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DIPLOMA THESIS

Functional equivalence in the film adaptation of Ian McEwan's *Atonement*

Funkční ekvivalence ve filmové adaptaci románu *Pokání* Iana McEwana

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Odevzdáním této diplomové práce na téma *Functional equivalence in the film adaptation of Ian McEwan's Atonement* potvrzuji, že jsem ji vypracovala pod vedením vedoucího práce samostatně za použití v práci uvedených pramenů a literatury. Dále potvrzuji, že tato práce nebyla využita k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this diploma thesis is the analysis of the film adaptation of Ian McEwan's novel *Atonement* that was directed by Joe Wright and written by Christopher Hampton in 2007. The thesis focuses on the instances of functional equivalence in the film.

The thesis is divided into two parts. The theoretical part elaborates on the phenomenon of functional equivalence and briefly discusses the main approaches to film adaptations. The practical part examines individual examples of functional equivalence in the film, describes and analyses corresponding passages in the novel and scenes in the film. It describes the scenes in which Hampton introduces the characters with special attention to the changes that were made to fully do so and then inspects the other segments of the film that were transformed to seamlessly transfer the adapted material to screen.

Keywords

Film, adaptation, novel, equivalence, scene, passage, theme, narration

ABSTRAKT

Cílem této diplomové práce je analýza filmové adaptace románu Iana McEwana *Pokání*. Film *Pokání* režíroval Joe Wright a scénář k filmu napsal Christopher Hampton. Film měl premiéru v roce 2007. Tato práce se soustředí na užití principu funkční ekvivalence v daném filmu.

Práce se skládá ze dvou částí. Teoretická část se zabývá principem funkční ekvivalence a stručně rozebírá hlavní přístupu k filmovým adaptacím. Praktická část analyzuje konkrétní příklady užití funkční ekvivalence ve filmu, popisuje a rozebírá odpovídající pasáže z románu a scény z filmu. Praktická část také popisuje scény, ve kterých Hampton představuje hlavní postavy. Práce si také všímá změn, které Hampton ve scénáři udělal, aby postavy dostatečně vykreslil. Dále se práce věnuje dalším částem filmu, které byly přetransformovány tak, aby mohl být obsah románu plynule převeden do filmové podoby.

Klíčová slova

Film, adaptace, román, ekvivalence, scéna, pasáž, téma

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1 Introduction

I have always appreciated adaptations and as an avid reader I usually make sure to know both, the source text and the adaptation. My interest in this particular pair of works, the novel *Atonement* and the film *Atonement* (2007), is rooted in my admiration of both McEwan's and Wright's works. What is more, *Atonement* fascinates me because of its structure and especially because of its intertextual undertones.

Joe Wright's adaptation of Ian McEwan's *Atonement* is often referred to as very faithful to the original. It is obvious that absolute fidelity to the adapted work is impossible. I chose this novel and this adaptation as its relative fidelity makes it easier to navigate and, consequently, I was not distracted by overt changes and huge diversions from the plot. Therefore, I could focus on the more subtle nuances of the adaptation. Nevertheless, the creators could not avoid various transformations, reformulations, and reinterpretations. Adaptations are often compared to translations, therefore, it seemed reasonable to employ one of the terms which is predominantly used in translation studies, namely functional equivalence. This principle is therefore used as one of the main interpretive prisms for juxtaposing McEwan's *Atonement* with Wright's adaptation.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the various manifestations of functional equivalence in Joe Wright's adaptation of Ian McEwan's *Atonement*. As any adaptation, *Atonement* contains many examples of this phenomenon. It is understandable that it is not possible to pick all the details and describe all the instances of this aspect of the film, however, this thesis focuses on the most obvious and most prominent examples.

As for the structure of the thesis, the theoretical part discusses the theoretical background of film adaptations, the opinions on the value of adaptation and explains the role of functional equivalence in film making. Since the notion of functional equivalents in films relates to the theories that view adaptations as works that should be valued in its own terms, the theoretical part is mainly rooted in the opinions of Linda Hutcheon, who endorses this theory. The theoretical part also briefly mentions theorists that oppose this notion. What is more, the use of diegetic and nondiegetic sound is also described in the first part. Furthermore, the theoretical part includes basic information about Ian McEwan and Joe Wright. To provide necessary context, the theoretical part also contains a brief introduction of the plot of the novel.

The main objective of this thesis is the examination of the adaptation which is presented in the practical part and whose aim is to analyse the actual use of functional equivalence in the film. The main part of this work is to go through the book and the film and look for the equivalents Wright employs to successfully translate the themes, moods, psychological states, and other parts of the novel. To make the thesis more comprehensible, it seemed systemic and convenient to present the events of the novel first and then I supply the film's reinterpretations.

First, we focus on the introduction and depiction of the characters with regard to functional equivalents. Second, the practical part focuses on several scenes that demonstrate the role of equivalents in the film. Lastly, the function of music, colours, light and camera work is elaborated on. In the conclusion I summarize my findings and briefly reiterate the main points of the analysis.

2 Theoretical part

2.1 Adaptation and its value

This chapter aims to introduce the two main views on adaptations, namely, the opinion that adaptations are degradations of the original literary sources and the competing notion that adaptations should not be viewed as less valuable and should be appreciated as creative works of art with their own artistic merits.

2.1.1 Adaptation as a ‘parasite’

According to Frontier Economics, more than half of the top grossing UK-produced film between the years 2007-2016 were adaptations and their collective gross amounted to 61% of the UK box office gross (Publishing’s Contribution). What is more, novels and other written sources are adapted not only into films, but also to television series, musicals, videogames, attractions in theme parks and more. Such adaptations consistently attract the attention of filmgoers, viewers, theatre goers, gamers, visitors, and other adaptation enthusiasts. Despite their obvious success and the fact that adaptations seem to dominate the scene, there are still those who do not share the enthusiasm and maintain the view that adaptations are somehow lesser to their source materials. The thesis will now briefly summarize the argumentation behind this standpoint and then will move to the opposing view on adaptations.

Linda Hutcheon starts her work *A Theory of Adaptation* with the analysis of what she calls contempt towards adaptations and promptly delves into the explanation of the

never-ending popularity of adaptation. Similarly, Robert Stam *Literature and Film* first explains the prejudice that surrounds adaptations. As can be seen in Hutcheon's and Stam's findings, the critics that are adverse to adaptations often voice their displeasure with a creative assortment of choice words which they employ to degrade adaptations. Some of the derogatory terms are "desecration", "deformation", "betrayal", "interference" and others (found by Hutcheon, 2-3). The recurring and most common terms are "violation" and "parasite". Stam seems fascinated by this hostility and even compiles a list of eight reasons or sources of this animosity. This thesis' main point is not to analyse the negative outlook on adaptations, therefore, only two of the reasons will be mentioned.

The very simplistic paraphrases of the common criticism of adaptations is the sentence 'this was rendered differently in the book'. Traditional film criticism is based on the fidelity argument. In other words, the value of the adaptation is measured by its faithfulness to the adapted source text. Critics who support this argument are, for instance, David L. Kranz and Nancy C. Mellerski. Though outdated, this criterion is also the most readily understandable one as fans of books often go to the cinema with certain expectations about the film and can be disappointed when the adaptation fails "to 'realize' or substantiate what [they] most appreciated in the source novels" (Stam 14). In such cases, the viewer's imagined film version of the novel does not align with the filmmaker's concept.

Stam discusses the fidelity argument but he also focuses on resentment that is rooted much deeper. Firstly, Stam notes that there exists a rather ignorant view that it is

easy to watch and create films (Stam 7). Another argument of the critics of adaptations implies that to watch a film requires no knowledge, no mental capacity; one simply sits and watches without the necessity to engage one's brain, unlike the active interpretive engagement with a book. Secondly, and this notion is very closely related to the first one, films and adaptations are viewed as something that is deliberately simplified to satisfy the masses. Those who share this opinion appear to think that to adapt means to dumb down the adapted text and make it digestible for those who want to only passively watch the screen (Stam 7). Among the critics who promote this view are, for example, Paulene Kael, Charles Newman, Gerard Peary, and Roger Shatzkin (Hutcheon 3). It seems that these critics have conveniently forgotten that the genre of novel, the genre that gets adapted most often and is in their view valued high above the film adaptation, used to face the same prejudice at the time of its origin as it was considered as lower in comparison to long-established poetry or drama. It is interesting that even though the adaptations seem to "dominate" in cinemas and in TV, and Hutcheon's and Stam's works were published in the years 2006 and 2005, respectively, the negative perception of adaptations is still, fifteen years later, present in some of the reviews by both journalists and academics.

2.1.2 Adaptation as an autonomous work of art

In contrast to the critical theories mentioned above, Linda Hutcheon argues that adaptations have their own value, irrespective of their faithfulness to the source text. The critics and the audience should then appreciate adaptations in their own terms and should avoid comparisons to the original texts. What is more, Hutcheon believes that the great

works of literature should not be considered as unadaptable because films are more than capable to adequately render the content of such works. Moreover, written texts are not the only medium that can describe and portray all the intricacies of human life and human mind. Director Joe Wright, whose work is going to be discussed later, agrees with Hutcheon and also refuses the notion “that literature and the written word has a monopoly over internal truth” and uses the works of filmmakers like Fellini and Bergman to justify his claim (Milazzo).

Some critics claim that adaptation cannot possibly transport the content, for instance, of a novel, as the literary work contains thousands of words while the film script is considerably shorter. However, as Dalrymple explains, “film is a heterogenous art form that has its unique forms of expression but also borrows and deploys techniques from other narrative media” (Dalrymple 2). In other words, *words* are not the only means of expression the filmmakers have at their disposal. What enables film adaptation to sufficiently transfer the content from the written medium to the medium of motion picture is the use of what Hutcheon calls various “equivalents”. The term refers to the idea of functional equivalence which is explained in chapter 2.2.5.

While in the telling mode, the writer uses words to prompt the reader to imagine something, to let the story unravel in his or her head, the work of the adapter could be seen as even harder as he is supposed to use his or her imagination to provide the image of the writer’s words that the viewers can perceive. In other words, the adapters present the audience with the story as it happens in their own heads. Therefore, the „the process of adaptation always involves both (re-)interpretation and (re-)creation“ (Hutcheon 8). It is

important to emphasize that this does not confirm the critics' idea that the viewer just sits and consumes a ready-made product. As James Monaco argues, "the observer is not simply a consumer, but an active or potentially active—participant in the process" (Monaco 127). He or she needs to be able to decipher the means of expression the filmmakers employ.

