Over the last 200 years Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* has been read by millions of readers all over the world – and by some of them innumerable times. It is them who allowed the text (or the experience of having read it) to remain with them wherever they went and it is the same readers who took the novel also with them through their lives and passed it on to younger generations. In other words, only due to its readership neither space nor time could counteract the continuous blossoming of the *Pride and Prejudice* phenomenon, a development that Marion Gymnich explores in her introduction.

As a result, the novel can certainly be called a globetrotter: It is rather likely that you can find an edition that was published in one of the languages that you read. But the complexities and challenges inherent in translation processes, on which Uwe Baumann’s article focuses, are certainly not restricted to translations that involve ‘primarily’ a language transfer; *Pride and Prejudice* did not only cross borders; it has repeatedly been turned into a cultural go-between. Exhibiting a rather tricksterish demeanour, the text has been culturally appropriated, adapted and thus transferred into various (trans-)cultural realms. It is these transfer processes that Stella Butter’s contribution analyses by referring to some of the most influential and certainly paradigmatic transcultural adaptions of the text rooted in Indian culture(s).

But *Pride and Prejudice* strides not only across continents, it has also travelled through centuries. Being a time traveller entails almost inevitably certain effects. First of all, any potential aging processes of the novel have been counteracted by the fact that its readers allowed it to participate in the progression of media history: *Pride and Prejudice* has resurfaced not only in many TV adaptations, such as the famous BBC version (1995), which is – especially due to the iconic ‘wet shirt scene’, as Imke Lichterfeld explains – one of the main sources for Darcymania, but also in video blogs such as *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, which are discussed by Elena Baeva, or online erotic rewritings, which are analysed by Silke Meyer. Secondly, *Pride and Prejudice* has naturally been swept along by literary history, which not only means that it was adapted for or worked into relatively
recent genres, such as Chick Lit (cf. Gislind Rohwer-Happe’s contribution). It also follows that *Pride and Prejudice* was rewritten or modified by employing more established narrative frames, such as the genres of crime fiction (Ulrike Zimmermann) or the Gothic (Hanne Birk). Thirdly, due to the fact that readers are often also researchers, the time travelling of literary texts may have the effect that they are approached from ever new angles or analysed by taking contemporary research or discourses into account, so that perpetually new insights into the literary text can be gained. Examples in this volume include – among others – Josefine Joisten’s sociocultural contextualisation of the character of Mrs Bennet and her intentions and Nadežda Rumjanceva’s analysis of nineteenth-century illustrations of *Pride and Prejudice*.

The processes addressed above certainly are if not triggered then fuelled by the indisputable canonical status of Jane Austen’s classic. And evidently, canonization (and its revision) are closely intertwined with teaching: As soon as or as long as a text is taught, it is read by students and talked and/or written about and thus kept ‘alive’. Naturally, the validity of a text, its contemporariness or seemingly timeless relevance, is not only affirmed when the original is taught, but also when adaptations of a text are used in creative teaching situations such as those explored by Uwe Küchler.

The fact that students not only read *Pride and Prejudice* but even perform excellent research on the text was illustrated by the quality and number of responses to a ‘call for papers’ issued in autumn 2013, i.e. an essay competition that asked students to respond to the question whether Elizabeth Bennet really is a heroine for our times. Due to page restrictions it was regrettably not possible to include all student essays in this collection. Only two contributions could be published in full. While Bettina Burger focuses mainly on the character of the female protagonist in the original as well as in adaptations, fan fiction is discussed by Denise Burkhard and Simone Fleischer. In addition, the editors decided to publish a ‘synergetic essay’ consisting of excerpts from the other student essays in order to include as much research done by students as possible.

Furthermore, the presentation of selected students’ work constituted a vital part of the anniversary festivities held at the University of Bonn in 2013. Coinciding with the novel’s bicentenary the vitality and contemporariness of *Pride and Prejudice* was celebrated at a birthday party disguised as an academic conference called “*Pride & Prejudice 2.0 – Celebrating the Bicentenary of Jane Austen’s Most Popular Novel*” in December 2013. And this is certainly the right moment to express our sincerest thanks to Anna Coogan, without whom the conference simply would not have taken place and the volume would not have been published, as well as to Carolin Brühl and Ann-Sophie Treuheit for their invaluable help and support at the conference and as members of the editorial team.
As the conference *Pride & Prejudice 2.0* revolved mainly around one single text it provided the participating scholars with the rare enough opportunity to discuss their work with others who naturally shared the same in-depth knowledge of the very same text. A fact which contributed further to the lively discussions and the enjoyable working atmosphere – for which we want to thank everyone who was there. It goes without saying that the shared experience of having read *Pride and Prejudice* (repeatedly) constitutes a condition for new research output (presented orally in 2013 and lying right in front of you in print in this very moment), but furthermore the presentations given at the conference and the contributions in this volume also do their very own job in keeping the novel alive and its protagonists present in our world(s).

Go, readers, go – thank you for reading *Pride and Prejudice.*