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DIPLOMA THESIS

Shooting Jane Austen: Romantic and realistic imagery in two recent film adaptations of Austen's Pride and Prejudice

Author: Šárka Švábová

Supervisor: Mgr. Jakub Ženíšek

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Declaration:

I hereby declare that this diploma thesis, titled "Shooting Jane Austen: Romantic and realistic imagery in two recent film adaptations of Austen's Pride and Prejudice", is the result of my own work and that I used only the cited sources.

Prague, November 22nd 2007 .....

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Abstract

This diploma thesis is concerned with the comparison of Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* and its two film adaptations. Special attention is paid to the recent tendencies of film-makers to put emphasis on the romantic aspects of the main plotline, to tone down the realistic background and social satire of the story, and to favour minimalism, which often results in psychological reductionism of the characters. The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part concentrates on the depiction of individual characters, particularly their personality reflected in their behaviour. The second part examines the storylines of the two adaptations in terms of fidelity to the original; dealing separately with scenes which were omitted and scenes which were included in both versions. The thesis tries to find sufficient evidence of the tendencies mentioned above in order to illustrate the growing trend of these tendencies.

Abstrakt

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá porovnáním románu *Pýcha a Předsudek* od Jane Austenové a jeho dvou filmových zpracování. Velká pozornost je věnována především současným tendencím filmových tvůrců klást důraz na romantické rysy hlavní dějové linky, snaha o ztlumení realistického pozadí a sociální satiry v příběhu, stejně tak jako obliba minimalismu, která často vede k psychologické redukci postav. Samotná analýza je rozdělena do dvou částí. První část se soustředí na vykreslení jednotlivých postav, obzvláště na jejich charakter, který se odráží v jejich chování. Druhá část se zabývá dějovou linkou obou adaptací z hlediska věrného vyobrazení originálu. Odděleně jsou zkoumány scény, které byly vynechány, a scény, které se objevují v obou verzích. Práce se snaží nalézt dostatečné množství příkladů výše uvedených tendencí, které by poukázaly na to, že jde o vzrůstající trend.

Key words

Adaptation, character, convincing, depict, film, miniseries, narration, original, outline, realization, representation, romantic, satirical, scene, storyline

Klíčová slova

Adaptace, postava, přesvědčivý, vykreslit, film, minisérie, vyprávění, originál, nástin, realizace, znázornění, romantický, satirický, scéna, dějová linie příběhu

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1 Introduction

1.1 The aims of the diploma thesis

The trend of the present society is to give preference to film and television as the source of information, education, or simply the pastime instead of turning to literature. For those who are interested in the greatest literary classics of our time, film offers an alluring alternative in the form of adaptations of literary works of art. Some people watch adaptations because they have enjoyed the original; some are inspired to find their way to a bookshop or a library after watching them; but some, unfortunately, simply conclude that watching film adaptations is by far the easiest way of reading books. The important thing is that we should not view film adaptations as the replacement of their literary counterparts, and take them with a large pinch of salt.

The general trend of the film adaptations is to accentuate the romantic plotline and to tone down the satirical realistic background of its literary originals. I chose to demonstrate this phenomenon on *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen – a literary masterpiece that itself oscillates between Realism and Romanticism; in other words, it provides fruitful breeding ground for the film-maker's choice between stark realism and romance. The aim of this diploma thesis is to take a closer look at the relationship of Jane Austen's famous novel and its two latest adaptations, and to find evidence of the tendencies stated below.

With this aim in mind, the following premises can be outlined:

1) Film adaptations tend to emphasise romantic elements at the expense of social satire and social underpinnings in general
2) Psychological reductionism of film characters
3) Minimalism as an aesthetic strategy and/or as a virtue out of necessity

The major focus of this thesis will be on the comparison of the psychology of the individual (major) characters, and the changes or reductions in the storyline of the works in question. I chose to treat Jane Austen as if she were the original screenwriter and the text of her novel as if it were the original script. The film adaptations that will be compared are:

1. The BBC six-part version (in the thesis often referred to as 'the miniseries') directed by Simon Langton in 1995

2. The latest feature film directed by Joe Wright in 2005

My primary assumption is that the BBC version, which was created ten years prior to Wright's film and which comes from a typically more traditionalist studio, will be more faithful to the original and will therefore bear fewer sings of 'romanticisation' and simplification of the characters and plot than the film version. In my thesis, I will try to find enough examples of the mentioned phenomena which would subsequently serve as evidence in order to substantiate or refute my hypothesis.

1.2 Contextual background

1.2.1 Film and the novel

Almost since the beginning of the film era, this new medium was by many recognised as a new form of artistic expression. It soon became clear that the narrative potential of film almost predestined it to form its strongest bond with novel. Unlike painting or drama, both film and novel can tell long stories and provide a great deal of details. Of course, there are differences between them. The most evident difference is in the type of narration, which is visual in film and linguistic in novel. Another difference is that film is relatively more limited, because it operates in real time, whereas novels end when their authors feel like it.

This time limitation obviously causes much concern when a comparison of a novel and its adaptation comes to question. As a result of the limited time span, details of incident are almost always lost in the transition from book to film. Monaco claims: "Only the television serial can overcome this deficiency. It carries with it some of the same sense of duration necessary to the large novel." (Monaco 45) He takes the example of the screen versions of *War and Peace* to make his point clear: "the most successful seems to me to have been the BBC's twenty-part serialization of the early 1970s; not necessarily because the acting or direction was better than the two- or six-hour film versions (although that is arguable), but because only the longform television serial could reproduce the essential condition of the saga-duration." (Monaco 45)

On the other hand, film can offer something that the novel cannot. It can translate things that cannot by transferred by incidents into images. Monaco claims this to be an advantage. He argues that "the driving tension of the novel is the relationship between the materials of the story (plot, character, setting, theme, and so forth) and the

narration of it in language; between the tale and the teller, in other words. The driving tension of film, on the other hand, is between the material of the story and the objective nature of the image." (Monaco 45) As a result, it is the observer who can choose where to focus on the screen, what things to notice, and thus is "free to participate in the experience much more actively" (Monaco 45).

Traditionally, film adaptations of great literary works have not earned much respect. The earliest such adaptations date back to the silent era. They were presumably produced in order to attract more high-brow audience (or "better-quality audience", to use Cohen's snooty epithet) to the cinemas. Later, in the heyday of film production, adaptations were intended for the opposite reasons – to popularise the classics. To put in the words of Paula Marantz Cohen, they turned the classic works "into lavish entertainment vehicles" (Cohen 533) They did not attempt to equal the literary work that served as the inspiration.

Eventually, film established itself as a valid esthetic medium, and film adaptations began to be studied not only in terms of the preceding original, but also in other respects. A more recent trend is to "look at film adaptation without measuring it against an elevated concept of literary or cinematic form" (Cohen 534). Instead, the essays of film and literary critics rather attempt to "consider the cultural, economic, and political forces that shape the films we see." (Cohen 534) Nevertheless, the comparison between an adaptation and its literary counterpart will always be close at hand, and the film-makers can be sure of never escaping it.

The role of film in our current society has changed, and this also affects the way film deals with literature. The power and authority of traditional cinematic spectacle is on its decline; the reins were handed over to computer games, cable television, DVD's and The Internet. Paula M. Cohen argues that as a reaction to these changes "film seems to be over-compensating in two ways: catering to low-brow tastes through formulaic action and gross-out comedy movies and appealing to high-brow tastes through adaptations of serious literary works." (Cohen 539) The film-makers are aware of the fact that "they must compete with action-adventure TV shows and the explosion in expensive technical gimmickry", therefore they must provide "vitality, action, and a sense of continual movement" (Moody 12), or in other words simply fun. This requirement of 'fun' entertainment shapes the adaptations, and sometimes almost changes their total appearance.

1.2.2 Jane Austen and her works

When Jane Austen died, her sister Cassandra wrote: "I *have* lost a treasure, such a Sister, such a friend as never can have been surpassed, – She was the sun of my life, the gilder of every pleasure, the soother of every sorrow, I had not a thought concealed from her, & it is as if I had lost a part of myself." (Le Faye 344) in a letter to Fanny Knight, their niece and a dear friend, to express the deep sorrow at her loss. Indeed, the words that Cassandra used to describe her sister might as well represent what many Jane Austen's devoted readers think of the novels she left behind.

All of the six finished books provide the reader with fun, suspense, comfort, sympathy, and a chance for identification that it is no wonder that they all became ever popular classics. Her masterful use of sarcasm and irony, deep understanding of the social life, great powers of observation, and most of all her exquisite humour eventually made her one of the most acclaimed novelists of the early nineteenth century.

Her novels are often given the label of 'domestic comedies of middle-class manners'. And indeed, they represent all that. Her works give us a minute account of the everyday life of country families of Regency England. Her account of this world is, nevertheless, limited and highly selective. She has often been criticised for the narrowness of her subject matter. Yet, Austen deliberately chose what she knew best, and examined it to the smallest imaginable detail. She was not tempted by any subject matter that was outside her personal experience.

Jane Austen's novels are full of characters enjoying a life of leisure; her heroines struggle to find their happiness, which in the end invariably comes in the form of an ideal or at least eligible husband. Judging from these basic romantic plots we could assume that Austen was a Romantic writer, but a substantial part of the background action in her novels is satirical (namely social satire), so the classification is not so easy.

Austen lived and wrote in the time "when the old Georgian world of the eighteenth century was being carried uneasily and reluctantly into the new world of Regency England, the Augustan world into the Romantic." (Southam 5) It was a time of great societal changes, and Austen seems to function as a bridge between these two eras, casting her critical eye on the old world, and not yet fully stepping into the new one. Literary critics and scholars enter into lengthy discussions in order to decipher the individual aspects of her narrative which point to the source of her influence.

Austen described the world she knew best, and even though she herself was a part of if, she was able to remain detached in her critical observations. Her account of the world is truly realistic: "She presents the sad truth that however much people may dream of personal freedom, of escaping from the constrictions of their family or of society at large, we are nonetheless tied by blood and time and circumstance with bonds of need and dependence, to people we hate or despise or are bored by, yet cannot do without." (Southam 12-13)

In Austen's time, the literature was also influenced by the cult of feeling. According to Southam, "this is one aspect of the eighteenth-century shift from the Age of Reason to Romanticism ... Sensibility became the class badge of polite society ..." (Southam 23) The central figure of this type of literature was a heroine whose display of feeling, her blushes, swoonings, tears, or hysterics proved her ladylikeness. The plots were basically designed to let the main heroes fall in love at first sight, then separate them, and confront them with moral and physical dangers, the hero could then prove his great courage and virtue by rescuing his lady. Jane Austen reacted critically to this cult of sensibility, and she invariably made fun of it in her novels. Her mocking humour can be seen, for instance, in a passage from *Pride and Prejudice*, in which she laughs at love at first sight: "If gratitude and esteem are good foundations of affection, Elizabeth's change of sentiment will be neither improbable nor faulty. But if otherwise – if the regard springing from such sources is unreasonable or unnatural, in comparison of *what is so often described as arising on a first interview* with its object, and even before two words have been exchanged, – nothing can be said in her defence, except that *she had given somewhat of a trial to the latter method* in her partiality for Wickham, and that its ill success might, perhaps, authorize her to seek *the other less interesting mode of attachment*." (Austen 213; chapter 46; italics mine)

We might find other countless proofs for Austen's realistic and almost anti-romantic tendencies. However, it seems useless to search for a single category that would fit Austen; Linda Troost's claim: "She is no longer confined by the label *realist*; she is also parodist, allegorist, and even therapist. She need not be either Johnsonian[1] or Romantic; she can be both at once" (Troost 404) might be closest to the truth.

Finally, let me point out one more thing which greatly contributes to Austen's literary success, and that is her amazing readability. As Karl Kroeber beautifully puts it,

[1] Some literary scholars, for instance Gloria Sybil Gross, argue for Samuel Johnson as one of the principle influences on Jane Austen, and the inspiration for her realism.

"Austen's stories are read and re-read because they are beautifully told. No novelist is her equal in narrative transition – one scene flows into another often with radical changes in time and place and persons that nevertheless seem totally natural and logical. Her stories move with the easy continuity of a moderate-sized river ..." (Kroeber 116)

1.2.3 Jane Austen's Adaptations

It may sound hard to believe but Great Britain produced seven feature-length films or television miniseries adaptations between 1970 and 1986. Then there came six more adaptations in 1995 and 1996 alone, "half of them originating in Hollywood, and the rest influenced by it" (qtd. in Swingle 49). *Pride and Prejudice*, which is the concern of this thesis, was filmed eight[2] times in the whole film history. The question which naturally arises concerning film adaptations is why so much attention is being paid particularly to Austen. One simple answer, as Cohen suggests, is that as a satirist of manners Austen is by definition more concerned with surface than depth, and therefore inherently more suited for film and television than other great writers.