As mentioned above, films do contain words but they can also communicate meaning in other, more effective, ways. While some critics claim that films are unable to portray the human psyche, Hutcheon believes that the aural and visual equivalents "for interior events can be created" (Hutcheon 58) and she even goes as far as to imply that films can express the inner world of the characters even better. She mentions the advantages of close-up shots and the intimacy they can create and, similarly to Wright, mentions Bergman's films as stellar examples of this (Hutcheon 59). Monaco confirms their view and adds that books "are not nearly [as] capable of conveying precise information about physical realities" (Monaco 162). To take *Wuthering Heights* as an example, it is different to read about Heathcliff's grief after Cathy's death and to see Timothy Dalton in the adaptation, *Wuthering Heights* (1970), as his body and face contort in pain before he screams and repeatedly hits his head against a tree in anguish while the camera moves closer to his face. Moreover, Heathcliff's emotional state is stressed by sorrowful music which enriches the scene and hits its peak when he hits the tree. Dalton's expressions, the camera work, the editing of the scene, the employment of music, all these choices combined allow the film to adequately depict Heathcliff's state of mind.

Based on the evidence listed above, it is possible to state that adaptations are not mere reproductions of novels and other texts, but manifest in themselves all the artistic decisions of their adapters who (re)interpret, recreate, transform, recast, and translate the source text

into the cinematic medium. The result depends on the adapters and their personal vision of the source. Therefore, various adaptations of one novel differ. In *Wuthering Heights* (1992), Heathcliff does not bang his forehead against the tree, he sits near a tree on the moors and angrily recites his promise to Cathy. Moreover, while *Little Women* (1994) are narrated chronologically, the timeline in *Little Women* (2019) is fractured and the narrator keeps jumping back and forth in time. Furthermore, Javert in *Les Misérables* (2000) is alone in a scene and in a drawn-out shot handcuffs his hands behind his back, faces the Seine, slowly moves deeper and deeper into the river, and privately drowns his shame in its waters. On the other hand, the same character in *Les Misérables* (1998) ties his hands in front of himself, turns his back to the river and dramatically falls from the riverbank into the water. What is more, he commits his last act in front of Jean Valjean's eyes.

What attracts the viewers to film adaptations is not only the familiarity with the content and the expectation that the adaptation will be completely faithful to the original. It is not the expectation of yet another repetition of what they already know. The audience, in case they are familiar with the source material, seem to enjoy and appreciate "the repetition with variation" and the "piquancy of surprise recognition and remembrance" (Hutcheon 5) which are the results of the filmmaker's own interpretation and creativity.

2.2 Faithful adaptation, loose adaptation, functional equivalence

In this chapter, the difference between the terms faithful and loose adaptation is described and the origins and meaning of the term functional equivalence are discussed. What is more, the significance of this term for film adaptations is explained.

2.2.1 Faithful adaptation

When analysing adaptations, critics often label them as either faithful or loose. When discussing the faithfulness of adaptations, James Harold distinguishes two layers of faithfulness, faithfulness to the story and faithfulness to the themes of the story. He then defines adaptation as “faithful adaptation of a novel to the degree that it preserves the story’s themes” and “a faithful adaptation of a literary work to the degree that it *tells the same story* that the novel does” (Harold). Generally, the faithfulness of adaptations is measured by the number of changes than can be found in the adaptation. To put it differently, the fewer the changes and the more the adapters adhere to the source text, the more faithful the adaptation is. However, there are those who question the possibility of faithfulness or fidelity of adaptations. Stam argues that “fidelity in adaptation is literally impossible” (Stam 17) since film is a different medium than a book and this fact automatically means that the adaptation must differ from the written text.

2.2.2 Loose adaptation

For Desmond and Hawkes, an adaptation is loose “when most of the story elements in the literary text are dropped from the film and most elements in the film are substituted or added” (Desmond and Hawkes 44). In other words, when the adapters take

the story and keep only some parts of it and change or add other elements of the story, the result is called loose adaptation. One of the examples of loose adaptations is, for instance, *Lost in Austen (2008)* in which the creators borrow the world of Jane Austen and decide to incorporate original characters into the story who disrupt the storyline. Another example might be the TV series *Sherlock* that is based on the works of Arthur Conan Doyle. The adaptation retains the main characters and parts of the plots of Doyle's works, the series is full of allusions to the source texts, but the stories are transported to the 21st century and often significantly transformed. What is more, some of the names of the episodes slightly differ from the original titles, for instance, the episode *A Study in Pink* which is inspired by Conan's *A Study in Scarlet* or the episode *The Hounds of Baskerville* which alludes to Doyle's *The Hound of Baskervilles*.

2.2.3 Functional equivalence

Functional equivalence is a term which was coined by American linguist and translation theorist Eugene Nida who used it to refer to his own translation theory. Nida defines functional equivalence as a "quality of a translation in which the message of the original text has been so transported into the receptor language that the response of the receptor is essentially like that of the original receptors" (Nida and Taber 200). It is obvious that what Nida considers important in this theory is the function of the text. He seeks to translate the text into the target language in a way that it is accessible to the reader, so that the reader can experience it in a similar way that the original work is experienced by its readers. The function of the text is more important than its form and the form can even be changed as far as the equivalence of function is ensured. Nida

illustrates his theories on Bible translations and stresses that “meaning must be given priority” and, therefore, “certain rather radical departures from the formal structure are not only legitimate but may even be highly desirable” (Nida and Taber 14).

It is, in Nida’s view, possible to make changes in form and even in content as far as the function of the text remains the same, the text is natural and understandable. Nida even stresses that “to reproduce the message one must make a good many grammatical and lexical adjustments” (Nida 12) because he acknowledges the fact that the grammatical and lexical patterns of the source and the target language may be significantly different. To insist then on the preservation of form would inevitably be detrimental to the comprehensibility of the text; it would hinder the reader’s ability to fully grasp the meaning of the text.

2.2.3.1 Functional equivalence in film adaptation

Nida is interested in the translation from one language to another. To adapt a novel into a film could also be viewed as a form of translation, and it often is, as adapting means transferring the content of the source material from one medium to the other, namely, from the written medium to the cinematic medium. Linda Hutcheon writes about the possible equivalents that the adapters can use when she justifies the value of adaptations as repetition but “repetition without replication” (Hutcheon 7).

In film adaptations, functional equivalence relates to the fact that the adapters try to conserve the meaning or the function of the text and while they attempt to do so they employ means of expression that are available to the medium of film which are not the same as the means of expression used by writers. It is understandable because films

operate with a different mood of engagement. In contrast to the written text that engages the reader through telling mode and uses words to do so, the film engages the viewer through the showing mode (Hutcheon 22). Therefore, the filmmakers work with a fundamentally different set of tools than writers.

The possible equivalents, which can substitute what is expressed through words in the telling mode, are numerous. The following are often used to emphasize, contrast, amplify or downplay specific scenes and moments in adaptations. The showing mode can, apart from words which it also uses, work with lightning, colours, music, pacing, camera work, editing of the scenes, and, very importantly, the actors. An actor can equivalently portray the psychological state of the character he or she embodies with his or her face. While in the book, many words are often used to sufficiently describe the character's feelings, a simple glance, a shift of the eyes or a smile can equally express the same in the adaptation. As with the interlanguage translation, the content persists, however, it is expressed with different "sign systems" (Hutcheon 10) and it takes on a different form.

However, the opinions on the possibility and existence of equivalents in adaptations vary greatly, and there does not seem to be a clear consensus among the theorists. In fact, Stam and Hutcheon promote completely opposing views on the subject. Whereas Hutcheon believes that there are in fact equivalents to be found in film adaptations, Stam claims that 'equivalency theory' is simply fidelity theory in disguise and adds that "there can be no real equivalence between source novel and adaptation" (Stam 19). Similarly, some critics specify this view and add examples. For instance, they

claim that “the mode of telling alone can show relations among past, present, and future” (Hutcheon 63). This argument is dismantled by Hutcheon who states that the film is even better equipped to portray the changes in the timeline. In her view, “visual and aural leitmotifs can function to suggest the past through memory” (Hutcheon 64). For example, in the already mentioned TV series *Sherlock* in seasons three and four a particular melody from the soundtrack and later a childhood rhyme are used whenever there is a flashback to Sherlock’s childhood or whenever he thinks about and regains his memories of his childhood. What is more, the scenes use a different colour palette to emphasize this.

2.3 Diegetic and non-diegetic sound

One of the obvious differences between written works and film adaptations is the fact that the showing mode of films engages the viewer through the perception of the aural, while books remain silent. Film music plays an important role in a film and can fulfil various tasks in a film. As Dalrymple states, “film music is most commonly and conventionally used to emphasize what we see on screen, often artificially guiding our responses” (Dalrymple 3). Sound can be employed to subtly draw parallels between scenes, create tension, amplify the effect of the visual images, or manipulate the viewer’s reaction to the film. In the opening scene of Spielberg’s *Jaws* (1975), the camera moves through the murky waters of the ocean and the screen shows only images of seaweed, there is no shark to be seen, yet the scene manages to frighten the viewer. The frightening effect is caused by the music that underlines the images. In a film, music completes the atmosphere, indicates the mood, and sometimes expresses what is not explicitly stated in

dialogue. In Hutcheon's words, „music offers aural „equivalents“ for characters' emotions and [...] provokes affective response in the audience” (Hutcheon 23).

There are two types of sound in film, diegetic and non-diegetic sound. The term diegetic sound refers to “sound that has a source in the story world” (Bordwell and Thompson 297). It is not just music, diegetic sound of the film is comprised of the voices of the characters, sounds produced by animals and inanimate objects, musical instruments, and everything else that is heard by the characters. For example, in *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), Colonel Brandon approaches the house of his friend and is lured in by the sound of someone's singing that is accompanied by a pianoforte. He enters a room and the viewer can see that it is Marianne who is producing the music. Non-diegetic sound, on the other hand, “is represented as coming from a source outside the story world” (Bordwell and Thompson 297), therefore, the characters cannot hear it but the viewers can. Non-diegetic sound in the film usually consists of music that is added to the film, the soundtrack.

The two types of sound are often combined in films. In *Home Alone* (1990), the main character sits in a church and listens to a choir singing *Carol of the Bells*. The carol is part of the diegetic sound because Kevin can actually hear it. However, as he exits the church and consequently can no longer hear the music, the piece stays in the scene and gradually moves to a different melody from the soundtrack. Similarly, when Kevin runs from the burglars and hides in the nativity scene in front of the church, the audience can hear the soundtrack whereas Kevin cannot. At one point however, the chiming in the church bells that is heard by Kevin penetrates the non-diegetic soundtrack as the

soundtrack uses the bells as part of the rhythm and the line between the diegetic and non-diegetic sound gets blurred.

2.4 Contextual background

This chapter provides necessary information about the author of the book and quickly summarizes the plot of the novel. Moreover, the information about the film adaptation and its director is added.

2.4.1 Ian McEwan

Ian McEwan is a contemporary English novelist, short story writer and screenwriter. His writing career spans several decades and his works range from macabre novels (*The Cement Garden*) and collections of disturbing short stories (*First Love, Last Rites*) to children's books (*The Daydreamer*) and theatre plays (*The Imitation Game*). Nevertheless, McEwan writes mostly novels, and his works are typical for their unconventional topics and captivating writing style. His earlier works are known for their grim atmosphere, shocking content and preoccupation with violence and human perversities. Though his works are quite diverse, he tends to return to some of the topics, for instance, the theme of childhood, the theme of sexuality, interest in science and human psyche.

