

Pride and Prejudice Adaptations: A Comparative Study

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Abstract - The research embarks on an exploration of a meticulously curated array of adaptations, spanning from well-known renditions to more obscure iterations across diverse media landscapes. Employing a multidimensional paradigm that embraces narrative authenticity, character delineations, visual allure, and thematic elucidation, this investigation endeavors to shed light on the subtleties and divergences inherent in each adaptation. Moreover, it endeavors to discern the pivotal influencers shaping creative choices, including socio-cultural milieu, audience demographics, and prevalent cinematic zeitgeist.

Keywords- Pride and Prejudice, Adaptations, Zombies, Bride and Prejudice.

Introduction - Jane Austen stands as a pivotal figure in the annals of feminist literature, owing to her distinctive portrayal of women. Amidst an epoch where the archetype of femininity dictated reticence, benevolence, domesticity, modesty, and conservatism, Austen dared to render her protagonists flawed, thus rendering them inherently human. Elizabeth emerges as a luminary figure, characterized by her astuteness, sharp wit, outspokenness, yet tempered with diplomacy—a stark departure from her elder sister Jane, who epitomizes the quintessential virtues of the era. Rather than pitting these characters against each other, Austen delicately weaves a tapestry of sisterhood and cohesion. This study endeavors to dissect myriad adaptations of Austen's magnum opus, "Pride and Prejudice." Its focus remains tethered to the realms of cinematography, character dynamics, protagonist delineation, and the portrayal of pivotal plot events. Comprehensive in scope, the research encompasses an array of derivative and transformative interpretations of the seminal work.

Hypotheses:

1. Subsequent adaptations are anticipated to exhibit heightened expressiveness concerning the romantic allure between characters, as societal attitudes toward courtship progressively liberalize and evolve.
2. Contemporary renditions are expected to depict Mr. Darcy as more aloof and haughty compared to earlier adaptations, while newer interpretations may portray him as reticent and introverted, reflecting shifting societal norms regarding acceptable gentlemanly demeanor.
3. Regardless of the era in which an adaptation is

produced, fundamental character traits such as Elizabeth's wit, Jane's innocence, and Mr. Bingley's amiability are predicted to remain consistent.

4. The accoutrements and overarching thematic elements of adaptations are anticipated to undergo modification to align with the prevailing tastes of the audience, thereby implying a potential decrease in accuracy of costumes and props over time.

Research Methodology: The methodology of this research primarily hinges on a comprehensive literature review, encompassing seminal works such as "Pride and Prejudice" (1940), "Pride and Prejudice" (1985), "Pride and Prejudice: A Latter-Day Comedy," "Bride and Prejudice" (2004), "Pride and Prejudice" (2005), and "Pride and Prejudice and Zombies."

Pride And Prejudice 1940

"How clever of you, Miss Bingley, to know something of which you are ignorant."

"Pride and Prejudice" (1940) offers a captivating cinematic voyage, particularly suited for enthusiasts seeking the allure of classic black-and-white cinema coupled with accessible language. Opening amidst a scene bustling with genteel ladies, among them the Bennett sisters and Mrs. Lucas with her daughter Charlotte, the narrative eagerly anticipates the arrival of Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy. The simmering rivalry between Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Lucas finds expression even in a lighthearted chariot race among the Bennett sisters and Mrs. Lucas to their respective abodes. As the story unfolds, Elizabeth's acerbic wit, resolute demeanor, and forthright disposition come sharply into focus. Notably, Mr. Darcy's attempt to instruct Miss Elizabeth in archery exposes her surpassing skill, prompting

her unabashed acknowledgment of his previous underestimation.

Contrary to our expectations, the characters reveal themselves to be remarkably candid and emotive, infusing the narrative with a pronounced theatricality. This dramatic flair extends to the opulent settings and extravagant costumes, which, despite the rural backdrop, exude a lavishness that transcends historical accuracy. While Miss Charlotte Lucas is described in the text as of average attractiveness, the portrayal by the actress might perplex audiences accustomed to conventional standards of beauty, blurring the delineation of her character's supposed plainness.

Mr. Darcy, for the most part, presents an amiable demeanor, reserving hints of arrogance for private exchanges with his confidant. His affable demeanor extends to cordial interactions with Miss Elizabeth. In contrast, Jane is depicted as naive yet discerning, acknowledging her mother's machinations and even feigning illness to elicit Mr. Bingley's concern. The film leans heavily into a comedic tone, diverging from the revolutionary spirit underlying Austen's novel. Key plot moments, such as Mr. Collins' proposal to Elizabeth and subsequent discussions, as well as the notorious confrontation between Lady Catherine de Bourgh and Elizabeth, are rendered with a non-confrontational touch.