Another possible explanation of Austen's popularity can be seen within a larger social and formal framework. She was an author living and writing "in the context of new cultural paradigms" (Cohen 540). In her time, "a class-bound and rigidly gender dichotomous society was evolving into a more fluid and democratic one" (Cohen 540). Austen gave birth to "a more inclusive, human-centered novel, a form for the middle class and specifically for women, who would take on greater social and economic power as the century progressed" (Cohen 540) Two hundred years later, the society of the twenty-first century is faced with cultural and technological changes that are comparable with those of Austen. Cohen concludes that "... Austen can help ease us into this new paradigm." (Cohen 540)

Or is it simply the fact that the world is in ever-present need of love stories (with happy endings) that would make the drab reality of life a little more bearable? Whatever the reason may be, the creation of a literary adaptation is sure to trigger a wave of critical essays trying to grasp the relationship between the film and its literary

[2] This number does not include films such as *Bridget Jones Diary* or *Bride & Prejudice* which are not direct adaptations of the novel. However, their authors were no doubt greatly inspired by the original story.

antecedent. The recent films adapting Jane Austen's novels have been criticised by scholars and literary critics in several aspects.

To begin with, a general objection is that film adaptations "tend to make Austen's world too cozy, draining it of social significance" (Cohen 537). The films seem to be engaged in postmodern nostalgia for the good old days, and idealise the world that Jane Austen perpetually, even though covertly, criticised.

Devoney Looser says that the adaptations reveal "a distinct trend toward harlequinization of Jane Austen's novels" (qtd. in Swingle 50), and others maintain the same position arguing that the films over-romanticize Austen. This might be also closely connected to what other scholars observe, namely that "the male heroes in many of the films are too attractive, thereby pandering to conventional expectations about masculinity" (Cohen 537) On the other hand, Cheryl L. Nixon in her "Balancing the Courtship Hero" remarks that Austen's male characters "prove their worth by meeting a demand for social restraint," but in the film versions "they prove their worth ... by meeting a demand for emotional display" (qtd. in Swingle 49) This tendency might reflect the change in values of the present society. Modern women seek and appreciate more feminine qualities, like emotionality, in modern men.

The general tendency seems to be to emphasise the romantic elements, and to tone down the social underpinnings of Jane Austen's stories. The characters undergo considerable changes to serve the purpose of romance, and the original satire is largely swept away. The following sections will be dedicated to a closer analysis of these tendencies, focusing first on individual characters, and then on the storylines of the adaptations.

2 The depiction of individual characters

It is perhaps appropriate to give reasons for the logic of arrangement of the individual characters in this section. There are several possible ways of organising the characters. First, they could be simply put in alphabetical order. Second, they could be organised according to the degree to which they deviate from the original, but that could differ from character to character (in each adaptation), and therefore be quite problematic. Third, the characters might be organised according to their importance in the novel. I chose the third possibility as the most suitable one, even though it might be in some instances disputable. There is no doubt of who the central characters are, but the hierarchy of importance of the other characters is relative, and to some extent subjective. Moreover, some characters seem to share equal positions in terms of relevance for the story. Nevertheless, the characters must be arranged in some way. Naturally, the contents of the following pages are more important than their arrangement.

2.1 Elizabeth Bennet

Elizabeth Bennet, the main heroine of the story, is one of the most popular heroines created by Jane Austen, and was dearly cherished by the authoress herself: "I must confess that *I* think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, & how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least, I do not know" (Le Faye 201; italics in the original). A careful choice of an actress for this role is therefore absolutely crucial for the success of the adaptation.

The guidelines that the film-makers can find in the original are the following. In the novel, she is a pretty twenty-year-old girl with a "light and pleasing" (Austen 20; ch. 6) figure whose beautiful dark eyes are more than once the subject of the conversation throughout the novel. As for her other qualities, she is undoubtedly very intelligent or as her father puts it she has "something more of quickness than her sisters" (Austen 6, ch.1), she never lacks a sense of humour (though often ironic), and has an effervescent personality. Nevertheless, she can sometimes be quite headstrong. Let us recall two instances for illustration: she is so determined to visit her sister Jane, who fell ill at

Netherfield, that neither social conventions nor mud can prevent her from walking there; and she refuses to marry Mr Collins despite her mother's wishes and insistence.

Keira Knightley (aged 20 in 2005) starring in the feature film (henceforth only "film") and Jennifer Ehle (aged 26 in 1995) playing the leading part in the BBC miniseries (henceforth only "miniseries") impersonated the role in quite dissimilar ways. Knightley's dynamic personality shows us an Elizabeth who is sparkling and brisk, but she also gives the impression of a present-day girl rather than a nineteenth century young woman. In comparison, Ehle's Elizabeth is more restrained, and evidently bound up with the social and behavioural restrictions of the era. The former could be therefore classified as more authentic to the contemporary viewer, the latter more authentic in terms of adherence to the original.

Bearing in mind that film is first and foremost a visual medium, one of the most visible features (but perhaps not a very crucial one) that strikes the viewer in the eyes is the difference of physical appearance of these two actresses. Even though both Elizabeths are dark-brown haired and brown-eyed attractive girls with fine figures, we cannot help noticing the contrast between Jennifer Ehle's full-bosomed and her colleague's rather flat-chested figure. We might be tempted to infer Elizabeth's character from this visual sensuality (more voluptuous woman is stereotypically thought of as more sensual) but we could not be more wrong. It seems that what Knightley as Elizabeth lacks in appearances (when compared to Ehle), she eagerly compensates for in behaviour.

Whereas it is almost impossible to detect any traces of Elizabeth's physical attraction towards Mr Darcy – except for her own words – in the miniseries, we can easily sense the undeniable attraction between Elizabeth and Darcy in the film. Already at the Netherfield ball, Elizabeth very quickly forgets her sworn hatred of Darcy and becomes so engrossed in dancing with him that she does not notice anybody else in the ballroom. Later in the story, when Mr Darcy unexpectedly proposes to her, Elizabeth ends up standing so close to him that they both almost yield to the temptation to kiss. This passionate outburst of emotions is an amazing shift from the original scene where Elizabeth is clearly consumed by surprise and offence, and Darcy by his hurt pride. In the film, Elizabeth's magnetism to Darcy is present even when the object of her affection is not around. Being on holiday with her aunt and uncle, she wanders off the guided tour of Pemberley, enters one of Darcy's rooms, and instinctively touches his personal things. Again, rather an unusual aspect for Austen's world full of suppressed

emotions. This intensification of mutual attraction between Darcy and Elizabeth is of course highly appealing to the present-day spectators, whose own everyday experience with overtly sexual behaviour (in films, advertisement, life in general) in today's society has changed their perception, so that they might even seem to be expectant of such moments in a film with so evident a romantic plot. Both adaptations deliberately stress the aspect of attraction between the two main heroes, but the film version even more so in order to satisfy the spectators' expectations.

Another distinctive feature in the character of Elizabeth Bennet in the two adaptations is her sisterhood. The relationship of Elizabeth and her sister Jane is invariably ideal in Austen's version[3]; the two sisters share all their deepest secrets and hopes, support each other, and never quarrel. The scenario of the BBC adaptation did not modify the faultless bond between the sisters, and shows us all the crucial tete-a-tetes of the two confidantes with most of the original dialogues preserved. Elizabeth's need for intimacy with Jane is evident for example in the scene where she reveals the secret of Mr Darcy's proposal, Elizabeth exclaims, hugging her sister affectionately: "To that moment I never knew myself. And I had no Jane to comfort me. Oh, how I wanted you." (*P&P* 1995; episode 4 – 0:21:40).

The second adaptation took a slightly different turn. The film-makers of the 2005 version decided to change the perfect relationship between Jane and her sister into a less ideal but perhaps more natural one, and make Elizabeth more introspective than she is in the original. At first, the two sisters openly confide their feelings about Mr Bingley and Mr Darcy to each other, and the physical proximity of a shared bed emphasises the sisters' intimacy. But then the events in the story draw the girls slowly apart.

When Elizabeth returns from her visit in Hunsford, where Mr Darcy proposed to her, she does not tell her sister anything about it. When Jane asks about the news from Kent, she simply replies that nothing interesting happened there. The reason for not telling her sister might also be affected by the fact that she clearly sees Jane does not open her heart to Elizabeth either. Jane tries to persuade Elizabeth that her feelings about Mr Bingley have changed and that she no longer cares for him even though the complete opposite is true. Later on, Elizabeth only mentions having met Mr Darcy at

[3] Jane Austen had a very close relationship with her older sister Cassandra. It is believed that by creating the ideal relationship between the two Bennet sisters Jane Austen intended to pay tribute to her own sister.

Rosings but she is not able to disclose anything else. This scene evidently contrasts with the original where "Elizabeth's impatience to acquaint Jane with what had happened could no longer be overcome; and at length, resolving to suppress every particular in which her sister was concerned, and preparing her to be surprised, she related to her the next morning the chief of the scene between Mr Darcy and herself." (Austen 173; ch.40) In the film, she is confronted by Jane's asking her about Mr Bingley, so she has no other choice but to lie in order to protect her sister's feelings. The growing distance between the sisters is also further reinforced by their being turned away from each other in bed.

The following events do not bring about the renewal of mutual intimacy between them. Elizabeth does not tell Jane that she met Mr Darcy again and was introduced to his sister when she was on holiday with her aunt and uncle. Finally, after Elizabeth consents to be Mr Darcy's wife, she does not share this happy news with her beloved sister, and it is as much surprise to Jane as to the rest of the family.

The introspective personality of the film Elizabeth is further reinforced by diminishing the importance of her relationship with her aunt Gardiner. In the book as well as in the miniseries, Elizabeth also consults her feelings with her aunt and gets advice from her on several occasions. As the role of Mrs Gardiner was reduced to only a necessary minimum in the film, Keira Knightly as Elizabeth must simply rely on her own judgment.

Elizabeth's skill of judgment is another point worth discussing. The original Elizabeth is a very reasonable girl, who is careful in forming an opinion, and always tries to support it with rational explanations. Of course, she makes a mistake in the case of Mr Darcy and Mr Wickham but she does not tend to be prejudiced in general.

The miniseries Elizabeth expresses her opinion in a cautious way; she does not judge people at first sight but employs her powers of observation before she makes any remarks. Her dislike of Mr Darcy is created only after he demonstrates his arrogant behaviour and offends her by refusing to dance with her. The film Elizabeth, on the other hand, is more impulsive and rather quick in forming and expressing her opinion. At the Netherfield ball, she turns to her friend Charlotte to ask: "So, which of the painted peacocks is our Mr Bingley?" (*P&P* 2005; 0:06:23) in the instant Mr Bingley, his sister and Mr Darcy enter the room. Both gentlemen are dressed in darkish colours so we can hardly believe that this remark is targeted at their clothes. Elizabeth could not have based this derisive comment on any previous knowledge of the gentlemen, so it

must result from her prejudice of the two, her thoughtlessness, or her desire to become the centre of attention among her friends. Further, she immediately makes fun of Mr Darcy by saying: "He looks miserable, poor soul." And after Charlotte informs her that he owns half of Derbyshire, she quickly adds: "The miserable half." (*P&P* 2005; 0:06:40) Such behaviour is not in line with the notion of Elizabeth we get from the pages of the book; the film presents her as a pert adolescent which makes it easier for the target viewer category - i.e. teenage and adolescent girls - to identify with her.

The film version also puts more emphasis on Elizabeth's slight impudence in her relationship to her mother. Although she clearly loves her mother, Elizabeth is sensible of her occasional follies, and is not afraid to be a little cheeky to her. When Jane falls ill at Netherfield and her sister is alarmed by her letter, Mrs Bennet rejoices[4] in it and observes: "People do not die of colds." to which Elizabeth promptly adds: "But she may perish with the shame of having such a mother." (*P&P* 2005; 0:16:20) This open revolt against her mother shows a great deal of insolence. In that respect, she resembles the present day teenagers who generally do not treat their parents with respect so much as the previous generations did.

The Elizabeth played by Jennifer Ehle is well aware of her mother's improper behaviour, and we can often see a sardonic expression on her face which tells us her disapproval with her mother's conduct. Although her father's ironic remarks to his wife bring a smile to Elizabeth's face, she never actually ventures to criticize her mother in her presence.

Keira Knightley is also a much more straightforward Elizabeth than the one we know from the pages of the book. At the assembly ball, she openly acknowledges that she overheard Darcy's criticism of her. Darcy's question: "So, what do you recommend to encourage affection?" triggers her bold response: "Dancing. Even if one's partner is barely tolerable." (*P&P* 2005; 0:12:48) In addition, the film Elizabeth is more quick-tempered than the one played by Ehle, she loses her temper after Lady Catherine's inquisitorial visit at Longbourn. Her family naturally wants to know why Lady Catherine came to see her, but Elizabeth is only able to shout at them angrily: "For once in your life, leave me alone!" (*P&P* 2005; 1:46:49)

One more variation we can notice in the character of Elizabeth is that she is more negative and bitter in the film than the original suggests. During a conversation

[4] It was Mrs Bennet's scheme to send Jane to Netherfield on horseback instead of a carriage because bad weather might prevent her returning home, and thus give her a chance of meeting Mr Bingley.

with Jane at the Netherfield ball, Elizabeth expresses her opinion on men by using the words "humourless poppycocks" (*P&P* 2005; 0:05:54). In addition, when her aunt and uncle try to persuade her to join them on their holiday, Elizabeth bitterly observes: "Believe me; men are either eaten up with arrogance or stupidity. If they are amiable, they are so easily led; they have no minds of their own whatsoever." (*P&P* 2005; 1:15:43) reacting thus to Mary's quoting Byron's famous words[5]. Such a comment comes as a surprise from the always light-hearted Elizabeth, it shows her bitter disappointment at the turn of the preceding events. Suddenly, it does not remind us of the girl who oozes "ease and liveliness" (Austen 239; ch.50) from the pages of *Pride and Prejudice*.