McEwan is a postmodern author and his works display postmodern writing techniques and strategies, for example, metafiction, intertextuality, fragmented story lines, multiple points of view, and unreliable narrators. Many of his novels were adapted to screen, *Enduring Love*, *The Innocent*, *The Child in Time*, to name a few. Moreover, McEwan wrote

some of the screenplays for the adaptations himself. This thesis is concerned with the film adaptation of his novel *Atonement* which was adapted by director Joe Wright.

2.4.1.1 *Atonement*

Atonement is McEwan's eighth novel and it was published in 2001. The novel presumably "continues to stand out as one of his greatest achievements to date and is an exaggerated testament to how [McEwan] is a rarity in the literary establishment" (Ellam 2). *Atonement* is undoubtedly a postmodern novel. The novel is very complex and encompasses several time periods and multiple narrative voices. As McEwan states, it is "a very interior novel. It lives inside the consciousness of several characters" (Production Notes). The novel consists of three parts and a postscript and is predominantly narrated in third person limited omniscience. The exception is the fourth part where the narration shifts into first person narration and McEwan reveals the biggest twist of the novel – the fact that Briony herself is the author of the story.

The first part focuses on the events of one hot summer day in 1935 in an English country estate. The main character, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis, has just finished her play and is expecting the arrival of her older brother Leon. Meanwhile, Briony's sister Cecilia is also preparing for her brother's visit and is arranging the stay of his friend Paul Marshall. Mrs Tallis is lying indisposed in her bed plagued by one of her migraines. The Tallis estate currently houses Briony's cousins, Lola, Pierrot and Jackson whose parents are going through divorce. Another crucial character, Robbie Turner, is loitering in the garden. The first part of the novel employs several points of view and is characterized by slowly

mounting tension. Whereas Robbie and Cecilia try to make sense of their strange feelings, Briony battles with her cousins over the rehearsal of her play and the whole household prepares for dinner. The first part culminates when Lola is attacked and Briony accuses Robbie of Lola's rape.

The second part takes place in 1940 and resembles a war novel. It follows three soldiers, Robbie, Mace and Nettle, who are part of the retreating Allied forces through war-torn France. The peak of the second part is the depiction of the preparations of evacuation at Dunkirk. Unlike the first part, the second part offers only one point of view, Robbie's. Moreover, McEwan often goes back to the events of 1935 and the intervening years between parts one and two and adds information about Robbie's stay in prison and his recollection of the fateful day of 1935.

Part Three depicts war as well, this time at home front, namely the situation in hospitals and the work of nurses. One of the nurses and also the character from whose point of the third part is narrated is eighteen-year-old Briony Tallis. She is training to be a nurse and is trying to reconcile with her sister and Robbie and to atone for her crime. She realizes now that Robbie is not the person who attacked Lola and wants to correct her error. Briony experiences the reality of war when the wounded soldiers arrive to the hospital.

The final part moves to year 1999. Briony is an elderly lady who has just learned that she is dying. She is preparing for her journey to Tilney hotel where she plans to celebrate her birthday and meet with her relatives. On the final pages of the novel, Briony confesses that she is the author of the book and that Cecilia and Robbie both died in 1940 and were not given a chance to meet each other again.

2.4.2 Joe Wright

Joe Wright is a British film director and one of the prominent filmmakers of the 21st century. Wright's first feature-length film was *Pride & Prejudice* (2005) which is an adaptation of Austen's well-known novel. All his previous works were TV series, therefore, the adaptation marks the beginning of Wright's career as a film director. What is more, the film is the first collaboration between Wright and Keira Knightley, who plays Elizabeth Bennet in the film.

It seems that Wright's enjoys translating literary works to screen since most of his films are adaptations. Moreover, his most successful films are period dramas, namely, *Pride & Prejudice* (2005), *Atonement* (2007), and *Anna Karenina* (2012). However, period dramas are not the only genre Wright focuses on. Since *Anna Karenina* Wright tried other genres, for instance, thrillers (*Hanna*), biography (*The Soloist*), and he even drifted into the genre of fantasy and he introduced his vision of the story of Peter Pan in *Pan*. His latest project is *Cyrano* (2021), which is a musical adaptation of Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

Sarah Greenwood points out that “ [Wright] likes to run a film like a repertory company, using the same team. It's a very creative way of working, and you can hit the ground running because there's a shorthand” (Production Notes). It is not surprising then that Keira Knightley plays the leading role in all his early period dramas, namely, *Pride & Prejudice* (2005), *Atonement* (2007), and *Anna Karenina* (2012). In addition, Wright often works with composer Dario Marianelli, production designer Sarah Greenwood,

cinematographer Seamus McGarvey, and costume designer Jacqueline Duran. All the above mentioned were part of the production of *Atonement* (2007).

2.4.2.1 *Atonement* (2007)

The film adaptation of Ian McEwan's *Atonement* came out in 2007, six years after the publication of the book. The film is directed by Joe Wright and written by screenwriter Christopher Hampton whose filmography, similarly to Wright's, mostly consists of adaptations. The film premiered at the Venice Film Festival and "for a time it was the great British film of the year as it was nominated for seven Academy Awards in 2008 and won a Golden Globe and a BAFTA for Best Film" (Ellam 68). What is more, Marianelli won the Academy Award for Original Music Score for the film. Nevertheless, the reception of the film was quite varied. Some of the reviewers and critics viewed the adaptation as too faithful, unimaginative, and pointless (Ellam 69).

Atonement is a very faithful adaptation that closely follows McEwan's work. Joe Wright remembers that he and Hampton "literally kept the book on one side and the script on the other and we slowly worked through it" (Douglas). What is more, the adapters decided to follow the structure of the novel and keep the multiple narrative and the fragmentation of the storyline. Nevertheless, the process of adaptation is always "a kind of demolition job" (Production Notes), as McEwan notes, since the adapters need to transfer hundreds of pages into the script. Adapting a novel like *Atonement* proved even more difficult because of the complexity of the novel and, therefore, "the film is divided into three separate parts each defined by a different perspective, historical period and

location” (Design History). The postscript of the novel is creatively turned into a studio interview.

In *Atonement* Wright continues his successful collaboration with Keira Knightley who is cast as Cecilia Tallis. The main male role is played by James McAvoy. Instead of choosing an actress that could play both thirteen-year-old and eighteen-year-old Briony and could be, with the help of the make-up department, “aged” to look like an elderly lady, Wright decided to hire three actresses to play the role of Briony, namely, Saoirse Ronan, Romola Garai and Vanessa Redgrave. The role of the victim of Benedict Cumberbatch’s Paul Marshall is portrayed by Juno Temple.

3 Practical part

As has been advertised, the practical part seeks to identify some instances in Wright's film adaptation that arguably qualify as functional equivalents. This structured comparison starts with a juxtaposition of the main characters and their filmic counterparts, followed by a head-to-head comparison of several pivotal scenes of the novel/movie and an inquiry into the sound and colour palette as subliminal carriers of functional equivalence.

3.1 Meet the Characters

3.1.1 Briony – the child writer

As the first person introduced in both the novel and the film is Briony, this paper follows the example and begins the analysis with a closer look at Briony Tallis. In the novel, Briony is physically present in the first, third and the last part. The character is thus portrayed by three actresses, namely, Saoirse Ronan, Romola Garai and Vanessa Redgrave.

Ian McEwan spends the whole length of chapter One presenting the main character. It is interesting that out of the fifteen pages, only five contain dialogue and even then, it is sparse and centred around one scene, the rehearsal of Briony's play. McEwan takes his time to describe Briony's controlling nature and to analyse her opinions on various subjects. He paints a picture of an innocent child whose mind operates with the simple terms of black and white and "lacks the vital knowingness of the adult

world” (McEwan 6) and introduces Briony as “one of those children possessed by a desire to have the world just so” (McEwan 4). In a lengthy description of her room, “the shrine to her controlling demon” (McEwan 5), he mentions her taste for the miniature, secrets, and diaries. Briony’s life is dominated by her greatest desires, order and control, which she successfully executes in her writing. Briony is the youngest child of the household, the baby of the family, and her lack of siblings and friends taught her to make do with herself and her own imagination. What helps her deal with her involuntary solitude are her stories. What is more, her writing also provides her with a chance to have secrets and helps her attract the attention of her family and gain their precious praise.

The opening scene of the film equivalently and efficiently, even though through different means, conveys all the necessary information from chapter One. As Linda Hutcheon remarks, “the form changes [...], the content persists” (Hutcheon 10). The first shot shows Briony’s room and the girl herself typing on the typewriter. The tidy room, with Briony’s shoes in a neat row next to the made-up bed, and the long line of miniature animals reverently staring at their mistress while she finishes her play embody the “harmonious, organized world” (McEwan 5) that Briony wishes to establish. Moreover, her need for control and approval is displayed in her single-minded quest through the house and her determination to rehearse the *Trials of Arabella*, despite the reluctance and eventual refusal of the ‘actors’, and to unveil her masterpiece to the Tallis family. The scenes show how determined Briony is to reap the desired fruits of her labour and collect the awe her hard work deserves.

As Linda Hutcheon points out, “sound, in general, can enhance, reinforce, or even contradict the visual and verbal aspects“ (Hutcheon 23). Briony’s excitement over her

work, the potent anticipation she feels, the flurry of activity that led to the creation of her new play are perfectly embodied by the soundtrack. The first track, *Briony*, consists of a never-ending string of the tapping of the typewriter and it sums the frenzy of Briony's writing, which McEwan calls a "two-day tempest of composition" (McEwan 3). The frantic tempo of the typewriter corresponds with the scene of thirteen-year-old Briony, played by Saoirse Ronan, who is quickly charging through the house, making perfect ninety degree turns at every corner, informing everyone that her play is ready to be bestowed upon its audience and breathlessly, with an air of wannabe-adult self-importance, adding "I have to go now" (Hampton). As Dalrymple points out, "everything is in step, as if synchronized [...] we are being offered something of Briony's perspective, the love of order and symmetry" (Dalrymple 4).

Interestingly enough, the film uses the character of Robbie Turner to shed more light on Briony's artistic beginnings and introduces him much sooner than the novel. This, together with scenes that are to be elaborated on later, completes the picture of Robbie and adds more information about his background. Moreover, it keeps the audience a bit confused about Robbie's status as it shows him in his work clothes and putting on his work gloves. Briony storms through the house, adamant to notify everyone about the premiere of her play, and during her advertising campaign she stops to talk to Robbie and invites him to see the play. Robbie politely declines her invitation but expresses interest in reading the play and adds, "you used to make me beautiful bound copies of all your stories, I kept them all" (Hampton 3). This scene evidently indicates that Briony's literary endeavour is not a novelty and that writing is not just a passing fancy for her. In the book, it is clear that the play is only the latest of her works though in the novel it is Cecilia who

is interested in her sister's scribblings and who "[wants] each bound story catalogued and [places them] on the library shelves, between Rabindranath Tagore and Quintus Tertullian" (McEwan 7). What is more, replacing Cecilia with Robbie, apart from introducing Robbie and Briony's writing and the length she went to show her talent off to others, prepares ground for another important story line – Briony's relationship with Robbie. Briony's hesitance, so unlike her confident mannerism in the previous scenes, reinforces one of the latter scenes in which Briony remembers how Robbie has taught her to swim which reveals Briony's secret crush on Robbie that might or might not be one of the, though perhaps unconscious, reasons for Briony's crime.