Although diverging from the canonical plot, the film suggests Lady Catherine de Bourgh's eventual approval of Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth's union. Notably, the narrative strives for a "happily ever after" for all, introducing a romantic subplot for Mary, portrayed as a demure bibliophile with a penchant for music.

Pride And Prejudice- A Latter Day Comedy

Released in 2003, this adaptation emerges as a romantic comedy falling within the transformative realm. Set in a contemporary backdrop, the narrative reimagines the characters as college roommates, with only Kitty and Lydia sharing a familial bond. Jane assumes the role of an Argentine exchange student, echoing the theme of 'rare beauty' associated with her, a motif mirrored in Fitzwilliam Darcy's character. Elizabeth's aspirations center around becoming a novelist, imbuing her portrayal with heightened emotionalism over practicality, a departure from her 1940s counterpart who exudes a more 'girlish' charm and clumsiness.

Fitzwilliam Darcy's demeanor veers towards aloofness and arrogance initially, leading to a curt and awkward first proposal. The film boldly diverges from the original romantic trajectories of characters; Mary pursues Collins, Lydia expresses interest in Charles Bingley, and Caroline Bingley undergoes a notable transformation, deceiving Elizabeth into believing she is engaged to Fitzwilliam Darcy before marrying a much older billionaire.

Jack Wickham, mirroring George Wickham, faces charges of bigamy and fails to elope with Lydia after

intervention by Fitzwilliam Darcy and associates leads to his arrest.

A significant departure lies in Caroline Bingley's portrayal, elevating her from a minor character to a central antagonist in the 2003 rendition. Characters like Charlotte Lucas, Lady Catherine De Bourgh, and Mrs. Bingley receive scant attention in the film adaptation. Despite these alterations, the movie adheres to the convention of a 'Happily Ever After' denouement, imbued with individual growth and a sense of personal fulfillment for each character.

Bride And Prejudice

"There's nothing wrong with having standards, is there? No, as long as you don't force them on others."

A delightful surprise in the realm of musical cinema, *Bride and Prejudice* unfolds its vibrant narrative against the backdrop of Amritsar, India. Featuring seven lively songs, each lasting between two to three minutes, the film echoes the quintessential Bollywood movie blueprint of the early 2000s. The opening scene introduces Will Darcy, attending a friend's wedding in India, setting the stage for his fateful encounter with Lalita Bakshi, who embodies the spirit of Elizabeth Bennet. Lalita's character exudes a spirited yet opinionated demeanor, engaging in banter with Will Darcy that deviates from the light-hearted exchanges seen in the 1940s adaptation, instead aligning more closely with the comedic tone of the 2003 version.

In subtle instances, Elizabeth's prejudice is portrayed with shades of mild xenophobia, reflecting both India's colonial past and Will's perceptions of the country, despite his American origins. A striking parallel emerges in the characters of Mr. Chaman Bakshi and Mrs. Manorama Bakshi, who closely mirror the traits of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet from the original text. While Mrs. Bennet may not be universally adored, her whimsical possessiveness seamlessly intertwines with the portrayal of a stereotypical Indian mother from the 1990s.

Furthermore, while the narrative follows the trope of forbidden love, with Lady Catherine's role assumed by Mrs. Darcy, the characters' motivations and intentions diverge from those of the original book. Similar to its comedic counterparts, the film deviates from the conventional ending, eschewing Wickham's marriage to Lakhi. *Bride and Prejudice* caters to a global audience, evident not only in its English dialogue but also in its infusion of Indian cultural elements into a storyline set in India. However, this blending of cultures raises questions about the film's cultural authenticity; for instance, an elaborate garba evening is depicted despite the scene being set in Punjab, and Mr. Kohli, mirroring Mr. Collins, dons traditional Indian attire for his wedding, which nonetheless follows a Christian ceremony despite both bride and groom belonging to Hindu families.

Pride And Prejudice (2005)

"You have bewitched me body and soul. And I love...I love..."

love you. I never wish to be parted from you from this day on."

Diverging from its predecessors, *Pride and Prejudice* (2005), helmed by Joe Wright, unfolds with a captivating silence, portraying the Bennett family engrossed in household tasks and engaging in spontaneous conversations. While Elizabeth's character maintains its inherent uniqueness, her interactions with her sisters eschew formality, radiating with a childlike affection. The film delicately preserves the bonds shared among the sisters, imbued with youthful charm and endearing camaraderie.

Elizabeth's romantic inclinations are subtly woven into the narrative, notably evidenced in her overt affection for Mr. Wickham—"On the contrary, Wickham is twice the man Darcy is." Her body language exudes youthfulness, good humor, and charm, coupled with a diplomatic demeanor necessitated by societal constraints of the era.