The final scene (of the film) – the tête-à-tête between Elizabeth and her father, shows us the difference in Elizabeth's perception of the whole affair between herself and Darcy. Keira Knightley asserts: "I was wrong. I was entirely wrong about him." (*P&P* 2005; 1:52:40) She seems to take all the blame for the misunderstanding between them on herself: "We misjudged him, papa. Me more than anyone...in...in every way, not just in this matter" (*P&P* 2005; 1:53:35) Jennifer Ehle, on the other hand, is not so outspoken in the same situation. She does not account for the change in her opinion so openly: "Indeed, he has no improper pride. He is perfectly amiable. If you only knew his generous nature. I didn't always love him. But I love him now so very dearly. He is truly the best man I have ever known." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 6; 0:45:30) We can presume that she is conscious of the fact that both of them have made mistakes.

The differences in the depiction of Elizabeth Bennet, in terms of correspondence to the original, are more prominent in the film. Elizabeth's character was approximated to present-day adolescent in order to provide better grounds for identification. She is more emotional, but at the same time less expansive as far as her secrets are concerned. In the miniseries, Elizabeth does not deviate from Austen's descriptions, therefore she is a more faithful representation.

2.2 Mr Darcy

Mr Darcy is obviously meant to be the romantic hero of the story. Nevertheless, he occupies only about thirty per cent of Jane Austen's novel. He could not be so

[5] "What are men to rocks and mountains?" (qtd. in Austen 121; ch.27) Elizabeth herself enthusiastically quotes it in the original, when she is invited to accompany her aunt and uncle on holiday.

'neglected' in either of the adaptations, especially the BBC version with its five hour-time frame could afford some free interpretations and development of the character of Mr Darcy.

Jane Austen describes Darcy as a tall, handsome ("much handsomer that Mr Bingley" (Austen 10; ch. 3) but "not so handsome as Wickham" (Austen 197; ch. 43)) twenty-eight-year-old man who is very quickly given a label of being proud, disagreeable, and above his company. He must then struggle through the rest of the novel to show Elizabeth (and the readers) that it is not quite so true and to reveal his real character.

The actors Colin Firth (aged 35 in 1995) and Matthew MacFadyen (aged 31 in 2005), both of them slender and good-looking, played the part of Mr Darcy with elegance and spark but the respective final outcomes are significantly different.

If we take a closer look at the scene of the first ball where Darcy is introduced, we get a very different idea of Darcy's character. Colin Firth tries to be in line with the bad qualities attributed to his character throughout the novel: "haughty, reserved, and fastidious, and his manners, though well-bred, were not inviting" (Austen 15; ch. 4). When he and his friend Bingley first arrive in the assembly rooms, Darcy stands behind his friend in a reserved manner, with a disapproval written all over his face. Having been introduced to Mrs Bennet and her two eldest daughters, he does not respond to Mrs Bennet's friendly suggestion and leaves them without a single word of excuse.

In comparison with that, Matthew MacFadyen is clearly centralized on entering the assembly room with his party, and then even walks through the crowd a few steps before Bingley and his sister. His expression is suggestive of shyness rather than haughtiness. When he glimpses Elizabeth in the crowd for the first time, Darcy quickly turns his head away to avoid her look – something a proud and ostentatiously self-confident man would hardly do. He does not speak to anybody until he is addressed by Elizabeth herself to whom he gives such a quick and uninviting answer that it puts an end to their conversation. Apart from the insulting remark Darcy makes about Elizabeth when Bingley tries to persuade him to dance, we do not witness any other instances of pride or claim to superiority from him. He does not even support Caroline's derogatory comments. Consequently, it is more plausible that Elizabeth feels less repulsion to Darcy later on in the film than the original suggests.

Let us now take a closer look at the roots of Darcy being perceived as he is in the book. The most frequently used epithets for Mr Darcy in the first part of the book

are "proud", "disagreeable", and "conceited"[6]. Under a closer examination, this impression of "pride" that he seems to emanate from Darcy can in fact be broken down to several partial characteristics.

Firstly, "pride" itself of course forms an essential part of the cluster. Darcy seems to be aware of the fact that he may be regarded as a proud man, and does not seem to be disconcerted by this. This is quite obvious from the riposte he uses to fend off Elizabeth's accusation of his character faults: "Yes, vanity is a weakness indeed. But pride – where there is a real superiority of mind, pride will be always under good regulation." (Austen 47; ch. 11) The exact words were used by Colin Firth in the BBC adaptation. The dialogue was changed for the film version, so when Elizabeth confronts Darcy: "Are you too proud, Mr Darcy? And would you consider pride a fault or a virtue?" (*P&P* 2005; 0:21:50), his reply: "That I couldn't say." (*P&P* 2005; 0:21:52) points to the fact that he does not necessarily consider pride a good character quality, and may not be aware of his giving the impression of a proud man.

Secondly, Darcy is in many respects a very sincere person. He speaks his mind which in some situations verges on an almost brutal candour, and can easily be mistaken for arrogance. Darcy's legendary "tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt *me*" (Austen 11; ch. 3; italics in the original) critique of Elizabeth can easily be seen as a sign of his complete frankness with his friend rather than the evidence of his arrogance. In the scene where Mrs Bennet and her daughters visit Jane at Netherfield en masse, Darcy offends Mrs Bennet by merely expressing his opinion on living in the countryside: "In a country neighbourhood you move in a very confined and unvarying society." (Austen 35; ch. 9) His honesty again results in his being classified as arrogant and above his company.

Thirdly, the characteristic which may be mistaken as pride is the social restraint that Darcy undergoes in the society. He is not as outgoing as Bingley is, it can be inferred that he disguises his shyness as aloofness. Caroline Bingley informs Jane that "he never speaks much, unless among his intimate acquaintance" (Austen 17; ch. 5)

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[6] "He was the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world", "he is a most disagreeable, horrid man ... so high and so conceited" (Austen 13; ch. 3); "for he is such a disagreeable man", "His pride..." (Austen 17; ch. 5); "I think him very disagreeable", "Everybody is disgusted with his pride." (Austen 63; ch. 16); "the very pride of this Mr Darcy", "such abominable pride as his", "family pride, and *filial* pride ... also *brotherly* pride" (Austen 66; ch. 16; italics in the original); "His pride never deserts him" (Austen 67; ch.16); "having heard Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy formerly spoken of as a very proud, ill-natured boy" (Austen 113; ch. 25)

Another ample proof that Darcy is in fact unsociable and shy can be found in the piano scene at Rosings where he talks to Elizabeth about his nature.

Both pride and shyness can, to some extent, be substantiated by the original book. If we look at the realization of the piano scene at Rosings where Elizabeth teases Darcy about his unwillingness to dance at the Netherfield ball, we can see how the creators chose different sentences from the original text to support *their* idea of Mr Darcy's character. Colin Firth generally tends to represent a proud and self-confident Mr Darcy whereas Matthew MacFadyen a shy and insecure one.

The BBC adaptation offers us Darcy's rather stiff reply: "I fear I am ill-qualified to recommend myself to strangers." (*P&P* 1995; episode 3 – 0:38:31) In the film, Darcy's defence shows the core of his problem: "I knew nobody beyond my own party." (*P&P* 2005; 1:01:50) In both versions, Darcy's next explanation of his peculiar behaviour: "I have not the talent which some posses of conversing easily with strangers." (*P&P* 1995; episode 3 – 0:38:53)/ "I do not have the talent of conversing with people I have never met before." (*P&P* 2005; 1:02:11) is almost identical with the original as far as the wording is concerned, but the manner in which it is delivered differs – Firth speaks firmly after a moment's hesitation in which he is more likely looking for the right words than plucking up the courage to say them; MacFadyen adds his justification in a hesitant whisper. He is afterwards silenced by Elizabeth's incisive comment: "Perhaps, you should take your aunt's advice, and practice." (*P&P* 2005; 1:02:16) to which he does not find the courage or verbal skill to counter, and his shyness is therefore further underlined. On the contrary, Darcy played by Firth replies to Elizabeth's teasing comment quite readily, and finishes their debate with his very accurate observation: "We neither of us perform to strangers" (*P&P* 1995; episode 3 – 0:39:20)

The justification for Darcy's pride underscored in the BBC version can be found in chapter 58 of the original where Darcy speaks to Elizabeth about his upbringing: "I have been a selfish being all my life. … As a child, … I was not taught to correct my temper … left to follow them [principles] in pride and conceit … [my parents] allowed, encouraged, almost taught me to be selfish and overbearing – to care for none beyond my own family circle, to think meanly of all the rest of the world…" (Austen 284; ch. 58)

Another important difference in the character of Mr Darcy in the two respective versions is the depth of Darcy's affection for Elizabeth or rather his internal struggle to

overcome it. The miniseries stays faithful to the original and copies the scenes as well as the dialogues. Darcy tries to suppress his feelings as long as possible. Although the viewer knows more and can notice Darcy's affection for Elizabeth, he does not give her any hint. When they dance together at the Netherfield ball, Darcy worries that Elizabeth will get a false impression of him and suggests: "I wish, Miss Bennet, that you would not attempt to sketch my character at the present moment. I fear that the performance would reflect no credit on either of us." (*P&P* 1995; episode 2 – 0:36:13). But the playful remark from Elizabeth informing him that she may never have another opportunity only triggers a rather cold reply: "I would by no means suspend any pleasure of yours." (*P&P* 1995; episode 2 – 0:36:20). After that, Darcy puts an end to seeing his object of affection. He intends to overcome his feelings by separating himself from Elizabeth. But they eventually meet again at Rosings and Hunsford parsonage where Darcy finally gives in to his emotions. Before his actual proposal, he visits Elizabeth and drops a hint by asking her: "You would not wish to be always near Longbourn, I think?" (*P&P* 1995; episode 3 – 0:42:09). At this moment, Darcy must have their marriage already in mind but his appearance still remains calm and restrained.

In the cinematic version, the development of Darcy's love for Elizabeth and his effort to overcome his feelings have a much shorter duration. In fact, we do not have the chance to see Darcy's resistance at all. Already at the Netherfield ball, his intentions are so obvious that they cannot escape our notice. Again, Elizabeth tries to find out the truth about Darcy and Wickham, and learn about his character: "I hear such different accounts of you as puzzle me exceedingly." (*P&P* 2005; 0:39:18). This time, Darcy replies: "I hope to afford you more clarity in the future." (*P&P* 2005; 0:39:22) thus telling that he intends to spend more time with her in the future which simply implies his plan. Their next meeting at Rosings is no coincidence (as we learn from Darcy some time later); he comes there because of his strong desire to see Elizabeth again. The hero himself creates his fate by yielding to his temptation.

In some aspects, the two adaptations of the novel are like mirror images: where Colin Firth resists giving a little hint, Matthew MacFadyen does not and vice versa. When MacFadyen in his role finds Elizabeth on her own in the parsonage, he does not talk about or ask anything that would be suggestive of his marital intentions. The contrast between his behaviour and the behaviour of Darcy played by Firth (and the original as well) in this scene is immense. Darcy fidgeting with his gloves is extremely

nervous, and by no means sure of himself. He looks like he is trying to find courage to propose to Elizabeth at the very moment. We can quite reasonably suspect that he does not struggle with his reason and family expectations but his shyness and lack of confidence. When she politely offers him some tea, his "no, thank you" (*P&P* 2005; 1:03:41) is rather a desperate sigh. The sound of Charlotte coming home is a signal for him to leave the house instantly.

The character traits of the two Darcys are also reflected in the actual proposal to Elizabeth. The miniseries Darcy takes his time before he starts with his declaration of love. He walks to and fro, breathes heavily, and almost frowns at Elizabeth. He probably feels some kind of nervousness but once he starts speaking, we can see his confidence and arrogance coming back with every breath he takes. In contrast, the film Darcy noiselessly approaches Elizabeth, and before she is able to recover from the shock of seeing him (and probably before he loses all his courage), he pours out everything in one breath, making his speech almost incomprehensible. The way he speaks is again more suggestive of his shyness than his arrogance which is only expressed through the content of his declaration. He confesses among other things: "I came to Rosings for the single object of seeing you. I had to see you." (*P&P* 2005; 1:06:11). The 2005 film stresses Darcy's deliberate arrival to Rosings in order to see Elizabeth, whereas the miniseries treats it rather as a mere coincidence. In the original, the clues in the narrative are not explicit, but rather seem to suggest that Darcy planned to visit his aunt for other reasons than seeing Elizabeth: "Easter was approaching, and the week preceding it was to bring an addition to the family at Rosings … Elizabeth had heard soon after her arrival that Mr Darcy was expected there in the course of a few weeks" (Austen 133; ch. 30) Nevertheless, the film-makers of the 2005 film chose to see this original passage as inexplicit, and exploit it in order to underscore the depth of Darcy's desire.