3.1.2 Cecilia and Robbie, the star-crossed lovers

In the novel, the reader gets acquainted with Cecilia and Robbie in chapters with their respective points of view. Though they are mentioned briefly by Briony, a closer first look is provided later, namely in chapters Two and Eight. The chapters consist of long paragraphs that venture into the minds of the characters, explain and explore their psyches. The film, however, is limited and cannot portray this tour into "the space of the mind" (Hutcheon 14). To mediate the content of such passages, the subject matter needs to undergo reinterpretation, "it has to be made manifest in the material realm to be perceived by the audience" (Hutcheon 14).

Such reinterpretation occurs in the already discussed scene on the stairs between Robbie and Briony and the added lawn scene between Cecilia and Briony that substitutes three different points of view from the novel. Completely missing in the book, yet

extremely vital in the movie, the scene conveys important information that is part of the narrative in the novel, namely Cecilia's changing relationship with Robbie, the arrival of the Quincey's, Cecilia's outlook on Briony's writing and Briony's musings about the advantages and disadvantages of various literary genres.

Firstly, in the novel, Briony ponders the pros of drama, yet she doubts whether it can sufficiently express her hidden message to her brother Leon and "guide him away from his careless succession of girlfriends, toward the right form of wife" (McEwan 4). In the film, Briony voices her concerns to her sister, played by Keira Knightley, "perhaps I should have written Leon a story" (Hampton 4). Moreover, she admits that in a play, everything depends on the performance, "it all depends on other people" (Hampton 4). This exclamation is a paraphrase of another realization that Briony arrives to in the novel, when she becomes aware of the "power one could have over the other, and how easy it was to get everything wrong, completely wrong" (McEwan 39). This short sentence in the script foreshadows not only the destruction of Briony's play but also the ruin of her sister's relationship with Robbie.

Secondly, Briony is fascinated by the inner workings of human body and the uniqueness of human experience. "What do you think it would feel like to be someone else?" (Hampton 4) she asks Cee in the adaptation. Lastly, Cecilia's attitude towards Briony's writing which McEwan summarizes as "enthusiasm [...] a little overstated, laced with condescension" (McEwan 11) is expressed by a single exclamation, "I'm sure it's a masterpiece" (Hampton 4).

When Briony innocently inquires after the lack of communication between her sister and Robbie, played by James McAvoy, Cecilia brushes her question off with a

seemingly dismissive, “We’re just moving in different circles, that’s all” (Hampton 5). The truth is that she is struggling with the sudden unease that she feels in Robbie’s company and with the onslaught of unexpected emotions that his presence evokes in her. This new development is the main catalyst for their peculiar encounter by the fountain.

McEwan elaborates, several times, on the circumstances of Robbie’s childhood and education and on the (slightly awkward) position he has in Cecilia’s home. Robbie and Cecilia have known each other since they were children. When Robbie’s father abandoned their family, Jack Tallis, Cecilia’s father and the employer of Robbie’s father, allowed Robbie and his mother to continue living on his property. Grace Turner has become a cleaner for the Tallises and eventually an owner of the bungalow she and Robbie live in. Jack Tallis’ generosity and money enabled Robbie to study and to get a first at Cambridge, the same university that Cecilia achieved her third at. Robbie Turner grew up with “the freedom of the house” (McEwan 27) and “his tree-climbing pal was Leon, Cecilia was his little sister who trustingly held his hand and made him feel immensely wise” (McEwan 88).

At Cambridge, they met only a few times and Robbie speculates that it must have been their class background that caused their falling out, “that’s our cleaning lady’s son, she might have been whispering to her friends as she walked on” (McEwan 79), though he insists that he is above such old-fashioned notions. “There goes my mother’s employer’s daughter, he once said to a friend” (McEwan 79). Robbie is depicted as self-assured in his intelligence and his politics and does not seem to be affected by his working-class background.

Nevertheless, the change of his perspective towards Cee whom he has always seen as a little sister, “almost invisible” (McEwan 79) and the revelation of her femininity make him behave strangely in her presence. Whereas Cecilia believes that it is their opposite social standing that is causing the tension between them, it is their opposite sex that makes them feel so awkward and ill at ease around each other. Robbie ultimately realizes this and admits so in his letter to Cecilia, “I feel rather lightheaded and foolish in your presence, Cee, and I don’t think I can blame the heat!” (McEwan 85).

It is interesting that we first meet Robbie from Briony’s perspective (the scene on the stairs) whereas the novel approaches him from Cecilia’s point of view. In the movie the audience remains unclear about his standing as the scenes offer many confusing clues. For instance, he is wearing working clothes, but it is implied that he used to be on friendly terms with Cecilia. While the novel directly elaborates on his position from various points of view, the film uses carefully staged and elaborate scenes that use numerous details to indirectly portray his character. They have the same effect, but the delivery differs significantly.

When Robbie meets Briony on the stairs, the audience can legitimately assume two facts. Firstly, Robbie and Briony has known each other for some time. Secondly, the scene suggests that Robbie is of lower standing, quite probably a member of the staff in Briony’s home given his attire and the chores he is doing. The confusion continues when he is, during Cecilia and Briony’s tête-à-tête on the lawn, seen pushing a wheelbarrow in the background and digging with a trowel. Those viewers who are acquainted with the novel might also perceive this scene as a manifestation of “his last craze” (McEwan 19),

landscape gardening, or might feel that the scene alludes to the fact that his father used to work as a gardener at the Tallis' estate.

Cecilia meets Robbie's during her trip to visit the fountain (this scene is to be discussed later) and more pieces are added to the jigsaw of Robbie's life. It is clarified that he has university education and that he cannot pay for his own education. The picture is finally completed and Robbie's life story summarized by Cecilia's brother Leon who bluntly enlightens their visitor, Paul Marshall, that "the Housekeeper's son, whose father did a bunk twenty years ago, gets a scholarship to the local grammar and the Old Man puts him through Cambridge; goes up at the same time as Cee and for three years she hardly speaks to him! She would not let him within a mile of her Roedean chums" (Hampton 17). The deliberately added line about Robbie's father sufficiently substitutes McEwan's more detailed description of Ernest Turner.

Chapters two, four and nine are dedicated to Cecilia Tallis. She is very briefly mentioned in chapter one as a stark contrast to Briony's perfectionism, her room depicted as "a stew of unclosed books, unfolded clothes, unmade bed, unemptied ashtrays" (McEwan 4), and as an enthusiastic reader of Briony's stories. Nevertheless, she fully enters the novel in chapter two.

McEwan describes Cee as "restless to the point of irritability" (McEwan 21). Having returned home from the university, Cecilia cannot decide what she wants to do next in life and is currently bored to death in her childhood home. At the same time, she feels torn between expectations of the time and of her family and her own more modern ideas of life. As Knightly clarifies, "she knows who she is, yet she doesn't know which

direction to go in, so she's quite conflicted" (Production Notes). What is more, she is annoyed by the inexplicable tension between herself and Robbie. Cecilia's introduction in chapter two is followed by her interaction with Robbie that ends with their row at the fountain.

In the film, Cecilia is introduced sooner and her character is shown during the added lawn scene. However, the audience does not learn much about her. In contrast to the novel, the film shows the fountain scene first and then later supplements the scenes with solo focus on Cecilia that portray her feelings and her general state of mind. The viewer then can infer that Robbie and Cecilia somehow know each other but the prelude to their current relationship is explained later. This helps to evoke confusion in the viewers similar to the uncertainty the two protagonists feel. Hampton thus follows the jigsaw structure of McEwan's narration. At the same time, he reformulates the subject material to better suit his needs. Cecilia's restlessness and boredom are aptly visualised when she runs with the flowers through the woods, breathlessly arrives at the house, then with an air of complete detachment "drops the flowers untidily into" (Hampton 9) a vase and, finally, idly flicks the string on the musical instrument.

Whereas the author elaborates on the specifics of their strange relationship on several pages, the screenwriter needs to work with a completely different means of expression. The short conversation between the Tallis sisters suggests that there is a noticeable change in Cecilia and Robbie's relationship.

The rest of Cecilia's different feelings for Robbie are best seen in two scenes. In the first one, Cecilia notices Robbie on the stairs and self-consciously checks herself in the mirror, fixes an invisible imperfection in her hair and with a sigh sets to greet him. In

the second one, she is painting her nails and is preparing for the arrival of her brother and his friend and she notices her brother greeting Robbie on the path. It is obvious that Leon is inviting Robbie to dinner. Cecilia “frowns in obvious annoyance” writes Hampton in the scene description. To make her displeasure absolutely clear, Knightley voices Cecilia’s thoughts, “no need to encourage him” (Hampton 13), while she talks to herself as she looks out of the window. In the novel Cecilia deliberately does not invite him to dine with the Tallis family because she believes that he would refuse the offer and that his strange behaviour means that he wants to keep his distance. She even quarrels with Leon when she learns that he has asked Robbie to join the family and demands that he rescind the invitation. The little spat between the siblings is featured in the film as well.

3.1.3 Emily and Jack – the absent parents

Jack Tallis never makes an appearance in the book, his character does not have his own point of view and, therefore, he is only ever mentioned and referred to by other characters, for example, by his wife Emily and then briefly by Cecilia and Robbie. There are only a few other comments in the book and his character remains silent throughout the work. The film treats the character similarly and as a result, Jack Tallis is literally absent from the film. True to the book, Jack Tallis never appears on screen and is actually mentioned only four times, for instance, when Cecilia fleetingly questions “is the Old Man staying in town?” (Hampton 15) and informs Robbie that “the Old Man telephoned last night” (Hampton 11). As the reader does not have access to Emily’s feelings of disappointment towards her husband, his unsatisfactory existence is emphasized by a

rather amusing way - he is not even afforded the privilege of a full name. His insignificance is even greater than in the novel and is enhanced by the moniker he is kept hidden under, "the old man".

Emily Tallis, Cecilia and Briony's mother, is more important than her husband in the book and, consequently, deserves more, though still very limited, screentime in its adaptation. Emily's migraines are shown during one scene that takes approximately ten seconds. Compared to the long descriptions of her inner turmoil and her never-ending battle with the sleeping animal, the caged panther (McEwan 63), as she aptly calls her migraine, the scene is rather straightforward and univocal. However, her thoughts need to be expressed somehow. Her opinion on her sister's (Lola's mother) love affair that is the reason for her divorce and that led to the Quincey children's stay with the Tallises are voiced by Cecilia. In the added lawn scene she warns Briony: "You have to be nice to them. Think how you'd feel if your mother had run off with Mr. What's-His-Name who reads the news on the wireless" (Hampton 4). Emily's feelings towards Robbie are quite palpable in the stares she gives him throughout the movie and the hard set of her mouth when she reads the fateful love letter. Emily does feature in the film, but she utters mere three or four lines and the rest of her inner monologues become the victim of "the labour of simplification" (Hutcheon 1). Nevertheless, Hampton manages to equally render her role in the novel.

