- Chen, Fangfang. (2015). The Artistic Implement of Ideal Community in *Pride and Prejudice*. *Art Research*, 3, 100-02.
- Cottom, Daniel. (1985). *The Civilized Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Deresiewicz, William (2009). Community and Cognition in *Pride and Prejudice*. In Harold Bloom (Ed.), *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Jane Austen*, New Edition (pp.113-44). New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Deresiewicz, William (2011). *A Jane Austen Education: How Six Novels Taught Me About Love, Friendship, And The Things That Really Matter*. New York: The Penguin Press.
- Doody, Margaret (2015). *Jane Austen's Names: Riddles, Persons, Places*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Greene, Donald J. (1953). Jane Austen and the Peerage. *PMLA*, 68(5), 1017-31.
- Hugessen, Edward Ed. (1884). *Letters of Jane Austen* Volume 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McMaster, Juliet (1997). Class. In E. Copeland and Juliet McMaster (Eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen* (pp. 115-30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mee, Jon (2011). *Conversable Worlds: Literature, Contention, and Community 1762 to 1830*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Simpson, J. A. and E. S. C. Weiner, eds. (1989). *Oxford English Dictionary* (Second Edition) Volumes I ~ XX. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Southam, B.C., (ed.). (1979). *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage* Volumn 1: 1811-1870. London: Routledge.
- Southam, B.C., (ed.). (1987). *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage* Volumn 2: 1870-1940. London: Routledge.
- Todd, Janet (2005). *Jane Austen in Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tönnies, Ferdinand (2001). *Community and Civil Society*. Trans. Jose Harris and Margaret Hollis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, Raymond (1960). *Culture and Society 1780-1950*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Williams, Raymond (1961). *Long Revolution*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Williams, Raymond (1977). *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Williams, Raymond (1985). *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Revised edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wolfson, Susan J. (2009). Re: Reading *Pride and Prejudice*: What think you of books? In Claudia L. Johnson and Clara Tuite (Eds.), *A Campanion to Jane Austen* (pp. 112-22). West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing.
- Yin, Qiping (2016). Conversation and Community Building in English Literature. *English and American Literature Studies*, 24, 40-55.
- Zhou, Qin (2015). Fitzwilliam Darcy: Community Builder in *Pride and Prejudice*. *Youth Literator*, 27, 112-13.