On the whole, the miniseries underlines Darcy's pride, whereas the film his shyness. The deviation from the original is, nevertheless, manifested much more in the film version. MacFadyen bears the stamps of a more romantic hero – being driven by his passion rather than his rationality, as seen in his confession of the reason for coming to Rosings.

2.3 Mrs Bennet

Mrs Bennet is another character which Jane Austen chose to depict as a caricature rather than an authentic person. Together with Mr Collins, she personifies the laughing stock for everybody (and a huge embarrassment for her daughters Jane and Elizabeth). Jane Austen was extremely severe upon Mrs Bennet and described her as "a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented, she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news" (Austen 7; ch. 1) The only merit that this woman ever had was youth and beauty which captivated Mr Bennet so much that he first overlooked her "weak understanding and illiberal mind" (Austen 183; 42) and married her.

Alison Steadman and Brenda Blethyn starring as Mrs Bennet in the miniseries and the film respectively are both beautiful middle-aged women whose appearance need not be discussed here. What is more interesting is their totally different approach to Mrs Bennet's personality.

The BBC version tries to capture the original character of the mother as much as possible. She remains a nervous and invariably silly woman who is only interested in gossip and prospective husbands for her daughters. In some instances, Mrs Bennet is made even more irritating than the novel suggests. When Jane gets a letter from Caroline Bingley containing an invitation for dinner, Alison Steadman in her role is so impatient to know its contents that she rushes towards her daughter exclaiming: "Oh, well, that is a good sign, too. Give it to me!" (*P&P* 1995; episode 1– 0:32:50) and grabs it and recites its parts to the whole family sitting at the breakfast table. The original Jane was so kind to satisfy her impatient mother by reading the letter aloud herself. The film-makers did not attempt to adjust neither Mrs Bennet's behaviour nor her character, therefore the majority of sentences she says can be traced back to the original itself. The conclusion is that there are not any significant changes in the character of Mrs Bennet played by Alison Steadman when compared to its original.

However, if we take a closer look at the 2005 film, we can clearly see that Brenda Blethyn's part is considerably altered. Mrs Bennet is no longer a feeble-minded creature that is an object of ridicule most of the time. On the contrary, she is portrayed as a loving mother whose eager interest in the welfare of her children is only occasionally tainted by her silly remarks in the society, and more surprisingly a wife

who is dearly loved by her husband. Instead of treating his wife with sarcasm, Mr Bennet teases her quite affectionately.

We can notice more sense and propriety in Mrs Bennet for example in the scene of Lydia's invitation to Brighton. The original mother (also in the miniseries) first joins her younger daughters in their grief for the departing regiment, and she unsuccessfully tries to persuade her husband to take the whole family to Brighton with her usual "lamentations resounding perpetually through Longbourn House" (Austen 178; ch. 41). But when her youngest daughter is invited by the Forsters to go there, "the delight of Mrs Bennet" is "scarcely to be described" (Austen 178, ch. 41). Lydia's lucky prospect is all that "consoled her from her melancholy conviction" (Austen 180; ch. 41). She shares her daughter's enormous joy, and they both do not hesitate to show it despite the fact that it is unpleasant to the rest of the family, particularly Kitty: "their [Lydia's and Mrs Bennet's] raptures continued, with little intermission, to the very day of Lydia's leaving home" (Austen 180; ch. 41). In the film, the mother only drily observes: "If I could but go to Brighton … a little sea-bathing would set me up very nicely" (*P&P* 2005; 1:14:09) when passing by the room where Lydia displays her triumph, and Kitty moans about her mishap of not being chosen by Mrs Forster as well. Though the lines are taken from the novel itself, they are not spoken in a tone that would be suggestive of any preference of Lydia or any intense pleasure at her going away. She bears the whole situation rather philosophically.

Another occasion where Brenda Blethyn as Mrs Bennet appears to be more sensible than her role model is how she copes with the news of Lydia's elopement. She keeps to her bed and feels all kinds of spasms and pains but – unlike her literary counterpart – is able to understand the dreadful consequences for her daughters that must arise from this episode: "You are all ruined. Who will take you now with a fallen sister?" (*P&P* 2005; 1:29:12) The BBC-fashioned Mrs Bennet, on the other hand, responds to the same scene by numerous lamentations taken from the original. And although she exclaims: "We are all ruined forever!" (*P&P* 1995; episode 5 – 0:21:56) on her brother's entering the room, she does not realise the truth of her words – it is just a part of her usual theatrical behaviour. She is more passionate about her instructions for the wedding dress of her beloved daughter.

In addition, Blethyn's Mrs Bennet is presented as a stronger and more determined woman. She is able to defend her point of view and is not afraid to resist her brightest daughter. When Elizabeth tries to subdue her mother's sheer delight from the

news of Lydia's oncoming marriage by saying: "Is that really all you think about?", Mrs Bennet readily replies: "When you have five daughters, Lizzy, tell me what else will occupy your thoughts. And then perhaps you'll understand." (*P&P* 2005; 1:31:18) This only further underscores the fact that Mrs Bennet is clearly meant to have more substance and credibility as a viable character.

The last aspect that makes Mrs Bennet more likeable in the 2005 film is her relationship with her daughters. Even though the original character clearly prefers her youngest daughter Lydia while resenting her husband's preference of Elizabeth, Blethyn does not give us evidence that any of her daughters is a favoured one. In return, she receives more real affection from her offspring. Even the usually critical Elizabeth hugs her soothingly when she cries over Lydia's departure. Mrs Bennet's original phrase: "...there's nothing so bad as parting with one's friends" (Austen 254; ch. 53) was changed into a more motherly remark: "There's nothing so bad as parting with one's children" (*P&P* 2005; 1:33:40), and Elizabeth's sarcastic comment "It must make you better satisfied that your other four [daughters] are single." (Austen 254; ch. 53) was omitted.

In sum, the miniseries remained more faithful to the original description of Mrs Bennet. However, the film screenwriter tried to adjust her to be a more plausible person, so she seems more authentic than her caricature-like miniseries counterpart. Mrs Bennet's character was much improved in the film, particularly by toning down her silliness. As a result, the film version, unfortunately, omits much of the farcical satire of the original novel.

2.4 Mr Bennet

The father of the five sisters is a man of "philosophic composure" (Austen 229; ch. 48), slightly eccentric but with a keen sense of humour, which helps him overcome the difficulties of his uneven marriage. As regards the domestic matters, the head of the family is as unconcerned as a man can be. He does not like to be involved in the 'trivialities' of the everyday life; he observes how his wife blunders through life but does not take the trouble to take some actions and spare his daughters from embarrassment. Nothing is more alluring to him than the quiet refuge of his study and a book in his hand.

Benjamin Whitrow playing the apathetic father in the miniseries shows the kind of disrespect for his wife that the original suggests. He does not have any regard for her, and teases her on many occasions for his own amusement with ironic remarks which are indecipherable for Mrs Bennet. Whitrow as Mr Bennet is neither an affectionate husband nor an attentive father. He is unable to appreciate any of his three younger daughters, and often wonders at their silliness but does not contribute to their improvement. Jane and Elizabeth are more fortunate because he respects them more than the rest. As the original Mr Bennet, who "must throw in a good word for" his "little Lizzy" (Austen 6; ch.1), there can be no doubt as to who is Whitrow's favourite. He does not even try to hide his preference of his second daughter before the others: "They are all silly and ignorant like other girls. Well, Lizzy has a little more wit than the rest." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 1; 0:05:52) Elizabeth is therefore a regular visitor in his study where she can enjoy her father's full attention.

The close relationship between the father and his daughter was not overlooked in the BBC version of the novel. His great affection for her can be perceived on a number of occasions. As Elizabeth leaves to visit Charlotte in Hunsford, her father kisses her hand saying: "You'll be very much missed, my dear." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:24:13) Later on – as if a confirmation of what Mr Bennet had said – Elizabeth rejects Lady Catherine's instruction to prolong her visit because her father wishes her back home: "He wrote last week to hurry my return." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 4; 0:14:13) Mr Bennet's also shows genuine respect for his second daughter by admitting to her his own faults as the provider of the family: "I wish I had laid by an annual sum to bribe worthless young men to marry my daughters, but I have not, I confess. … I should have taken better care of you all." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 6; 0:03:45)

The other Mr Bennet, played by Donald Sutherland, appears to be much less flawed as far as his family responsibilities are concerned, and therefore more amiable than his predecessor. Sutherland's Mr Bennet treasures his moments of solitude but – unlike his unsociable original – takes part in the usual social events of the neighbourhood; for example, he joins his wife and daughters for the first ball at the assembly rooms in Meryton. Apart from his books, he also finds pleasure in plants and insects which enhances the depth of his character. Moreover, his eccentricity (which was not much worked on in the BBC version) is very nicely depicted in the scene where he talks to a pig: "Not going to be famous, our pig. Black on the back, but not related to the learned pig of Norwich. Now that pig is …" (*P&P* 2005; 0:18:16)

Mr Bennet's parental qualities have been improved to some extent. His affections for his daughters are much more balanced than in the original. He does not show any favouritism to Elizabeth, though it is obvious (particularly in the final scene) that he loves her dearly. Moreover, we can witness his coming to hug and comfort Mary after her embarrassing piano display at the Netherfield ball which shows a genuine care for his third daughter. He also omits commentaries about his daughters being silly girls.

As for the relationship of Mr Bennet and his wife, the two live in a more harmonious and respectable marriage than Austen created. The positive alteration of Mrs Bennet's character enabled her husband to respect her more and consequently show true affection for her. Endearments such as "blossom" (*P&P* 2005; 0:18:24) are spoken without any trace of irony in Mr Bennet's voice. He does not tease his wife as much as Whitrow does – a fact that was probably also influenced by the limited timespan of the film. In addition, the camera takes the viewers into their bedroom and shows the couple huddled together in bed rejoicing over Jane's engagement towards the end of the film. Their domestic felicity is thus almost perfect.

On the whole, Mr Bennet is depicted in both versions as a fully developed, intricate character. Yet, the changes that were made in the film to improve Mr Bennet as a father and particularly as a husband deprive the film of much of the original satire, which was already pointed out in the case of Mrs Bennet. Austen's essential message that the choice of a marriage partner is crucial for the future happiness of a couple, which is principally underscored by Mr and Mrs Bennet's relationship in the original, is conveyed only through the examples of Lydia's and Charlotte's marriages in the film.

2.5 Mr Collins

The pages of *Pride and Prejudice* show the clergyman Mr Collins as a caricature of a man. His absurd behaviour, pompous style, and ever-present self-importance are a constant source of humour both for the other characters of the novel and the readers. To portray such a character on screen is a difficult task indeed. The next few paragraphs will attempt to compare the different ways in which this character was fleshed out in the two film versions, focusing namely on their varying degrees of authenticity.

The first problem with every character that the film-makers have to tackle is the physical appearance. Unlike the book, film leaves us virtually no room for imagination. The visual aspect is crucial for the success of a film. In this case, the directors, along

with their casting crews, were more or less given a free hand because Jane Austen was a minimalist as far as the physical description of her characters was concerned. She did not linger on her characters' appearance; their behaviour and psyche were more important for painting the characters.

In the book, Mr Collins is described as "a tall, heavy-looking young man of five-and-twenty" (Austen 53; ch. 13). His behaviour is "grave and stately, and his manners "very formal" (Austen 53; ch. 13). Such is Austen's only attempt to describe the clergyman's looks throughout the book. It is interesting to note that she often draws our attention to the height of her characters rather then their hair colour or the shape of their noses.

Jean E. Graham points out that stature tends to be a sign of status, elegance, and the ability to attract the other sex in Jane Austen's novels. If we take the example of *Pride and Prejudice*, at the first ball "Mr Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person" (Austen 10; ch. 3) but Mr Bingley's height is not mentioned at all. Lady Catherine de Bourgh is also described as tall. Caroline Bingley tries to draw Darcy's attention to her height by comparing it to his sister's height. And Lydia Bennet is not afraid of a lack of partners at a ball by exclaiming "... for though I *am* the youngest, I'm the tallest" (Austen 9; ch. 2). Nevertheless, Jane Austen was not always consistent in attributing the same qualities to her characters along with a certain height as we can see from Mr Collins' case, for he is neither good looking nor of high rank.

The film-makers disregarded one of the few adjectives Jane Austen had chosen to describe Mr Collins. Both film versions display him as rather short - slightly shorter than Elizabeth, and a great deal shorter than Mr Darcy. The difference in heights of the two men is used to achieve a humourous effect in the same scene in both films. When Mr Collins tries to introduce himself to Mr Darcy at the Netherfield ball, Darcy is able to look down on him both metaphorically and literally. In the second version, the joke is taken a little further. Darcy almost hits Collins' face with his elbow when turning around. Such an attempt to ridicule a character which is already comical enough in his nature is perhaps unnecessary.