3.1.4 Paul Marshall

The villain of the story and one of the instigators of Cecilia and Robbie's misery, Paul Marshall, who is played by Benedict Cumberbatch, is presented a bit differently in the film. Due to the limitations that this medium must work with, the film, logically, needs to forego some of the finer details of his character and is forced to retell his part of the story in a more straightforward manner. In other words, the portrayal of Paul Marshall in the film is not exactly subtle and can be almost blunt at certain points. Even though the portrayal of Marshall's story line differs at times, all the changes equally depict the character.

Whereas the novel approaches Paul from three different points of view, the film cannot convey the distinct impressions Marshall leaves in the various characters. As a result, the creators of the film merge the partially opposing descriptions of this character, namely, Cecilia's, who is a mature woman, freshly out of the university, Lola's, a young girl, who only recently experienced her first steps into the realm of womanhood, and Emily's. Each perspective stresses different aspects of the character. While Cecilia thinks about Paul in terms of his character, considers his social standing and imagines her life as a wife of someone "so nearly handsome, so hugely rich, so unfathomably stupid" (McEwan 50), Lola limits her observations to his facial features and his demeanour and concludes that "it was a cruel face but his manner was pleasant, and this was an attractive combination" (McEwan 58). Emily believes "that wealthy young entrepreneur might not be such a bad sort, if he was prepared to pass time of day entertaining children" (McEwan 69).

The picture is of Paul completed by the snippets of his conversation with Leon and Cecilia. To sum up, Paul Marshall is a warmonger who is eagerly awaiting the declaration of war that signifies, in his greedy mind, a huge amount of money in his pockets. Moreover, he is quite snobbish, even though he tries to mask it - "I knew some grammar school types at Oxford and some of them were damned clever. But they could be resentful, which was a bit rich, I thought" (McEwan 52).

Hampton works very closely with the novel and his script often copies the novel word by word. As Wright points out, he and Hampton "[stick] to the book as faithfully as possible" (Production Notes). When this is not possible, he creates additional dialogues to express the crucial parts of the characters' thought processes to avoid what he refers to as "the 'convenient crutch' of a voiceover" (Production Notes). However, he cannot always translate the thoughts into words. As a result, the most vital part of Paul Marshall's introduction, the depiction of the sick working of his mind, is not transferred into the adaptation. For this reason, the details of Paul's afternoon nap, especially the incestuous dream about his sisters and his consequent arousal that awakes him, remain hidden to the viewers. Moreover, Hampton opts to leave out Paul's comments to Lola, "you remind me of my favourite sister" (McEwan 61) as this sentence is rather pointless and empty without the background of his dream. McEwan used this sentence and the following observation, "they could see the tremor in his fingers" (McEwan 61) to emphasize Paul's intentions.

Since the clues mentioned above are not used in the film, the diegetic representational mode is substituted by the mimetic representational mode and Hampton pays more attention to the outward manifestation of Marshall's proclivities. Because of

this, the script exaggerates the indirect hints that are scattered throughout the novel and turns them into rather obvious signs of creepiness that point directly to Marshall. Therefore, the scenes between the victim and her attacker are downright uncomfortable to watch, due to the heavy stares and Paul's constant leering. The viewer truly cannot but understand the identity of the rapist as the big crime comes after Paul's unconvincing "no harm done, eh, Lola" (Hampton 36), a line which is accompanied by his fidgeting and a persuasive smile that is directed to a very nervous and unsure Lola. "That is how I got my war wound" (Hampton 36), he remarks while he is masquerading as Lola's saviour and is trying to convince the room that he defended Lola against her twin brothers.

3.1.5 The Quinces

Chapter five is from the point of view of the Quincey's, unexpected visitors from the north that take residence in the Tallis House and whose stay seems to be open-ended. Lola and her brothers arrive to the Tallis House because their mother, Hermione, is having an affair and her marriage to her husband is on the brink of divorce, which is a proper scandal in the 1930s, so shocking that Paul "[has] read about [it] in the paper" (McEwan 59). Hermione's children are looking for a refuge from the tumultuous times and are, begrudgingly, accepted by their aunt's family. Lola, the eldest of the children, is a fifteen-year-old girl who fancies herself as an adult. Marshall sees her as "poised and imperious, quite the little Pre-Raphaelite princess with her bangles and tresses, her painted nails and velvet choker" (McEwan 60).

She clearly distances herself from her younger brothers and from the confines of childhood when she admonishes Paul Marshall, “I’ll thank you not to talk about them in front of the children” (McEwan 59). On the other hand, the impending divorce of her parents and her eviction from home make her homesick and vulnerable, feelings which are highlighted when she sees “a masculine-looking suitcase [...] that [reminds] her vaguely of her father” (McEwan 56). Ironically, the suitcase belongs to Paul Marshall.

In the novel, Lola tests her adult privileges when she interacts with her brothers, whom she often disciplines, and with Briony. She seems to have the upper hand while dealing with all of them, but she suddenly appears out of her depth when she is confronted with a true grown-up. The reader can see that she tries to keep up with Marshall’s banter which is a mere compilation of inconsequential lies and flattery. However, she feels insecure when the conversation turns more serious, “she thought a game was played which she did not understand” (McEwan 59). As the audience might overlook Lola’s attempts to breach the border to adult territory, Hampton includes a few short remarks to point out her behaviour, for instance, Emily’s reprimand at the dinner table, “Lola, wipe that lipstick off. You’re far too young” (Hampton 35). Most of Lola’s storyline is intertwined with that of Paul Marshall which is elaborated on above.

3.2 From words to pictures

3.2.1 Two Figures by the Fountain

One of the postmodern techniques that McEwan utilizes quite often, especially in the first part of the novel, is multiple perspective narration. The narration is constructed of several points of view, which together create an elaborate net of perspectives. The multiple-perspective narration helps the reader to get to know the characters better and, logically, enables the reader to look at certain moments from different points of view, which are usually accompanied by different interpretations as well. These interpretations play pivotal role in the whole scheme. Moreover, it is a powerful tool of manipulation that is used to play with, control and even deceive the reader. The different, often contradictory facts allow the reader to question the truthfulness of the narratives. In other words, he or she is to decide where the truth lies.

McEwan sometimes circles around the important moments without reaching them directly. Quite the opposite, he describes events happening around, but deliberately avoids the direct narration. He disrupts the moment into pieces and shows them in the different narrative perspectives. Thus he creates kind of a mosaic and leaves the fragments scattered throughout the novel. In some cases the parts are offered right ahead, but sometimes the unsatisfied and curious reader must wait dozens of pages to reach the solution.

The multiple viewpoints are skilfully used regarding the fountain scene between Robbie and Cecilia. The first account is given from Cecilia's point of view. She is restless, feels trapped in the house and constantly irritated by Robbie's behaviour. She is especially

furious about the weird moment, when Robbie came to the house and “was play-acting the cleaning lady’s son come to the big house on an errand” (McEwan 27) removing his boots and socks in the process. Cecilia presumes that he is being impersonal and intentionally distances himself to mock her.

After their forced conversation that ends by the fountain, they have a little struggle and the vase gets broken. Once again annoyed by him, Cecilia decides to punish Robbie, and in an act of demonstrative revenge undresses and dips into the fountain to find the missing piece of the vase. Then she goes back to the house, leaving surprised Robbie behind her.

Meanwhile, Briony, who is hiding in the nursery, longing for the order and control she lost during the rehearsals of her play, spots the show between her sister and Robbie. She is still a child, obviously oblivious to the real source of tension between the two people. She immediately grasps the chance and tries to impose some order on the scene. Unfortunately, she approaches the situation with the limited experience of a child (symptomatically highlighted by the fact that she is literally in the nursery). For Briony, the world can be neatly divided into two categories, good and evil, and as in fairytales, the heroes are rewarded and the villains are punished. Traditionally, the price that is waiting for those good of heart is matrimony, “Marriage was the thing, or rather, a wedding was, with its formal neatness of virtue rewarded” (McEwan 9). Such notions are not able to cope with the complexity of real world of the adults and inevitably prove lacking in deciphering the scene in front of her eyes.

At first, Briony is tempted to explain the scene as a proposal of marriage. After all, “she herself had written a tale in which a humble woodcutter saved a princess from

drowning and ended by marrying her” (McEwan 38). All the pieces seem to fit, Robbie is a “son of a humble cleaning lady” (McEwan 38) and as Briony concludes, “such leaps across boundaries were the stuff of daily romance” (McEwan 38).

To her displeasure, her attempt fails because the sequence is illogical and is not compatible with the notion of the marriage proposal, therefore, she lets the imagination to take over and comes up with a dramatic tale. Instead of saving Cecilia, Robbie seems to be commanding her to undress and as “he looked on impatiently, hands on hips” (McEwan 38). Briony is mortified by such outrageous act and her mind is scrambling for feasible explanations. It is the first of the series of her misjudgements and it obviously anticipates her crime.

Later when she contemplates what she witnessed, she accepts the fact that she cannot understand it, because it “was not a fairy tale, this was the real, the adult world in which frogs did not address princesses, and the only messages were the ones that people sent” (McEwan 40). Briony is sure that something important has occurred, but she realizes that she is left with plain memory, without any indication of the content of the spectacle, and that “the truth has become as ghostly as invention” (McEwan 41).

McEwan frequently operates with memories. Memory, being distant from the present moment, inevitably works with incomplete accounts, mere glimpses of the real events. The characters can only try to get close to the reality. Once again, their own imperfect memories can lead them to contradictory conclusions.

When Robbie thinks the scene over, he does not focus on the encounter linearly. His mind is lingering on small details and he ponders about the motivation of her eccentric act. He understands that the point was to humiliate him. Moreover, he remembers his own

strange behaviour in Cecilia's presence. All Cecilia's previously mentioned assumptions prove to be wrong, as it is revealed that instead of mocking and impersonal, Robbie suddenly feels awkward and insecure around Cecilia. He remembers the time when he tiptoed through the hall and it is explained that what Cecilia saw as deliberate decision to irritate her, was in fact a desperate attempt not to embarrass himself.

