

Abstract

This bachelor thesis focuses on adaptation processes present in the transfer of Alan Bennett's plays *The Madness of George III* and *The History Boys* from stage to film. The former was considered a mediocre play but its film adaptation can be found on the British Film Institute's list of the country's greatest films while the latter is a critically acclaimed play but its adaptation received mixed reviews and is generally seen as inferior to the stage version. This thesis is to determine why did the two adaptation processes bear such different results despite the same creative team being responsible for both of them. Both processes are first analysed separately, with the analysis of the changes made to *The Madness of George III* is primarily focused on separate characters and aspects of the story while the changes present in the film version of *The History Boys* are primarily examined chronologically as the play's first and second half were adapted differently for the screen. After the analysis, both processes are compared.

The analysed changes made to *The Madness of King George* contain a largely condensed and efficient opening, the King, who is cemented as an active protagonist, Capt. Greville, a minor character used to highlight a theme of cold efficiency being favoured in court over empathy, the Prince, who was made far more complex and whose motivations have been altered, and the political conflict, the most condensed part of the story which was significantly simplified. In the chapter focused on *The History Boys*, the changes made to the play's first half are examined first, as they mostly consist of smaller additions which do not significantly affect the main conflict or the story's characters and mostly provide new details. The changes made to the second half are much more significant as they do affect the conflict between Hector's and Irwin's styles of teaching, create inconsistencies in characters' behaviour and, in some cases, significantly change their fate. The only part of the story which comes out of the adaptation process overall improved is the character of Rudge which is examined last. After the two

separate analyses, the two adaptational processes are compared in terms of condensation of the adapted text, with *The Madness of King George* condensing more of the adapted texts but with its additions complementing the preserved parts while the added aspects of *The History Boys* create inconsistencies in combination with the preserved text, the utilisation of the visual medium to relay information and the setting, which is particularly problematic for *The History Boys* as the film's realistic setting clashes with the stylised dialogue. Both the analysis of the adaptation processes and their comparison were performed in accordance with Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* and Linda Seger's *The Art of Adaptation: Turning Fact and Fiction into Film* and statements denoting quality of the examined plays and films are based on reviews by various critics.

Key words: adaptation, Alan Bennett, stage, film, adaptation process, *The Madness of George III*, *The History Boys*