As for the other epithets describing the physical appearance of the original Mr Collins, David Bamber (41) and Tom Hollander (38) who play the character in the first and second version respectively are both much older than twenty-five, and they do not by any means pretend to appear so. David Bamber is (in his role) an overweight, slow

and clumsy clergyman with his hair bizarrely framing his face and his head proudly sticking out.

In contrast, Tom Hollander's thin and short body makes Mr Collins look almost fragile. There is not such an obvious air of self-importance around him which is so often mentioned in the original; he rather gives the impression of a man who is uneasy in his skin. Although there are differences in the physical appearance of the two actors, the more interesting and striking thing is the way they coped with the character's behaviour.

Let us now attempt to enter into Mr Collins' psyche. The pages of the book contain numerous repetitions of Mr Collins' self-importance, servility, pompous style, and stupidity. His manners are formal, obsequious, and absurd. Firstly, the clergyman is always ready to offer his humble apologies and beg pardon. Moreover, he does so in a preposterous and often lengthy way as in "he continued to apologise for about a quarter of an hour" (Austen 54; ch. 13). Secondly, he enthusiastically worships people of higher status than himself, especially his patroness Lady Catherine de Bourgh. And thirdly, he is ready to speak on every occasion, even though his capacities in this skill are rather limited, which is a great source of sardonic humour in the novel.

The BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice* tries to remain as close to the original as possible, so the clergyman's grotesque behaviour stays almost unchanged. The viewers are first introduced to Mr Collins through his letter to Mr Bennet written in an unusually pompous style which is, with only a few minor omissions, an exact copy of the original one. We are thus prepared what to expect of this character. David Bamber plays the slimy clergyman in accordance with Austen's descriptions; self-conceit and stupidity radiate from him.

In some instances, however, Mr Collins is allowed to have a little bit more sense than is implicated in the novel, for example, in the scene of the fiasco after he proposes to his cousin Elizabeth. His injured pride does not permit him to stay any longer with the Bennets, and he decides to leave. Kitty informs us of that by telling Charlotte Lucas: "Mamma's beside herself, he says he won't stay another night" (*P&P* 1995; episode 2 – 0:51:20). In the original, Mr Collins' plans and pride could not be shaken by this unexpected failure: "... his plan did not appear in the least affected by it. He was always to have gone on Saturday, and to Saturday he still meant to stay." (Austen 93; ch. 21)

This instance is perhaps compensated in another scene where Mr Collins appears in a more grotesque light than in the original. When Elizabeth visits the Hunsford parsonage much later in the story, Mr Collins runs towards his wife, her sister Maria,

and Elizabeth frantically waving his hat to inform the ladies of the approaching visitors - Mr Darcy and Colonel Fitzwilliam, and of the need to return home immediately. Completely out of breath and very excitedly, David Bamber as Mr Collins shouts: "Make haste, make haste!" (*P&P* 1995; episode 3 – 0:33:21) thus showing his ingrained devotion to the higher classes. This does not correspond with the dignified manners he always tries to maintain, but proves even further that he is capable of being ridiculous under any circumstances. In the corresponding passage of the original, Mr Collins returns home already accompanied by the two gentlemen, not before their arrival, so he is prevented from exhibiting his "zealous" jog.

The character of Mr Collins is given as much space as possible in the miniseries. All the major events are preserved. Naturally, some of Mr Collins' letters are omitted, and his courtship with Charlotte Lucas reduced to minimum. However, the screenwriter of this version allowed the clergyman an additional appearance before the camera. Perhaps because letters are quite difficult to handle on screen, and because the correspondence is abundant in the original, Mr Collins turns up at Longbourn to condole to the Bennets during the critical period of Lydia's elopement. The speech he delivers to Jane, Elizabeth and Mary is the same as the letter in the novel, but the effect is much more insufferable because of his physical presence. This scene has an advantage over the original – Mr Collins is able accentuate various parts of his oral condolence. David Bamber uses this opportunity to stretch the caricature of his character to its limits. Expressing his sympathy, Bamber put emphasis on the word "sincerely" (*P&P* 1995; 0:31:53) achieving thus a completely adverse effect of what he as Mr Collins intends, i.e. to sound truthful. He also further proves his boundless adoration of Lady Catherine: "For who, *as Lady Catherine herself condescendingly says*, will connect themselves with such a family." (*P&P* 1995; 0:33:01; italics mine)

Tom Hollander, who played the part of Mr Collins in the film, had a more difficult task to do. His presence in the story was cut down enormously, so he had very little time to show or develop his character. Nevertheless, he manages to portray Mr Collins quite convincingly, even though in a completely different light than the devoted readers of the novel would imagine. Mr Collins' first (and only) arrival at Longbourn is simply stated by Mr Bennet holding a letter from him but not making any comments about the visitor. Instead, the attention is drawn to Elizabeth talking to her friend Charlotte, and thus informing the viewer that Mr Collins is the "dreaded cousin" (*P&P* 2005; 0:24:57) who will inherit everything after their father's death. The viewers do not

know what to expect from this character. The director of this adaptation prepared a small surprise for those who anticipated the extremely pompous clergyman from the pages of Jane Austen's novel.

During the conversation at dinner, the visitor proves his formal behaviour, admiration for higher classes, and extreme silliness. But the pride and pomposity that envelops Mr Collins in the book is not present in the case of Tom Hollander. He appears to be uneasy, and at the same time tries hard to impress the family. Unfortunately, he does not know how to show off in a natural way, and so instead of being admired he is laughed at. Although he is a comical character, we cannot help but pity him at the same time as well. We can also trace nothing apologetic in his manners.

Hollander's Collins is, on the other hand, very tenacious. He is determined to marry one of the Bennet girls, and when he consults his choice with their mother, he does not mind a bit that she instantly turns his attention from Jane to Elizabeth: "Indeed. Indeed. Very agreeable alternative." (*P&P* 2005; 0:28:21) In the scene of the Netherfield ball, we get a glimpse of him resolutely making his way through the crowd on his quest for Elizabeth. However, his methods of winning Elizabeth's heart are pathetic. While dancing with her, he steps forward from the line of dancers and says: "It is my intention, if I may be so bold, to remain close to you throughout the evening." (*P&P* 2005; 0:36:41) A few minutes after that, he already starts planning his proposal while plucking the petals of a little flower in his hand, at least that is what the spectator might legitimately conclude.

One of the crucial scenes for the portrayal of Mr Collins is his proposal to Elizabeth. In the miniseries, David Bamber repeats the lines of the original, and behaves in his usual pompous and self-assured style. In the film version, the clergyman's approach is different from the original. On his entering the breakfast room he is not spotted by anybody except for Mary. His insignificance is thus marked. After the family very reluctantly leave their unfinished breakfast, Mr Collins moves closer to Elizabeth and presents a ridiculous little flower (his idea of increasing the romantic atmosphere), which he places in front of Elizabeth, to support his declaration. While the original Mr Collins delivers his speech in his usual "solemn composure" (Austen 85; ch. 19), Tom Hollander is evidently nervous and maybe even a little embarrassed from the novelty of the situation. He is unable to look Elizabeth in the eyes, and his posture reminds us of a little schoolboy who is being examined. Hollander as Mr Collins even ventures to kneel down before Elizabeth but it cannot help him to succeed. His

embarrassment is completed when the door bursts open and the Bennet girls giggle at his failure. Again, one cannot help but pity the clergyman rather than laugh at him. Mr Collins is no more a caricature but a real unfortunate man.

The next and at the same time the last chance that we get to see Mr Collins (Hollander) is at his parsonage when Elizabeth comes to visit Charlotte. One of the scenes gives us the opportunity to have a look at him in his profession of a clergyman. As in his personal life, he preaches nervously and without self-confidence. Moreover, the film-makers decided to laugh at Mr Collins for the last time, and let him misuse the word 'intercourse' during his sermon: "I have now principally in view those objects which are only to be obtained through intercourse ... forgive me, through *the* intercourse of friendship or civility" (*P&P* 2005; 1:04:21). Nevertheless, the attention is immediately turned to the main heroine and the oncoming semi-climax between herself and Mr Darcy. Mr Collins is very quickly forgotten.

Tom Hollander's rendition of Mr Collins is remarkably realistic in spite of the limited time he was given in the film. Fortunately, the time reduction did not result in the reduction of the psychology of this character. The shift in Collins' character enabled him to become an authentic person. However, he is no more *the* Mr Collins from Jane Austen's novel. David Bamber remained balancing on the edge of caricature, staying truthful to the original but being a less convincing as a realistic human being.

2.6 Jane Bennet

The eldest Miss Bennet's most prominent characteristic is her beauty. She is by all means the most attractive of the sisters. Bingley pronounces her to be "the most beautiful creature" (Austen 11; ch. 3) he ever saw after a few minutes' acquaintance, and even the critical eye of Mr Darcy must admit she is extremely good-looking. In addition to that, Jane has a sweet and friendly disposition. Her general cheerfulness and modesty ensure she is liked wherever she goes. Nevertheless, she is much calmer that her sister Elizabeth, and does not show her feelings so openly.

Both adaptations portray Jane in accordance with Austen's descriptions. There are no significant changes in her character qualities – she remains a sweet-natured and affable young woman with a composed expression on her face. The chosen actresses, Susannah Harker in the BBC version and Rosamund Pike in the film, both have blond

hair and blue eyes – attributes representing the iconic image of an angelic face[7], which makes it easier for them to stand out from all the rest of the Bennet sisters, who are brunettes.

However, Harker is not as dazzling a beauty as we would expect. We cannot escape the feeling that in comparison with her sister Elizabeth the miniseries Jane looks quite insipid. Even though Susannah Harker was allowed much more space in the story than Rosamund Pike, it is the later that stands out as the beauty being capable of making a man fall in love with her at first sight. Pike embodies, in every respect, a charming Jane.

The relationship of Jane and Elizabeth, closest to her both in age and understanding, is idyllic in the original. Although Jane's general cheerfulness and serenity can persuade other people into the belief of her contentment, she does not hide her true feelings from her sister. The two confidantes share their thoughts and apprehensions on every subject. In the miniseries, Jane speaks openly with her sister just like in the book, and confesses to her: "It is just that I did … I'm afraid, I still do prefer Mr Bingley to any other man I've ever met. And Lizzy, I did believe he … but I was mistaken. That is all." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 4; 0:24:45) after her arrival from London. In the film, we do not see such a strong bond between the two sisters. When Jane returns home, she tries to persuade Elizabeth that her stay in London cured her of being in love with Bingley: "I'm quite over him, Lizzy. If he passed me in the street, I'd hardly notice." (*P&P* 2005; 1:13:26) Her insincerity with Elizabeth only puts more distance between the two.

One aspect about Jane that differs in the two versions is her opinion of Miss Bingley. Susannah Harker believes Caroline incapable of any guileful behaviour despite Elizabeth's suggestions until she meets Miss Bingley in London. Jane writes to her sister: "She made it very evident that she took no pleasure in seeing me." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:20:45) Caroline's contempt is so apparent that even the good-hearted Jane must confess she was misled in her true character.

Rosamund Pike, on the other hand, does not meet Caroline during her stay in London. She gets no evidence that what Elizabeth suggests about Miss Bingley is true, but she still changes her mind about her elegant friend. After Mr Bingley proposes to Jane, the two sisters have an intimate conversation in the evening. Jane informs

[7] "…as to Miss Bennet, he [Bingley] could not conceive an angel more beautiful." (Austen 15; ch. 4)

Elizabeth that Bingley did not know she had been in London; she accounts for Bingley's assumption that she was indifferent by saying: "No doubt poisoned by his pernicious sister." (*P&P* 2005; 1:43:38) It is very surprising that Jane, who always thinks the best about anybody, should make such a comment without any proof.

In this case, the more economical portrayal of Jane Bennet in the film version appears to be more convincing, mainly because Jane's substantial quality – her breathtaking beauty – was preserved. Jane's depiction in the miniseries is less successful due to the lack of this quality (helped by her rather insipid position in the story), even though her character was shaped more faithfully than in the film.

2.7 Mr Bingley

Mr Bingley, a rich young gentleman whose arrival at Netherfield causes a great deal of excitement among the mothers of unmarried daughters in the neighbourhood, is "just what a young man ought to be" (Austen 13; ch. 4) – handsome, lively and unreserved, and with such an easy temper that he could be "sure of being liked wherever he appeared" (Austen 15; ch. 4) He is, at the same time, very modest and in some respect almost diffident.

The role of this pleasant man was given to Crispin Bonham-Carter in the miniseries, and to Simon Woods in the latest film. Both of them fair, attractive, and with friendly features in their faces, are good representations of the good-looking Mr Bingley. But the resemblance between the two ends there.