This adaptation places emphasis on the sisterly bond between Elizabeth and Jane, with Jane assuming a more prominent role as the elder sister, evident in their heartfelt exchanges. The Meryton ball scene eschews romanticized depictions, portraying the bustle and crowd with realism, while Darcy's taciturn demeanor underscores his social awkwardness, highlighted by his failure to adhere to proper etiquette.

Attention to character depth is evident throughout the film; Mary is depicted as rational and stern, transcending her portrayal as a mere bookworm. Charlotte Lucas's humor and her bond with Elizabeth are authentically portrayed, enriching their pivotal confrontation. Notably, Kitty and Lydia are portrayed by actors their age, amplifying the gravity of Lydia's elopement with Mr. Wickham and Darcy's efforts to avert disaster.

While maintaining a serious undertone, the film interjects moments of light-hearted innocence. Directorial liberties are taken in key scenes, such as Mr. Darcy's proposal amidst a rain-soaked gazebo and Lady Catherine's confrontation with Elizabeth, imbued with a palpable sense of disdain rather than interrogation.

Romantic intentions are subtly conveyed, devoid of longing gazes or overt displays of physical affection, with quick glances serving as conduits for emotional expression. The visual theme prioritizes attention to detail, with clothing in muted colors echoing the era's fashion sensibilities. Overall, *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) faithfully captures the essence of Austen's vision, surpassing mere adaptation to emerge as a nuanced cinematic masterpiece.

Pride And Prejudice And Zombies (2016)

"It is a truth universally acknowledged that a zombie in possession of brains must be in want of more brains."

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies transforms Seth Grahame-Smith's 2009 novel into an action-packed film, offering a unique twist on the classic tale. While the source material itself serves as a parody of Austen's original work,

this adaptation warrants inclusion in our research for its adherence to the "*Pride and Prejudice*" storyline. Set in an Alternate Universe besieged by zombies, the narrative begins with a retrospective on England's tumultuous past. In response to the zombie threat, English children are raised and trained in combat abroad, with affluent individuals receiving training in Japan and others in China. Colonel Darcy's grim introduction sets the tone as he dispatches an undercover zombie at a gathering.

Elizabeth emerges as a fierce warrior, embodying regal strength and decisiveness, her opinions delivered with unyielding resolve. Major plot events, including Mr. Darcy's proposal, Lady Catherine's confrontation, and Lydia's elopement, are transformed into exhilarating fight sequences. The film emphasizes the Bennett sisters' martial prowess, depicting their harmonious sparring sessions and agile combat skills.

Other characters retain their original traits while adapting to the apocalyptic setting, maintaining the social etiquette of the era despite their constant armed vigilance. Jane retains her trademark kindness amidst bravery, while Mr. Wickham, though meeting a grisly fate, employs reason and sympathy in his interactions.

Visually, the film echoes the aesthetic established by *Pride and Prejudice* (2005), particularly in costume design. The language adopts a casual, modern tone, enhancing accessibility while offering contemporary insight into characters' emotions. Despite its parody nature, the film remains faithful to the essence of the original story and character dynamics, delivering an entertaining adaptation that balances humor with action.

Conclusion: In our concluding analysis, we will address each hypothesis individually and assess its applicability to the examined movies.

1. The hypothesis suggesting that newer films would feature more expressive characters was disproven, as the 1940s adaptation emerged with the most expressive characterizations among its derivative works. However, it's crucial to note that "expressive" does not imply a limited range of expression; rather, the intensity of emotions varied, albeit diminishing over time.
2. Regarding the portrayal of Darcy, a discernible trajectory is observed across subsequent adaptations. The 1940 version presents him in a warmer light compared to *Pride and Prejudice* and *Zombies*, lending credibility to the hypothesis.
3. The protagonist's perceived intelligence remains a steadfast trait across adaptations, while her romantic disposition fluctuates. Some movies depict her as a fierce and independent woman, as seen in *Pride and Prejudice: A Latter-Day Comedy* (2003) and *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, while others adhere closely to the romanticism of the original text. Other characters largely retain their core qualities across adaptations.

4. Contrary to expectations, the props and thematic elements of the films evolved not to cater to contemporary audience tastes but to adhere to historical accuracy. As derivative works progressed, there was a notable improvement in the authenticity of props and settings, aligning with historical details rather than contemporary preferences.

In conclusion, while some hypotheses found validation in the analysis, others were refuted or revealed nuanced outcomes. The examination underscores the dynamic interplay between adaptation and fidelity to source material, offering insights into the evolution of cinematic interpretations of *Pride and Prejudice*.

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