The film follows the mosaic structure of the fountain scene but it reduces the number of viewpoints, as Cecilia's and Robbie's points of view are not portrayed separately and, most significantly, changes the sequence of the points of view. Armed with the knowledge of Briony's childish mind and her taste for the dramatic, the reader can be persuaded to believe that Briony truly thinks that she witnessed some unsavoury incident and that this occurrence later causes her to readily embrace the idea of Robbie, the criminal and why she believes that the incident "clearly foretold the later brutalities" (McEwan 160). On the other hand, the audience does not have the luxury of the constant tours into Briony's brain and that is why it is necessary to present the pieces of the scene in a different order. In presenting the scene as something that is overheard, something unexplained and puzzling, the film manages to equally portray Briony's feelings about the incident. What is more, the audience can see the scene through Briony's eyes, that is to say, the viewer can step into Briony's shoes and truly experience it the way she does. Furthermore, the audience, similarly to Briony, is left hanging and remains unsure about the meaning of the altercation. Though the revelation is withheld for only a few minutes, the viewer has a chance to, just like Briony, arrive to their own interpretations.

When the scene fully unfolds, it, once again, contains additional dialogue to accommodate all the information from the novel. The conversation between Robbie and

Cecilia is almost painfully stilted, full of hesitant pauses and abrupt changes of the subject. Their shared education is hinted at and Robbie's ambitious plans are revealed, "you could get a Fellowship now, couldn't you? With your First?" (Hampton 11). It becomes clear that Robbie is not a simple employee as he might have appeared in the first scene with Briony. Robbie's studious nature and the identity of his benefactor is also mentioned, together with the supposed source of tension between them – money and social class when Robbie hastily remarks, "I said I'd pay your father back" (Hampton 11).

When McEwan explains the history of the Tallis' family, he devotes several paragraphs to the description of the Triton fountain and the vase that both stand in the centre of the scene. The vase was "presented in gratitude" (McEwan 23) to Cecilia's Uncle Clem after he had "initiated a last-minute evacuation of a small town west of Verdun before it was shelled" (McEwan 23) during the Great War. As such it has not only sentimental but also great monetary value for Cecilia's family. After their brief struggle, part of the vase detaches from the vase and falls to the fountain and Cecilia cries, incensed, "You idiot! You realize this is probably the most valuable thing we own" (Hampton 12).

When Briony witnesses this strange occurrence through the window she immediately feels compelled to write it down, to "be lost to the unfolding of an irresistible idea, to see the black thread spooling out from the end of her scratchy silver nib and coiling into words" (McEwan 115). Such tendencies are characteristic for her as she, true to her mantra "order must be imposed" (McEwan 115), uses writing to assert balance to the unruly world around her. The lack of time caused by her brother's imminent arrival thwarts her plan and she resists the urge. The film indicates Briony's compulsive need to

write when she is leaving the nursery and casts a longing glance at her notebook. Unlike her novel counterpart, the film *Briony* succumbs to the compulsion, snatches her pen, hides in the quiet corner of the garden and to vent her frustration with the world almost furiously pours her thoughts on the paper. Her story, snippets of which are read aloud in the film, is like her little revenge. Firstly, it is not a coincidence that “the princess knew instinctively that the one with red hair was not to be trusted” (Hampton 22) as the red-haired Quinceys ruined her rehearsal. Secondly, it is not a surprise that “young ward dived into the depths of the lake in search of the enchanted chalice” (Hampton 22). Finally, her portrayal of Sir Romulus, “no one could guess the darkness lurking in the black heart of Sir Romulus Turnbull: he was the most dangerous man in the world” (Hampton 22), mirrors her new suspicions about Robbie whom she describes as “a villain in the form of an old family friend with strong, awkward limbs and rugged friendly face” (McEwan 158) and envisions announcing to her father the dreadful news, “that his protégé should turn out to be a maniac!” (McEwan 158).

Wright and Hampton quite often face a rather difficult task, namely to tell McEwan’s story but to recast and transform it using means appropriate for the telling mode of a film. As Hutcheon argues, in films psychic reality is not told about, it is shown (Hutcheon 14). Therefore, the adapters must either physically embody the characters’ thoughts or they must portray them verbally, they must talk about them (Hutcheon 25). Briony is startled as she perceives her sister undress into her underwear and jump into the fountain. The stream of shocked thoughts running through her mind is equally depicted in a single shot – her gasp. All these seemingly meaningless little changes are examples

of efficient, functionally equivalent and “inspired cinematic solutions” (Dwyer) that allow for ingenious re-interpretation of the adapted material.

3.2.2 Love Among the Bookshelves

Another crucial moment which depicts the destructive force of a wrong interpretation is the scene in the library. Robbie’s perspective displays an inevitable culmination of the tension between him and Cecilia and a mutual declaration of love. But Briony’s view is absolutely different. As Robbie notes to himself, Briony inhabits “an ill-defined transitional space between the nursery and adult worlds which she crosses and recrosses unpredictably” (McEwan 141). Moreover, her fantasy operates in simple terms of good and evil. She is not completely unaware of the world of the adults, but she is still partly blinded by the innocence of childhood, therefore she completely misinterprets the mutually consensual act as a violent assault. Shocked and full of suspicions after having read and misunderstood the letter, she sees it as the confirmation of her vision of Robbie as a maniac – an embodiment of evil. She perpetually mistakes her own imagination for reality, which leads to her accusing Robbie of the rape of Lola.

Once again, Hampton and Wright face the uneasy task to sufficiently relay Briony’s viewpoint and her feelings about the incident. In this case, music seems to be the solution to the problem. As will be demonstrated later, soundtrack is often used to create aural equivalents to the events narrated in the novel. Similarly to the fountain scene, the audience witnesses Briony’s point of view first. Her approach to the library is “accompanied by a long, unwinding chromatic theme that rises progressively higher and higher in pitch and ends on an unresolved harmony, akin to the sort of sinister music that

might be used in a thriller” (Wilson 161). Unlike Briony’s version, the union viewed from Cecilia and Robbie’s point of view is completely bereft of music. Wilson suggests that music creates the distinction between reality and fantasy. The real scene needs no embellishments, whereas Briony’s distorted understanding of the scene is emphasized by the music.

3.2.3 I saw him, she said

Multiple perspective narration is skilfully used with regard to the search for the identity of the rapist. An observant reader can notice that the author provides him or her with a large number of hints. Robbie notices not only the scratch on Marshall’s face, but also his strange behaviour concerning the first attack. Emily internally questions the nature of Lola’s bruises, but she lets her antagonism towards her sister silence her doubts. Furthermore, as she lies in her bed and fights her migraine, she actually hears Lola with Marshall in the nursery and notices “a little squeal of laughter abruptly smothered” (McEwan 69).

At the same time, however, many instances of false clues are shown. Both Cecilia and Robbie notice Danny Hardman looking at Lola and later they both believe that he is the one who raped her. In fact, they commit the same crime of misjudgement as Briony does. On the basis of several glances, they are more than willing to accuse Danny of the crime.

Armed with the knowledge of the contents of Robbie’s note and her wild imagination, Briony wrongly concludes that Robbie is the rapist. During the interrogation, she claims that she “saw him with [her] own eyes” (McEwan 181). Later Robbie recalls

that Briony was “so consistent over time, never wavering, never doubted” (McEwan 229). Briony herself admits that when she hands the seemingly incriminating letter to her mother, she “[feels] vindicated by the reaction of the adults, and [is] experiencing the onset of a sweet and inward rapture” (McEwan 179), because she is praised for her actions.

In the film, the filmmakers let Briony speak straight into the camera as she resolutely confirms the identity of the rapist. Her mother’s approval is signified by the comforting hand she lays on her shoulder and the words “well done, darling” (Hampton 41) and “you’ve done the right thing now” (Hampton). However, whereas the readers know that Briony is prone to exaggeration but the filmgoer might not realize this. For this reason, Hampton makes Cecilia utter the line “I wouldn’t necessarily believe everything Briony tells you; she is rather fanciful” (Hampton 42) to the inspector. Later in part three, Briony makes sure that even the more unforgiving viewers believe that at the age of thirteen she did not know better while she explains to Fiona that her work is about a foolish little girl that sees something she does not understand but she thinks she does (Hampton 68).

What is more, the novel once again delves into the theme of social class and class division. McEwan seems to suggest that it was the fact that Robbie is not a member of upper-class that makes it so easy for everyone, sans Cecilia and his mother, to believe that Robbie is the person who attacked Lola, while the sleazy Paul Marshall, protected by his money and his pedigree escapes without even the slightest shade of suspicion. Combined with his love letter to Cecilia and Emily’s latent dislike for Robbie, Briony’s incessant insistence on Robbie’s guilt seals Robbie’s fate and nobody appears to doubt

them. McEwan stresses that Cecilia's account of the library scene is "far more shocking than Briony's" (McEwan 181). It is obvious that the revelation of the liaison is taken as a confirmation of Robbie's guilt. If he can break the rule of the distinction between the lower and upper classes, he can just as easily commit other atrocious acts.

All the above mentioned has been insinuated in the film before, but Hampton decides to spell it out for the less attentive in the audience and transfers this assumption into the confrontation in the third part of the film between eighteen-year-old Briony and Robbie in which Briony reveals the identity of the true culprit to the lovers. "You and all your family, you just assumed that for all my education, I was still little better than a servant, still not to be trusted" (Hampton 85).

3.2.4 Stolen Moments at the Café

Cecilia and Robbie's first (and only) meeting after his imprisonment at the café is narrated from Robbie's point of view. McEwan once again depicts strange distance and awkwardness between the two, but both lovers know the reason for their uncertainty. They have been kept apart for years, forced to communicate by censored letters and now have only a few moments to spend together. Robbie recalls mostly his feelings and the dreadful oppressiveness of limited time that reduces their meeting to a series of light-hearted exchanges and, most importantly and most vividly, their parting kiss that is keeping him sane, "in a French barn, in the small hours" (McEwan 206), together with a promise that they later give each other via post – to spend his leave together in a small cottage in Wiltshire. Lying in the barn he muses about Cecilia's estrangement from her

family, the letters they exchange during his time in prison and during his and her training, his to be a soldier, hers to be a nurse.

The novel portrays their rendezvous as a moving mixture of insufficiently expressed emotions, and mentions only one of Robbie's questions, "And do you get along all right with your landlady?" (McEwan 205). Hampton seizes the short passage from the novel, a page and a half exactly, and expands it into a five-minute-long scene that manages to evoke the emotions felt by Robbie in the novel and still be loaded with crucial details that the readers know from the letters which Robbie and Cecilia exchanged. The viewer does not know about Cecilia's work (though the nurse's uniform offers a clue) and her living situation, consequently, Robbie's question needs to be rephrased to "Where are you living?" (Hampton 48), followed by Cecilia, "Tiny flat in Balham. [...] The landlady's rude and horribly nose-y. [...] I have to be back at the hospital in half an hour" (Hampton 48-49).

What is more, Cecilia has severed all contact with her family and informed Robbie about her decision in her letters to prison. Later she reconfirms her resolution to never talk to her relatives again in her letters to the barracks. In the café, Robbie tentatively enquires about the state of her relationship with her family and Cecilia replies, "I've told you, I'm not going to. Leon came and waited outside the hospital last week. But I just pushed past him" (Hampton 49). Moreover, she adds another sad detail of her and Robbie's estrangement, "had they let me visit you, had I been allowed..." (Hampton 49). Having been diagnosed "as morbidly over-sexed, and in need of help as well as correction" (McEwan 204), Robbie has not been permitted female visitors in prison, with the only exception of his mother.