Woods' bouffant hairstyle is a little unfortunate because it draws unnecessary attention to his already easily-noticeable red hair, and makes him appear rather silly. Quite surprisingly, it corresponds with his character qualities. Although we cannot deny him his share of attractiveness, once Bingley opens him mouth in the presence of Jane the general easiness, which a careful reader of the novel expects, is substituted by behaviour that is rather suggestive of – to put in his own words – an "unmitigated and comprehensive ass" (*P&P* 2005; 1:40:38). His first conversation with Jane is very clumsy; Mr Bingley smiles and jabbers awkwardly to explain his preference of outdoor activities to reading: "Oh, I mean, I can read, of course. And I'm not suggesting you can't read out of doors, of course." (*P&P* 2005; 0:08:28) Such a manner of speaking is more characteristic of an inexperienced adolescent than a sensible young man accustomed to society.

Other instances of Mr Bingley's slightly idiotic behaviour are the following. When Jane falls ill at Netherfield, the host visits her in her room and again turns the conversation into a laughing stock: "It's a pleasure. Oh, I mean; it's not a pleasure that she's ill. Of course not. It's a pleasure that she's here, being ill." (*P&P* 2005; 0:18:05) We can assume that his being in love with Jane accounts for his foolish behaviour but in the scene where Darcy, Caroline and Elizabeth discuss accomplished women, he laughs in an extremely silly way in reaction to Elizabeth's comment: "I never saw such a woman. She would certainly be a fearsome thing to behold." (*P&P* 2005; 0:20:37)

Although Crispin Bonham-Carter's rendition of Mr Bingley resembles the original character much more than Wood's, the attention is in many cases turned to the relationship of Darcy and Elizabeth rather than that of Jane's and himself. This results in Bingley's occasional insipidity in the miniseries. For example, in the scene of Jane's illness at Netherfield, it is Darcy not Bingley who we see inquiring after Jane's health; Bingley stays seated by the card table in the background with his back turned to the camera lens so that we can see only his profile. He contributes merely one sentence to the conversation throughout the whole course of the evening.

The relationship of Bingley and Darcy characterises, to some extent, Bingley's nature. Austen describes it as a "steady friendship, in spite of great opposition of character" (Austen 15; ch. 4) Nevertheless, it is obvious from the further description – he has "the firmest reliance" on Darcy's point of view, and "the highest opinion" (Austen 15; ch.4) of his judgment – as well as the events themselves that Bingley is in some aspects dependent on his friend.

The 1995 version of the novel emphasises Bingley's dependence on his closest friend, and ventures to insert several new dialogues in order to prove it. Bingley's lack of resolution is evident right from the start. In the opening scene, Bingley seeks his friend's support for his intention of leasing Netherfield: "Have I your approval?" (*P&P* 1995; episode 1 – 0:01:09) And his trust in Darcy's opinion does not change even after his friend confesses his concealing the knowledge of Jane's visit in London. In spite of that, he still wants Darcy's approval of his choice of marriage partner: "Then, I have your blessing?" Darcy, testing his independence, replies: "Do you need my blessing?" Even though Bingley responds negatively, he confirms his reliance of Darcy's opinion to some extent by adding: "No. But I should like to know I have it all the same." (*P&P* 1995; episode 6 – 0:22:32)

The film version did not allow much space for the character of Mr Bingley, and therefore his friendship with Darcy is only marginal. There is no evident dependence on Darcy on Bingley's side apart from his hurried departure from Netherfield. At the end of the story, Darcy is most valuable for Bingley not because of expressing his resolute opinions and judgments but because of his friendly support. He helps him to rehearse his proposal to Jane; Bingley's decision "I'll just go in and I'll just say it." needs only a little encouragement from his friend in form of Darcy's short firm answer: "Yes, exactly." (*P&P* 2005; 1:39:02) It proves that Bingley is in need of support, but it does not explicitly show his dependence on Darcy.

All in all, Mr Bingley is more faithfully depicted in the miniseries where the original was carefully followed. In the film, he becomes a comic character which is not in line with the novel. Bingley's comic is not of the satirical kind as can be traced in Mrs Bennet or Mr Collins (in the novel), but solely designed to appeal to the teenager and adolescent target audience who can quickly identify with the moments of embarrassment when 'courting'.

2.8 Mr Wickham

George Wickham is a young soldier who has "all the best part of beauty, a fine countenance, a good figure, and very pleasing address" (Austen 59; ch. 15). His charms win the heart of almost every girl in the neighbourhood, Elizabeth not excepting. Everybody falls for his engaging manners and expression of goodness, and his true vile character remains veiled in secrecy for a long time.

Mr Wickham was impersonated by the actors Rupert Friend in the film version, and Adrian Lukis in the miniseries. In appearances, they are as different as day and night, and their characters seem to differ as well. Rupert Friend with his almost angelic attributes – blue eyes and long fair hair tied by a pale blue ribbon – sharply contrast with Adrian Lukis' dark eyes and short dark hair.

In the BBC version, the first meeting between Wickham and Elizabeth takes place in a larger group on the street according to the original. Their conversation is friendly but decorous, just as the book presents: "the introduction was followed up on his side by a happy readiness of conversation – a readiness at the same time perfectly correct and unassuming" (Austen 59; ch. 15).

The film adaptation has chosen a rather more unbuttoned approach. Elizabeth meets Wickham when walking together with Jane; he starts the conversation by picking up a dropped handkerchief. They are immediately joined by Lydia and Kitty, who disclose – with evident admiration – that he is a lieutenant. Wickham, watching Elizabeth intently, quite boldly adds: "An enchanted lieutenant." (*P&P* 2005; 0:28:57) It seems a very straightforward and daring thing to say for an introduction. The group then carries on to a shop, where Wickham and Elizabeth have a conversation in a virtually flirtatious way.

Later on, Elizabeth and Wickham discuss his connection to Mr Darcy in relative privacy under a tree. Their conversation goes straight to the point; Elizabeth helps Wickham on by enquiring: "I must ask, Mr Wickham, what is the manner of your disapproval of Mr Darcy?" (*P&P* 2005; 0:31:10) and he does not mention anybody else apart from Darcy.

Adrian Lukis, on the other hand, is a little more cunning or maybe cautious. Before he ventures to disclose: "We're not on friendly terms, but I have no reason to avoid him but one. He's done me great wrong." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 2; 0:15:08), he carefully finds out Elizabeth's attitude towards Darcy. Later on, he talks disparagingly about Darcy's sister Georgiana and Lady Catherine de Bourgh as well.

Rupert Friend has no other chance to disclose his villainous character because he disappears from the story as quickly as he appeared. He reappears only once again, this time as the husband of Lydia with whom he had eloped from Brighton. No one in the family, except for Elizabeth, knows about his true character. Elizabeth avoids talking to him altogether. The last attempt to sketch Wickham's character is offered us in the scene of his and Lydia's departure from Longbourn where he violently forces Lydia to sit down in the carriage.

Unlike Friend in the film, Lukis was permitted much more time for his mischief in the miniseries. Subsequently, his character appears to be more wicked and corrupted, just as is in the original. When Darcy leaves Meryton, Wickham relates his 'misfortunes' to the whole neighbourhood without any scruples. His attention to Elizabeth is later on turned to a more profitable object – a young girl Mary King, who inherited a large sum of money. Finally, after the incident with Lydia, stories about his "gaming debts", "drunken routs", "debauches", "intrigues", and "seductions" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:35:35) are spoken of in Meryton.

The reduction of the character of Mr Wickham in the film is so extensive that he almost loses all his importance in the story. His villainous character was toned down; consequently he is not as much of a threat to young girls as he originally was. Wickham's character traits were not reduced in the miniseries, and it can be safely inferred that his portrayal is more faithful there.

2.9 Lydia, Catherine (Kitty), and Mary Bennet

Lydia is the youngest of the Bennet girls, and by all means the wildest one. This "well-grown girl of fifteen, with a fine complexion and good-humoured countenance" (Austen 37; ch. 9) was allowed into society at an early age which only intensified her impulsive nature. She is at the same time ignorant, careless and self-willed. Lydia is a favourite of her mother, who is not troubled by her behaviour at all. Mrs Bennet rather encourages her daughter in idleness and vanity. Lydia's principle objects in life are gossip, dancing and officers.

Julia Sawalha, who plays Lydia in the 1995 miniseries, is first of all an unashamed flirt. She can think of nothing else but officers. She is also extremely fond of dancing; and when her two favourite pastimes mix together, Lydia is unstoppable. She interrupts Mary in playing the piano a couple of times and commands her to play a dance, even though she is only a guest at the particular place. She noisily whirls around the officers, laughs violently, teases them, and displays all kinds of improper behaviour (at least by early 19th century standards). She cannot stop thinking about red coats even at breakfast, and she unabashedly suggests to Kitty: "Aye, let's call on Denny early before he's dressed. What shock he will get! Ammm!" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 1; 0:36:10) Her shamelessness is further underscored in the scene where she meets Mr Collins outside her room without being dressed properly. Without a twinge of shame, she laughs at his evident discomposure.

Jena Malone's performance in the film presents Lydia as a wild, reckless and silly girl, but markedly childish. She is absolutely dazzled by the sight of marching officers which she, Kitty and their mother come to watch. They all cackle with laughter. Lydia's attempt to be introduced to an officer – she throws a handkerchief into the marching regiment – is very naïve. Her way of flirtation is straightforward and immature; it rather reminds us of a natural directness of a young child. Lydia is almost glued to Wickham when she introduces him to her sisters, and says admiringly: "Oh, Mr

Wickham, how perfect you are." (*P&P* 2005; 0:28:51) On the way home, the whole group meets Mr Bingley and Mr Darcy. Lydia jumps around showing off with her new ribbons for the Netherfield ball, and when Bingley politely says: "Very beautiful." (*P&P* 2005; 0:30:05), she impertinently implies his comment concerned Jane: "She is. Look at her. She's blooming." (*P&P* 2005; 0:30:07) In this instance, Jena Malone's behaviour resembles a thirteen-year-old girl.

One significant difference in the two versions is noticeable in Lydia's revelation of Mr Darcy's presence at her wedding. Sawalha in her role opens her mouth too wide in the company of her sisters and laughs about it carelessly. She does not provide any explanation, and it seems she does not wonder at Mr Darcy's assistance. In contrast, Malone accidentally spills the beans to Elizabeth alone. She tells her everything about the part Mr Darcy played in the incident. We can sense some gratitude towards him in her comment to Elizabeth: "Mr Darcy is not half as high and mighty as you sometimes." (*P&P* 2005; 1:33:00)

As with some of the other characters, the tendency of the film is to approach particularly the teenage and adolescent audience, so Lydia is depicted as a wild pubescent. In the miniseries, she is no more a child, but rather a young and silly flirt.

Kitty is two years older than her sister, but unfortunately "completely under Lydia's guidance" (Austen 166; ch. 37). She is irritable, weak-spirited, and usually in Lydia's shadow. This somewhat ungrateful role was given to Polly Maberly in the BBC version and Carey Mulligan in the film. Kitty's character and behaviour is true to the book in both adaptations.

In the miniseries, Kitty's fretfulness is accentuated right from the start. We encounter her for the first time in the midst of an argument about a bonnet with Lydia. Kitty vents her annoyance: "But it is mine! You let her have everything that is mine." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 1; 0:02:55). Such displays of Kitty's irritation are sprinkled through all the episodes.

As in the case of Lydia, Carey Mulligan appears to be a more up-to-date version of a teenage girl. We can see her in constant fits of laughter. Her behaviour is more in line with Lydia's, although she is already seventeen. She looks happier with her position (especially regarding Lydia) in the family than Polly Maberly does.

Mary is the plain one in the family, but she tries to compensate it by being highly accomplished, and therefore socially more acceptable. She studies all day long, practices playing the piano and singing. Unfortunately, her bookishness, "pedantic air and conceited manner" (Austen 22; ch. 6) do not recommend her much to anybody, and she is greatly overlooked even within her family circle.

Lucy Briers playing Mary for BBC stressed her studious nature by wearing reading glasses and pronouncing pearls of wisdom at various times of the story, whereas Talulah Riley having the same part in the film chose to emphasize Mary's plainness, or maybe even ugliness by wearing darkish colours all the time (except for the Netherfield ball where every woman had to be in white).

Garcia Fay Ellwood suggests that the way Jane Austen described Mary in her book shows the character as almost dehumanised, devoid of any feelings, and to some extent this is the way Mary was portrayed in the BBC adaptation. Her frequent moralising comments and weird observations which were taken straight from the original, the scholastic manner with which she speaks, and a complete absence of any display of emotions make her seem quite inhuman, that is, a rather unlikely character.

Talulah Riley's interpretation makes Mary more viable as a character. She also moralizes, but quite surprisingly her lines were in most cases taken from other characters of the original. During the visit at Netherfield, Mary expresses her negative view on balls which was originally Caroline Bingley's idea. Later in the story, she comments poetically on Elizabeth's being invited to the Peak district by her aunt: "The glories of nature. What are men compared to rocks and mountains?" (*P&P* 2005; 1:15:37) using the words of somebody else again – this time Elizabeth. Nevertheless, she shows us her sensitivity as well. Her father finds her crying in one of the rooms after her fiasco performance at the Netherfield ball. Her tearful utterance: "I've been practicing all week. I hate balls." (*P&P* 2005; 0:43:10) cannot leave us unmoved.

All in all, the 1995 Mary resembles her original in more aspects than the film Mary, but the latter proves to be more natural. In the miniseries, Mary seems to be extremely detached, never showing us any true feelings. In contrast, the film Mary proves her human nature when she cries at Netherfield ball.

2.10 Charlotte Lucas

Charlotte Lucas, Elizabeth's best friend, is a prudent and intelligent young woman. She is twenty-seven, without a dowry, and quite plain. Charlotte is well aware of the little chance she has to marry well. Accordingly, she has a very prosaic opinion of marriage and no romantic expectations. Charlotte's character was nicely delineated in both adaptations without any significant alterations. Nevertheless, a couple of changes are perceptible.

One of the crucial scenes of this character is the moment Charlotte informs Elizabeth about her engagement to Mr Collins. She knows how much it will surprise her friend, and that she will probably not approve of it. In the BBC version, the moment of surprise between the two was taken away because it is Kitty and Lydia who bring the news of Charlotte's engagement. Elizabeth visits Charlotte at Lucas Lodge where the latter tries to justify her actions to the former. The actress Lucy Scott as Charlotte explains her decision very calmly and matter-of-factly: "I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people can boast on entering the marriage state." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:02:13)

In the 2005 film, Charlotte played by Claudie Blakley comes to inform Elizabeth about her engagement in person. Her mode of expressing is very different from the serenity of the original Charlotte. She is mortified by Elizabeth's disbelief and disapproval, and defends herself very passionately. Her final "So don't judge me, Lizzy. Don't you dare judge me." (*P&P* 2005; 0:53:33) proves that she is almost angry with Elizabeth for being unable to comprehend her point of view.

Another important change in Charlotte's character is the way she behaves after the marriage with Mr Collins. The BBC Charlotte bears her husband's stupidity with her usual serenity. In the scene where Mr Collins wants to hurry their return home before Darcy and his cousin arrive to visit them, she is unmoved by his frantic activity and does not run like her younger sister Maria. Further, she does not worship Lady Catherine as much as her husband does. On the contrary, she seems to be completely unafraid or rather indifferent to Lady Catherine's authority. Although being expected at Rosings, Charlotte offers to stay at home with Elizabeth when the latter claims to have a headache: "You're sure, Lizzy? Because I would willingly stay at home with you, and brave all Lady Catherine's displeasure." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:44:38)

Blakley's presentation of the married Charlotte brings a little change in her behaviour. Charlotte adapted to the new environment so much that she resembles her husband in some aspects. Her adoration of Lady Catherine can be detected in her exclaiming admiringly: "Oh, it's Lady Catherine. Come and see, Lizzy." (*P&P* 2005; 0:55:45) when Lady Catherine's carriage passes by the Hunsford parsonage. She also joins her husband in instructing Elizabeth what to wear for the dinner at Rosing: "Just put on whatever you brought that's best." (*P&P* 2005; 0:56:01)

In terms of adherence to the original, it is the miniseries Charlotte who comes closer Austen's characterisation. In the film, her usual insipid serenity was seasoned with a little bit more passion; but on the other hand, she quickly adopted Mr Collins' habits, which can not be substantiated by the book.

2.11 Caroline Bingley

Mr Bingley's younger sister Caroline is an elegant and fashionable woman, who got used to mingling in high society so much that she feels "entitled to think well of" herself "and meanly of others" (Austen 14; ch. 4) Unlike her brother, she is proud and snobbish. In addition to that she finds endless pleasure in laughing at other people. She usually chooses people less fashionable and worldly than herself, who are therefore easy targets, such as Mrs Bennet, but she also has the nerve to make fun of Mr Darcy – the object of her affection, whose heart she tries – unsuccessfully – to win by that. Caroline is clever enough to see that Darcy is attracted to Elizabeth, and her intense jealousy makes her even more vicious. She abuses Elizabeth in every possible way that she can think of. Nevertheless, She can be nice and friendly as well, if she chooses: "Elizabeth had never seen them [Miss Bingley and her sister] so agreeable as they were during the hour which passed before the gentlemen appeared. Their powers of conversation were considerable. They could describe an entertainment with accuracy, relate an anecdote with humour, and laugh at their acquaintance with spirit." (Austen 44; ch. 11)

Miss Bingley, played by Anna Chancellor in the BBC version, is a faithful copy of the original character. BBC particularly stressed the aspect of Caroline's jealousy of Elizabeth. Miss Bingley's witticisms and derisive comments were mostly taken from the book, but they are slightly shorter and less biting. Her original provocative remarks to Darcy from the evening at Lucas Lodge: "Miss Elizabeth Bennet! I am all astonishment. How long has she been such a favourite? – and pray, when am I to wish

you joy? ... You will have a charming mother-in-law, indeed, and, of course, she will be always at Pemberley with you." (Austen 23, 24; ch. 6) were cut to the laconic "Miss Elizabeth Bennet! I am all astonishment." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 1; 0:32:33) However, Anna Chancellor very nicely compensates the economy of her lines by nonverbal communication – the camera shows us numerous close-ups of her constantly irritated, scornful or jealous looks.

The corresponding part in the 2005 film was given to Kelly Reilly. Caroline Bingley's appearance in the film was immensely reduced. Most of the time, she simply walks around with a haughty expression on her face. At the first ball at the assembly room in Meryton, she scarcely speaks at all – only one sentence. She does not even join the group of her brother, Darcy, Mrs Bennet and her two eldest daughters in their conversation, but keeps standing slightly apart, watching them carefully from a distance. Moreover, we neither see Caroline singling Jane out by talking to her, nor by talking about her. Her friendship with Jane is only implied. The only clues are Jane's being invited to Netherfield, and the letter Caroline writes her after their hurried departure. She appears almost hostile to Jane when her brother welcomes her at the Netherfield ball – without a warm word to her supposed friend Caroline glances at Charles rather wonderingly. What a difference to the rapturous welcome: "Oh my dear Jane, how delightful to see you. And so well recovered. Luisa and I have been quite desolate without you, haven't we?" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 2; 0:25:13) that Caroline gives in the BBC version.

Her preference for Darcy is not so evident as in the original or the miniseries. She does not try to recommend herself to him by means of teasing him about Elizabeth. It can also be inferred that Darcy (introvert and shy as he is in this version) would not admit to Caroline that he is attracted by Elizabeth as he does in the original and the miniseries. He also ignores Caroline's criticism; her remark about Elizabeth's appearance at Netherfield: "My goodness. Did you see her hem? Six inches deep in mud. She looked positively mediaeval." (*P&P* 2005; 0:17:33) remains unanswered. Caroline tries to draw Darcy's attention towards herself by asking Elizabeth to join her in a walk around the room preceded by the well-known conversation about accomplished women. This is the only scene where Kelly Reilly was able to show the viewers her character for more than a few seconds. After the Bingleys and Darcy leave Netherfield, Caroline does not appear on the film again.

Unfortunately for Reilly, the time allocated to Caroline Bingley is so limited that it causes lack of dimension in her character in this version. Her friendship with Jane appears to be only briefly sketched, and she has neither enough time to present herself as Elizabeth's rival.

2.12 Lady Catherine de Bourgh

The part of the authoritative Lady Catherine was played by Barbara Leigh-Hunt in the miniseries and Judy Dench in the film. Lady Catherine's conceited, dictatorial and disagreeable manners were very nicely portrayed in both of the adaptations. Her character stays principally unchanged from Jane Austen's idea of Lady Catherine. However, a few minor changes can be traced in her depiction.

In the piano scene at Rosings, Lady Catherine behaves very rudely to Elizabeth when she invites her to practice on the pianoforte in Mrs Jenkinson's room – apparently secluded from the main rooms – so that she would not trouble anybody. In the film version, Judy Dench addresses Charlotte instead: "You'd be in nobody's way in that part of the house." (*P&P* 2005; 1:01:10) Shifting Lady Catherine's improper remark from Elizabeth to Charlotte causes the offence to somewhat lose its teeth.

The BBC version shows the character more inquisitive than in the film. Barbara Leigh-Hunt as Darcy's aunt cannot stand to be left out of anything, she immediately demands to be informed: "What are you talking of? What are you telling Miss Bennet? I must have my share in the conversation." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:39:39) when Darcy, colonel Fitzwilliam, and Elizabeth talk a little distance away. Moreover, she even tries to order Darcy around by inquiring: "Is that my nephew? Where have you been? Let him come in and explain himself!" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 4; 0:02:00) as soon as Darcy returns home after his unsuccessful proposal to Elizabeth.

In comparison to Judi Dench, Barbara Leigh-Hunt is also slightly more autocratic. She bosses her subjects a great deal – for example she orders Charlotte which apothecary to use. And she even presumes to issue orders to visitors like Elizabeth: "You will write to your mother and tell her you wish to stay a little longer. She could certainly spare you for another fortnight." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 4; 0:14:08)

The final conflict between Lady Catherine and Elizabeth was conducted differently as well. Judy Dench arrives at Longbourn at night when all the family is ready for bed. Coming at such an hour shows how infinitely superior Lady Catherine

feels to them. Nevertheless, she does not seem so overbearing in the following dialogue with Elizabeth as in the beginning. When Elizabeth refuses to promise her never to marry Mr Darcy, she does not carry on with her arguments and leaves. In contrast, Lady Catherine in the miniseries, although coming in a less imposing manner, has her arguments ready for the revolting Elizabeth. She appeals to Elizabeth by pointing out her origin: "you would not wish to quit the sphere in which you've been brought up" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 6; 0:35:10), Mr Darcy's "honour and credit" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 6; 0:36:26), her own supposedly rightful claims "you refuse to oblige me" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 6; 0:36:33), and Elizabeth's own conscience "claims of duty, honour, gratitude" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 6; 0:36:39).

Both versions have depicted Lady Catherine's most prominent character traits faithfully. Although some of her inquisitiveness and despotic tendencies have been lost by the omissions in the film, Lady Catherine character does not seem to be psychologically reduced.

2.13 Georgiana Darcy

The younger sister of Mr Darcy, Georgiana, is a very accomplished girl – especially in playing the piano and singing. We do not learn much about Georgiana, but among the few things mentioned about this character is her prettiness. Even though Elizabeth observed that she is not as attractive as her brother, she perceived that "though little more than sixteen, her figure was formed, her appearance womanly and graceful" (Austen 199; ch. 44). The two versions portray this character slightly differently. Emilia Fox, who took the part of Miss Darcy in the miniseries, meets the description of the original. In contrast, Tazmin Merchant from the film looks still very childlike.

In the book, when Elizabeth meets Miss Darcy for the first time, she finds it difficult "to obtain even a word from her beyond a monosyllable" (Austen 199; ch. 44) because Georgiana is extremely timid. Emilia Fox smiles shyly at Elizabeth at their first meeting. Although she is slightly more talkative than in the original, she proves her shyness later on. When asked by Elizabeth to play the piano for her, Georgiana fearfully replies: "In front of all these people? I will play, but please don't make me sing." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:06:00)

Tazmin Merchant, unlike her literary counterpart, is not so "exceedingly shy" (Austen 199; ch. 44). As much as her brother's shyness was stressed, hers was omitted.

On meeting Elizabeth's for the first time, Tazmin as Georgiana exclaims: "Miss Elizabeth!" (*P&P* 2005; 1:25:53) and zestfully runs towards her. She quickly adds: "My brother has told me so much about you. I feel as if are friends already." (*P&P* 2005; 1:26:04)

On the whole, Georgiana underwent a similar change as the three younger Bennet sisters in the film. She is presented rather as a child than a young woman. The shyness which is attributed to Georgiana in the novel as well as the miniseries is lost completely (arguably all transferred to her brother).

3 Comparison of the storylines of the two adaptations and the original

The first thing we have to realise with respect to the storyline is the different time limitations of the two versions. The book itself consists of 61 chapters and fills almost 300 pages, so the screenwriters of the adaptations had a lot to cope with. The miniseries, divided into 6 fifty-minute episodes, takes up 300 minutes, and therefore could afford to encompass majority of the events of the story. The 2005 film, on the other hand, lasts only 115 minutes, so that is only a little more than one third of the duration of the BBC adaptation. Naturally, a larger number of events had to be left out from the film, and the storyline changed accordingly.

3.1 Scenes which were not included in the film

Let us now first take a closer look on the scenes that were considered unnecessary for the narrative, and therefore left out in Joe Wright's film. Most of the events and dialogues in the film adaptation were, obviously, heavily compressed in order to squeeze the whole story into the timespan of less than two hours. Some scenes were, nevertheless, deleted completely.

The scenes with Charlotte Lucas were reduced to a necessary minimum, and therefore we neither see Charlotte visiting Elizabeth after the ball at the assembly, nor the party at Lucas Lodge which illustrates her friendship with Elizabeth, and particularly shows us her opinion on love and marriage which are crucial to understanding her later actions. It also nicely depicts the usual pastime of the society at that time. Some parts of the conversation between Charlotte and Elizabeth were, nevertheless, included within their conversation at Netherfield ball, but the words of the former seem to fade out in all the commotion.