3.2.5 The Long Walk

This part of the thesis analyses several scenes from the part which lead to the epic Dunkirk scene, which is to be elaborated on later, namely in sections 2.3 and 2.4. Over the course of the novel, McEwan piles the titbits of Robbie's life and, true to the mosaic structure of his story, slowly fills all the blank spaces in the narration. Correspondingly, the film is full of scenes which are scattered through the two-hour picture. Even though the filmmakers must inevitably subtract some parts of the adapted material, they "always [try] to find cinematic equivalents to McEwan's masterpiece" (Douglas) to divulge the crucial information the viewer requires to fully comprehend the story.

There is a five-year gap between the first and second part of the novel. The narration switches to Robbie's point of view as he is walking through France towards Dunkirk. Flanked by two corporals, Mace and Nettle, he marches through the war-torn country and in his thoughts slowly recounts what followed after that fateful night in 1935. He elaborates on his stay in prison, on his correspondence with Cecilia, on Cecilia's life and on his enlistment to the army. McEwan makes sure to constantly remind the reader of Robbie's education and intelligence, of his ambitions and dreams, all of which were rendered useless or crushed by Briony's false accusations. At the same time, the author describes the devastating impact of war, the torn fields of France, the suffering of its people, and the overall atmosphere of wartime. Robbie draws parallels between the two as he muses, "First his own life ruined, then everybody else's" (McEwan 217).

In the film, Robbie's companions remain nameless and in Mace's case also almost mute. Nevertheless, Nettle becomes important mediator of information for Hampton, who uses him to question Robbie and to comment on their situation. Mace and Nettle are both

corporals but they follow private Robbie wherever he goes and do whatever he tells them. “He acted like an officer, but he didn’t even have a single stripe” (McEwan 193). As a form of deference, Mace and Nettle devise a nickname for Robbie. By calling him Guv or Guv’nor they acknowledge his obviously different demeanour and upbringing that seems quite baffling to them. What is even more puzzling is his low rank. “How come a toff like you, talks French and everything, ends up a private?” (Hampton 47). Robbie is very tight-lipped about his past in the novel, after all, “he [does not] owe [his fellow wanderers] any explanations” (McEwan 193). However, when translating novels into films, sometimes it is inevitable to spell some facts directly. Therefore, in the film Robbie briskly supplies the answer, “not eligible for officer training if you join direct from prison” (Hampton 47) and even admits that he has been given a choice to “stay in prison or join the army” (Hampton 47).

During their grim march, Nettle often makes remarks about the war and about their fate. “They’re getting themselves sorted out down on the beach. The boats are back and a geezer from the Buffs is marching us down at seven. We’re away, we’re off home, mate!” (Hampton 64), he hopefully announces to Robbie, only to be seen, at the end of the film, covering Robbie’s dead body and pocketing his letters. This is reminiscent of his role in the novel, where elderly Briony mentions Mr. Nettle whose letters describing his experience from Dunkirk were of great help to her when she was writing the novel.

3.2.6 I Confess

The final, fourth part of the novel and the film ending are perfect examples of functional equivalence. Though the medium and the delivery differ, the content, the meaning and the impact are the same. It can be even argued that the manner in which Wright and Hampton handle and transform the fourth part of the novel is even more effective with the respect to the content of the closing part which can easily be labelled as a confession. Treating it as such is, therefore, quite fitting and shows that adapting is not a mere retelling, but it contains a great amount of creativity.

In the final part of the novel, which is prefaced by the words “London, 1999” (McEwan 351), McEwan strays from the third person narration and employs first person narration instead, the first person being the seventy-seven-year-old Briony. The narrator has just learned that she is suffering from vascular dementia, a series of strokes that slowly causes her brain to close down (McEwan 354), and is currently preparing for a journey to her childhood home, now a hotel, where she is going to have dinner with her relatives to celebrate her birthday and to renew the family relationships. The high point of the reunion is a performance of Briony’s play *The Trials of Arabella*. Later, at five o’clock in the morning, Briony finishes her latest novel, *Atonement*, and reveals to the reader the main twist of the novel - that she is in fact the writer of the work the reader has been reading and that Cecilia and Robbie never got a chance to meet again for they both died in 1940. Wright claims that “the novel grows in power as the story progresses” (Production Notes) and so does his adaptation of the novel. From the seemingly calm and brightly lit British countryside of the year 1935, over the harsh reality of World War II, both overseas and

the home front, to Briony's surprising and devastating revelation, the film copies the mounting tension of the novel.

In the novel, the final part is a stream of Briony's thoughts with no dialogue. Hampton, however, reimagines the last six minutes of the film as an interview. Briony, played by Vanessa Redgrave, is now a famous author who is currently publishing her twenty-first book and is being interviewed in a TV studio. When the interviewer asks her whether she is retiring, she springs the information of her imminent death on the audience without any kind of sugar coating, "I'm dying" (Hampton 88). The reporter is visible at the beginning of the sequence, but after a couple of seconds, the focus of the camera shifts solely to Briony. As the camera zooms in and the background turns to black screen, Briony starts her revelation and her confession, which is only twice interrupted by the interviewer.

As Briony is the only person on the screen and nothing can distract the viewer from her face, the scene becomes very direct and almost uncomfortably intimate. Hampton and Wright view Briony as "the eyes of the film, which is conveyed when each of the three Brionys looks straight at the camera lens" (Production Notes). By placing Briony to the centre of attention, they manage to fully utilize the potential and the impact of the confession.

In the novel, the writer muses about her crime only in her head, alone she writes about the faithful night so many years ago. On the other hand, in the film she divulges her secret and her shame to the broad public and she tries to persuade the interviewer, the public and the audience that lying in her novel was the right thing to do and defends and justifies her lie as a "final act of kindness" (Hampton 92). The words from the book are

transformed to a public event, yet the confession feels extremely personal and intimate for she talks to the interviewer and coaxes him and the viewer, “you’ve read the book, you understand why” (Hampton 89). Then she elaborates on the futility of truth and states that the readers would have no satisfaction from the real story. Her voice momentarily becomes a voiceover and the film with crippling finality shows Robbie and Cecilia meeting their respective deaths. The visual images of Robbie’s lifeless stare and of Cecilia’s body which listlessly floats in the flooded underground tunnel is accompanied by the haunting tones of Marianelli’s score. These depressing pictures look as if they were supporting her statement about the uselessness and impact of honesty in storytelling.

For the last minute of her defence, the camera zooms even closer and Vanessa Redgrave gazes directly into the camera and imparts the last piece of her plea, “I gave them their happiness” (Hampton 92). There is a nice parallel between the thirteen-year-old girl from the first part of the work who thinks that a play can be used as a means of persuasion or guidance for her wayward brother and her seventy-seven-year-old counterpart who resurrects this childlike notion and hopes that her novel might be her atonement.

The whole film ends with Robbie and Cecilia on the beach splashing “gleefully through the waver, below the towering white cliffs on their way back to their white clapboard cottage” (Hampton 92). This closing scene echoes Briony’s wish to have “the power to conjure them at [her] birthday celebration [...] Robbie and Cecilia, still alive, still in love” (McEwan 372). The picture of a happy couple on the beach is a visualisation of the novel’s penultimate sentence in which Briony writes, “it’s not impossible” (McEwan 372).

3.3 The Sound of Atonement

An integral part of every film is its soundtrack, because, as Hutcheon claims, “language is not the only way to express meaning or to relate stories“ (Hutcheon 23). Music can narrate stories and relate various emotions just as skillfully, it could even be argued that a melody can often be much more expressive than words. In *Atonement*, Wright decided to join forces with Dario Marianelli, with whom he has already worked on another period drama, *Pride & Prejudice*. As Dario Marianelli and Joe Wright say, they worked on the music for the film with one goal in their minds, “to make the picture and the soundtrack into an integrated, cohesive whole” (Production Notes).

In terms of functional equivalence, both diegetic and nondiegetic sounds are indispensable in *Atonement* and the soundtrack is used to its full potential. Marianelli uses sound to accentuate various motifs and emotions and to move the plot forward. A stellar example of this is the already discussed use of the typewriter noise that is central to the soundtrack and can be heard in several recurring melodies. Two of the important themes of the novel are writing and letter writing and Marianelli’s idea to use the typewriter as a central motif of his soundtrack “enables the film to harness the novel’s metafictional discourse on (re)writing” (Dalrymple 2).

From the first moment that Briony enters the screen and is seen finishing *typing* her play, the sound of the typewriter follows her through the house. The sound of the typewriter is predominantly used in Briony’s scenes, which is quite logical as she is the author of the whole story. However, typing and writing follow other characters as well, for example, Robbie, while he types his indecent note to Cecilia. Diegetic sound of

Robbie's typewriter smoothly moves to nondiegetic when Robbie realizes his fateful mistake and Briony opens the letter. The shocking effect the expletive Robbie writes in the letter has on the innocent Briony is emphasized by four loud and stern strikes of the typing machine. What is more, the constant and swift typing "underscores a sense of unease and suspense" (Dalrymple 3) which underlines the above mentioned moments.

The typewriter is missing in the second part of the film but comes back in the third part that reveals Briony's continuous writing aspirations and again brings the importance of order, this time in the form of hospital discipline. In the novel, Briony ponders on "the constant and pervasive anxiety the trainees shared about making mistakes" (McEwan 270). The clicking of the typewriter can be heard when Sister Drummond leads the nurses through the hospital ward and reprimands them for their transgressions. Later, before she visits Cecilia, Briony attends a wedding. Slowly the typewriter resurfaces again and as the film moves closer and closer to the revelation of the identity of the bride and groom and to the unveiling of the past crime, the typing compliments the mood of the scene; it becomes faster and faster and "serves to accentuate and, moreover, to accelerate the action" (Dalrymple 3).

Sounds and melodies invade the whole film, indicating the emotions felt by the characters and completing the mood of the different sections of the film. In the first part of the novel, the narrator constantly comments on weather, more specifically on the oppressive heat of the summer of 1935. In the film, "the feeling of summer torpor was rendered through a variety of effects. Much was suggested by the sound design's incessant insect sounds" (Design of History).

Marianelli often accelerates the tempo and the strength of the melodies when he wants to express the gradation of tension in the scenes. For instance, when the first ambulances arrive to the hospital, Briony “emerges into scene of escalating chaos” (Hampton 72) and realizes for the first time “that a person is, among all else, a material thing, easily torn, not so easily mended” (McEwan 304), the music escalates as well to highlight the gravity of the situation.

Similarly, the music becomes faster and more powerful when Robbie finally smells the sea and rushes closer to the beach. On the other hand, when the viewer is supposed to pause and savour the climate of the scene the music slows down, the notes are lower and more subtle. Therefore, the rhythm of the music is always in line with the plot. While Robbie explores the Dunkirk beach, Marianelli combines diegetic and nondiegetic sounds, while simultaneously incorporating of the two *songs* used in the film. The viewer can hear Marianelli’s piece *Elegy for Dunkirk* that includes soldiers singing the hymn *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*. The combination of the two expresses the wistful longing for peace and home felt and often mention in the novel by Robbie.

The other instance of the combination of the diegetic and nondiegetic sound appears in the first part of the film. During the pivotal scene where Robbie writes his letter to Cee and Cecilia prepares for the dinner, Puccini’s *O Soave Fanciulla* can be heard playing on Robbie’s record player in the background. The scene is fragmented and consists of snippets of Robbie and Cecilia, only the first of can hear the music. Catrin Watts suggest that this mixture of diegetic sound and nondiegetic music acts to “blur the lines between reality and fiction” (Watts) in the film.

Marianelli rarely incorporates original works into his score, *O Soave Fanciulla* and *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind* being two of the exceptions. The third one is Claude Debussy's *Claire de Lune*. Several times throughout parts two and three, McEwan mentions the contrast of the reality of war and its presentation in the newspapers, on the radio, etc. While the journalists feed the readers hope by writing about "strategic withdrawals to previously prepared positions" (McEwan 284), Briony recognizes the effort to underplay the situation. In the film she informs her friend Fiona that withdrawal is just "a euphemism for retreat" (Hampton 70). After the initial influx of patients to the hospital, Briony is ordered to take care of and sit by a dying French soldier. Hampton reminds the viewer of the clash between the image of war presented by the newsreel that tries to lift the morale of the soldiers and the civilians alike with hopeful scenes and grand words of "the epic of Dunkirk, a name that will live forever in the annals of warfare" (Hampton 78) and the grim reality Briony faces in the hospital. This incongruence is amplified by Debussy's calm and melancholic work that precedes the scene and works as some sort of bridge – as if Briony was moving between two worlds.

3.4 Zoom in and Add a Bit of Colour

Joe Wright, the production designer, Sarah Greenwood, and the director of photography, Seamus McGarvey, resort to a great number of cinematic equivalents to enact the differences between the three or more precisely four parts of the novel. The sections of the novel vary not only in location, but also in historical period. Additionally, they focus on different perspectives. The filmmakers mainly rely on colours, different

lighting and different camera work and attempt to “make curtain rods and floral prints speak of social unrest and economic instability, of personal longing and psychological burdens” (Design of History).

The first part of the novel takes place during a hot summer and Greenwood works with the colour in the scenes “to evoke that sense of summer day where everything is full, ripe, and about to be forever lost” (Design of History). Therefore, there is a lot of green colour and the camera often focuses on flowers and plants. What is more, the beginning of the film literally basks in a great amount of light that gives the scenes something akin to dreamlike quality. McGarvey explains that “the lustrous quality of the 1935 scenes was achieved by using particular filters [...] over the lens” (Production Notes). Gradually the plot turns more sinister and consequently the light in the scenes is dimmed to symbolize this ‘descent into darkness’.

The second part of the novel encompasses, in seventy-four pages, Robbie’s firsthand account of war and also contains the missing pieces of some of the events from part one as well as information about Robbie’s life between the years 1935 - 1940. Wright and Hampton pack all this into thirty minutes. As a result, they must compartmentalize and focus on the cinematic tools that can foreground the most important bits from the novel, namely, the camera work.

The central scene of part two is the depiction of the end of Robbie’s journey, the picture of Dunkirk that is full of troops awaiting the evacuation. This epic six-minute-long shot is also one of the most acclaimed scenes in the film. The audience can experience the effect of the camera and its movement as it follows Robbie while he stumbles through the beach. The feeling of futility and stupidity of war that Robbie

describes in the novel is visualised in the “surreal carnival of a ruined seaside” (Imagining Wars). Wright points out that Robbie’s arrival to Dunkirk in the book feels like a long lyrical passage (Douglas) and he believes that a single uninterrupted shot is a suitable equivalent of the extract. Greenwood also utilizes “the gaudy, tarnished hues of a seaside resort” (Design of History) and the receding sunlight to create “an even more ghostly appearance” (Design of History). What is important is that “there is no victory in the film, only a collapse into chaos” (Dalrymple 11) which is exactly what Robbie’s narration constantly stresses. Whereas Robbie narrates the events on the beach from his point of view, in the adaptation there is a shift of agency, suddenly “the camera becomes the writer” (Production Notes). The camera spans the whole expanse of the beach and the individual scenes of madness and despair, foregrounds “wastefulness, the waste of human life, of animal life, of machinery of everything” (Wright qtd. by Earnshaw), but at the same time constantly moves back to Robbie’s face to catch the manifestation of his experience.

The Dunkirk sequence is not the only crucial scene in the second part of the film. In contrast to the first, brightly lit, part of the film, Robbie and his friends wander through a “blue-tinged French countryside” (O’Hara) which always appears as if on brink of dusk or dawn. The light is considerably dimmed and “[becomes] a perfect metaphor for the psychological worlds inhabited by its characters” (Design of History) whose hope is also fading. Wright’s films often portray pastoral beauty and the director admits his love for “dawn shots, or shots after the rain has stopped” because for him, such scenes “act as emotional recall “ (Solomons). That is why such takes in the film usually indicate that

Robbie is recalling his past and his time spend with Cecilia, and are followed by or preceded by the scenes that go backwards in plot.

Part three opens with a shot of a hospital ward full of sterile and pristine white and dull grey colour. In the novel Briony describes the routine of her apprenticeship in the hospital, the anticipation that is felt by all the doctors and nurses. Greenwood again relies on colours, more specifically the colour red, to reveal the horror of war. Before the arrival of the patients “the rooms are drained of red until it is finally introduced in the form of blood. And then the shock is as primal as the color itself” (Design of History).

The evident changes in the colour palettes in part one to three are supposed to be “hinting at the ways in which memory and emotion can color our vision of the past” (Design of History). The film thus references one of the themes of the novel, specifically the theme of memories, remembering and forgetting. As far as the colour of the costumes are concerned, Briony’s innocence and her young age is symbolized by the simply cut, shapeless white dress she wears in the first part. Cecilia’s backless green dress is supposed to “remind the audience that it is the hottest day of the year” (Durrant qtd. by Canfield).

3.5 Intertextuality lost?

Atonement is a postmodern novel and as such employs many above mentioned postmodern techniques, for instance, multiple perspective narration and metafiction. Another device that is quite prominent in the novel is the use of intertextual references. Some of the referenced texts are explicitly mentioned in the novel, for example,

Richardson's *Clarissa*, Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, the works of Virginia Woolf, and Auden's poems; some connections are more subtle, for instance, the parallels between *Atonement* and Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and Hartley's *The Go-Between*. What is more, Cecilia and Robbie both studied literature at Cambridge and the letters they exchange during Robbie's stay in prison are littered with literary references. In the film, the viewer can see that Robbie's room is stuffed with books, he is seen reading *Gray's Anatomy*, and Robbie asks Cecilia, "how are you enjoying your book?" (Hampton 10). However, most of the overt references are not present in the film and it may seem that the intertextual side of the work became the casualty of the process of simplification.

Wilson argues that as McEwan explores the process of writing and employs a vast array of postmodern devices, Wright mirrors this process and creates the film as an exhibition film's history and of cinematic devices. She claims that "Wright's use of dissolves and montage, and an extended one-take Steadicam shot for the Dunkirk scene, consciously draw attention to filmic techniques" (Wilson 160). Other critics share this view and add that while McEwan's work contains many intertextual references to works like *The Go-Between*, *The Lady Chatterley's Lover*, etc., Wright's adaptation reflects other period dramas and literary adaptations (Geraghty 93). Moreover, Wilson believes that "Wright uses music and other devices to pile additional layers of signification onto a complex network of intertextual references already put in place by McEwan" (Wilson 159). Therefore, the seemingly omitted intertextuality is equally represented in the adaptation.

4 Conclusion

This thesis has sought to analyse the film adaptation *Atonement* (2007), chiefly from the point of view of the director's use of functional equivalence. It argues that this phenomenon can be found in many relevant scenes in the film and the novel. We have focused on the specific strategies that the filmmakers employed to sufficiently translate the novel to the screen, while also discussing the motivation of the filmmakers, in other words, what lead the adapters to employ these cinematic solutions while transferring the content of the work from the written medium to the medium of motion picture.

In the theoretical part, the two contrasting approaches to adaptations are explained. The thesis applies the theories of Linda Hutcheon who values adaptations as independent works of art which are equal in value to their source texts. Nevertheless, the opposing views which claim that adaptations are parasitic and secondary and their value depends on their faithfulness to their source texts are briefly introduced in chapter 2.1.1. Moreover, the distinction between faithful and loose adaptations is discussed in the theoretical part.

The meaning of functional equivalence in translation theories is explained in chapter 2.2.3. The thesis elaborates on Nida's theory and draws the parallel between functional equivalence in translation and functional equivalence in film adaptation. What is more, the reasons for and the necessity of the use of functional equivalents in film adaptations are illustrated. Furthermore, the author and the director and their works are introduced in the thesis.

The practical part of the thesis, hopefully, demonstrates the use of functional equivalence on specific passages from the film. The thesis firstly focuses on the ways in which McEwan and the adapters introduce the characters and the lengths the adapters go to give the viewer as much information from the novel as possible without the use of voiceovers and other openly diegetic devices. Instead they use functional equivalents to successfully depict the characters. For example, Briony's passion for order and control is displayed in the way she marches through the house. Additionally, several pivotal scenes from the novel are analysed. The equivalents in form of music, work with colours, lighting, camera, and dialogue are elaborated on. Furthermore, the scenes which were added to the adaptation are pointed out and the reasons for these additions are clarified. The sequence of the scenes and the effect the order of the scenes has on the understanding of the plot are examined as well. For instance, the differences in the depiction of the fountain scene are inspected in detail. In this case, the filmmakers deliberately changed the order of the portrayed points of view to help the audience to understand Briony's reaction to the scene.

The practical part also points out how Wright and Hampton succeed in visualizing the psychological state of the characters and how they use various equivalents to provide access to the characters' minds. The thesis also explores how the adapters managed to translate the postmodern techniques McEwan uses in his writing, for instance, intertextuality, metafiction, fragmentation, and multiple narrative perspective, into the film. For example, though writing is not talked about as often in the film as it is in the novel, the soundtrack makes writing present with the constantly resurfacing sound of the typewriter.

Chapter 3.3 is concerned with the role of music in the adaptation. As the chapter shows, music often helps the adapters to express what McEwan conveys through words. The

film uses both diegetic and nondiegetic sound to highlight various motifs and to emphasize the psychological state of the of the characters. What is more, the soundtrack helps to accentuate the tension in some of the scenes.

As was illustrated in the practical part, even though the adapters could not have remained slavishly faithful to the source text, they clearly deemed it necessary to employ many functional equivalents to assure that the viewers experience the story in a similar way that the readers experienced the novel. Virtually all the segments analysed in chapter 3 can qualify as partial or full functional equivalents that were deliberately introduced by way of rendering a particular aspect or aspects in the novel.

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