What is more puzzling is the elimination of Charlotte's coming to Longbourn after Mr Collins proposes to Elizabeth, and Charlotte's subsequent ploy to secure him for herself. We do not see anything that happens between Charlotte and Mr Collins, hence it must be quite surprising to see Charlotte announcing her engagement to Mr Collins out of the blue for those who are not familiar with the classic story. The reaction

of the Bennets, particularly the mother, is also omitted, thus the material damage which Elizabeth caused to the family by rejecting Mr Collins is not so evident. Mr Collins' departure and early return for the courtship and marriage with Charlotte were, of course, omitted as well.

The second character whose presence in the story was considerably abridged is Mr Wickham. So many of the scenes where Wickham and Elizabeth meet were deleted. He appears only twice in the film – the first time before the Netherfield ball, and the second time after he has married Lydia. The scene where Elizabeth's aunt and uncle Gardiner come to spend the Christmas at Longbourn is omitted, so Elizabeth cannot introduce Wickham to her aunt. In the original, her aunt sees that the attachment of Elizabeth to Wickham could develop into something deeper, and warns her against it: "Do not involve yourself or endeavour to involve him in an affection which the want of fortune would make so very imprudent." (Austen 114; ch. 26) The readers are thus reminded of the reality of relationships – that sense, not sensibility was important in marriage matters at that time. The beauty of the original story lies in that it offers us not only a romance, but also a deep insight into the everyday lives of the people and the social conventions they were tied with. Jane Austen herself described her work to her nephew James Edward as "the little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a Brush, as produces little effect after much labour" (Le Faye 323). The film concentrates on the romantic aspects of the story a great deal, but does not include, as in this case, many passages where grim reality lurks in the book. The film only hints at the naked material realities of Wickham's situation (and thereby his ineligibility as a prospective partner) once, when Wickham tells Elizabeth the story of injustice that he had suffered at the hands of Darcy. He concludes his tirade by saying that as a result of the atrocious behaviour he became "a poor foot-soldier, too lowly even to be noticed" (*P&P* 2005; 0:31:59), exhibiting some flair for overstatement.

Furthermore, nothing is mentioned about Wickham's preference of Elizabeth giving way to a more profitable object – a young heiress Mary King. This scene may not be important for the overall course of the story, but again emphasises the mercenary nature of the marriage, thus indicating Wickham's questionable character.

In the film, Wickham and the militia move from Meryton earlier than Elizabeth visits Hunsford parsonage, so her last dialogue with Wickham before he leaves for Brighton was not realised. It is there we can see the gradual change in Elizabeth's feelings towards or rather appreciation of Darcy: "When I said that he [Darcy] improved

on acquaintance, I did not mean that either his mind or manners were in a state of improvement, but that, from knowing him better, his disposition was better understood." (Austen 182; ch. 41) In addition, Wickham is neither mentioned by the housekeeper at Pemberley; nor is his bad reputation disclosed in Meryton after his elopement with Lydia.

In relation to the scene of Lydia's elopement, Mr Collins' letter was omitted which does not affect the story too much, but attenuates the awareness of the severe consequences this deed would have for the Bennet sisters – it is not so evident how big a disgrace such behaviour used to be at the turn of the century. Moreover, Mr Bennet's determination of not accepting Lydia and her husband at Longbourn which shows that the impropriety of their behaviour would have been sanctioned by the society was skipped. Wickham's last conversation with Elizabeth, where the latter makes it clear she knows the whole truth about him, was also left out because it does not help to develop the main narrative.

In the final stage of the story, the focus is only on the two main characters and their getting together, so Mr Collins' letter hinting at Elizabeth's oncoming engagement to Mr Darcy was taken out of the story. This episode which further illustrates both Mr Collins' and Mr Bennet's nature and increases the suspense of Elizabeth and the readers would probably hinder the fast approaching happy ending.

Finally, the last two chapters of the novel that describe the events after Elizabeth and Darcy's engagement and briefly sketch subsequent lives of all the principal characters were disregarded, as they serve as an epilogue that is not needed in a love story. Besides, it would rather spoil the romantic climax of the film.

3.2 Scenes which were not included in the BBC miniseries

Simon Langton and Andrew Davies, the director and screenwriter of the miniseries respectively, tried to be as faithful to the original 'script' of Jane Austen as possible. Thanks to the relative length of their adaptation, they were able to do justice to most of the scenes from the book. Nevertheless, some omissions appeared even in their script.

The events leading up to Charlotte's engagement to Mr Collins are only implied. Charlotte comes to Longbourn just in time to calm down the tense situation after Mr Collins proposes to Elizabeth; she kindly takes him to Lucas Lodge at the end of

episode 2. Afterwards, we hear the news of their engagement from Kitty and Lydia. As in the film, we do not see the immediate reaction of the Bennet family – apart from Elizabeth – to Charlotte's engagement to Mr Collins. However, Mrs Bennet alludes to the subject several times later on expressing thus her anger: "And I cannot bear to think of Charlotte Lucas being mistress of this house. That I should be forced to make way for her, and live to see her take my place in it!"(*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:10:48), "To think she [Elizabeth] would have been Mr Collins' wife by now! Those Lucases are such artful people indeed. They are all for what they can get." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:14:26)

The second visit of Mr Collins at Longbourn was also considered unnecessary for the main plot, and was skipped accordingly. The preceding events are portrayed quite faithfully; therefore omitting this part does not disrupt the story and its authenticity in any way.

Aunt Gardiner's advice concerning Elizabeth's relationship to Wickham was also omitted (I have already stated the reason for the importance of this scene above). Nevertheless, some remarks in the adaptation allude to the significance of the material concerns in marrying Wickham. Mrs Bennet rightly points out: "If only he [Wickham] had five or six thousand a year I would be happy to see him married to any of the girls." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:09:33) In addition, a conversation between Wickham and Elizabeth regarding his choice of Mary King was created for the miniseries. Elizabeth indulgently reacts to Wickham's confession about his intention to marry Mary King: "I understand – as my younger sisters are not yet able to – that handsome young men must have something to live on as well as the plain ones." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 3; 0:22:24) This is a nice example of how pragmatic marriages used to be; and that not only women had to be careful in their choice of marriage partners, but that men had to consider the financial situation of their future lives as well.

The final two chapters of the book were, as in Wright's film, excluded from the miniseries because they do not go together with the romantic finale very much. Although it must be noted that an attempt to foreshadow the lives of some of the characters was made in the final scene of the wedding where two short intercuts show us Lady Catherine de Bourgh with her daughter sitting contemptuously and at the same time forlornly at Rosings, and Lydia with Wickham's slowly fading desire.

3.3 Comparison of the passages existing in both adaptations

The opening scene of the six-part BBC *Pride and Prejudice*, the story of five sisters and their future prospects, starts with two men. As Kerryn Goldsworthy points out in her study 'Austen and Authenticity', the camera shows Mr Bingley and Mr Darcy, unknown to the viewers for the time being, "mounted on handsome, powerful, snorting horses galloping flat-out across a field" (Goldsworthy) which according to Goldsworthy stresses masculinity in what she calls 'women's Writing'. Nevertheless, it could be argued that Jane Austen herself started her novel with a sentence about a man. The other reason for starting with the male heroes is, in my opinion, to emphasise the romantic aspect of the story. If we take into account the target audience – women – presenting the male cast first must inevitably attract the viewers' attention. On the other hand, this early introduction of Bingley and Darcy perhaps gives the story away a little too much. Unlike the viewers, the main heroine has to wait till page ten of the novel to see the men with her own eyes.

Nevertheless, the next instant takes us to Elizabeth watching the horsemen from a distance and enjoying her morning walk before she returns home where the whole Bennet family is introduced to the viewer by a series of shots into various rooms of the house. Jane Austen's famous opening line, which very aptly characterises her novel, was given to Elizabeth, who comments humorously on her mother's excitement about the new renter of Netherfield: "A single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 1; 0:04:17)

Joe Wright, the director of the film adaptation, decided to start the story at the beginning of a new day – the nature is waking up, the sun is rising and a blackbird is singing (this motif is repeated at the end of the film in the final reconciliation between Darcy and Elizabeth). This introduction is immediately followed by a close-up of Elizabeth, who is reading a book while walking home. The camera pans through the house to introduce us all the members of the Bennet family. Although done in a new and interesting way, the whole idea of Elizabeth coming home from an early walk to enable the viewers encounter the rest of her family is perhaps too reminiscent of the BBC opening.

The 2005 film then moves very quickly from the Bennet house to the ball at the assembly rooms. We are deprived of much of Mr Bennet's teasing his wife by refusing to visit the newcomer which makes it for the viewer slightly more difficult to

understand the social background of the era. It is much clearer from the BBC version that the Bennet girls are dependant on their father in order to be introduced to Mr Bingley.

The ball at the assembly rooms is the first occasion the Bennet girls and the viewers of Wright's film meet Mr Bingley and his friend just like in the original. The Hursts were taken out of the story completely, and thus only Darcy and Bingley's sister Caroline remain to look down on the country society. On the other hand, one character was added to the large social gathering – Mr Bennet accompanies his family to the ball, thus showing more concern for his daughters than the father in the original. The tension between Darcy and Elizabeth is accelerated by Elizabeth's retaliation against Darcy. Unlike in the original, she lets Darcy know that she has heard his insult, and strikes back with his "barely tolerable" (*P&P* 2005; 0:12:40) in a conversation about poetry as a way of increasing one's affection.

After the ball, Elizabeth and Jane discuss only Bingley's qualities and Darcy's rudeness; Caroline, whose invitation to dinner Jane (in this version) will receive the very next morning, is not mentioned at all. The film brings us a rather subjective point of view – the story is clearly focused on Elizabeth and her perception of the events. We see neither what the Netherfield party thought about their first evening in the neighbourhood, nor Jane's dinner with Miss Bingley at Netherfield. The viewers follow only the footsteps of Elizabeth Bennet most of the time.

The BBC version offers us an overview more in line with Jane Austen's omniscient narrative perspective. Bingley and his friends discuss the people at the ball and particularly the Bennets after their return home, thus they further reveal their characters. As in the original, the eldest Bennet sisters also discuss the newcomers – including Caroline Bingley.

The following social events mentioned in the original were skipped in the film; the miniseries depicts at least the party at Lucas Lodge to portray Elizabeth's friendship with Charlotte, and to show the gradual development of Bingley and Jane's love, and Darcy's rising affection for Elizabeth.

The BBC scene of Jane's illness and Elizabeth's subsequent stay at Netherfield carefully follows the original script. Most of the dialogues remain the same with only a couple of omissions which put Bingley into a more passive role, and stress the conflict between his friend and Elizabeth. Once again, the viewers have the chance to see the point of view of the other side. The Bennet's "low connections" (*P&P* 1995 – episode

1; 0:39:04) and the girls' future marital prospects are discussed, and laughed at by Bingley's sisters. This illustrates how strictly stratified the society was at that time. The film-makers decided to increase the romantic friction between Darcy and Elizabeth by adding a couple of accidental encounters which are not mentioned in the original. When Elizabeth walks to Netherfield in order to visit Jane, she runs into Darcy in the park. Later on, she comes across Darcy playing billiards as she is looking for the drawing room. The BBC series has given much more space to the character of Mr Darcy, and one of the moments added to enhance his desirability for the women viewers is a bathing scene after which he secretly watches Elizabeth frolicking with a dog in the park.

In the film, Elizabeth's stay at Netherfield is compressed into one evening, therefore the dialogues were very selective. Nonetheless, the most interesting disputes between the main characters were glued together, and realised. The scene of departure highlights Darcy's physical attraction to Elizabeth. The two touch for the first time while Darcy is helping her to get in the carriage. The close-up on Matthew MacFadyen's hand gives us an idea about his immediate emotional reaction.

In both versions, Jane keeps to her room and does not join the group in their evening amusement. The relationship of Elizabeth and Darcy is clearly centralised.

The next turn of events, that is to say the arrival of Mr Collins, remained in both versions without any important changes. The film deals with this part of the story in a concise, almost hasty way; the BBC at its own leisurely pace – the film-makers could afford to dwell on these scenes bearing in mind their generous five-hour timespan.

Mr Wickham's appearance in the story is only episodic in the film. He disappears before he is able to show us his great charms or his considerable skills of deception. The first meeting of Elizabeth and Wickham is conducted in a slushy way (as if taken from a nineteenth century Mills&Boon story) – Wickham picks up a fallen handkerchief, and assuming it is Elizabeth's he addresses her. Their following conversation is much more playful and unbuttoned than in the original. The crucial dialogue between him and Elizabeth is conducted in seclusion under a tree with Wickham standing in an imposing manner over the sitting Elizabeth. This environment adds a more romantic and secretive atmosphere to the scene originally set in a room full of people. Only Mr Darcy is mentioned by Wickham. After this conversation, Wickham quietly (Elizabeth merely mentions him in a letter to Charlotte) disappears from the focus of the story.

In the miniseries, the story trails Wickham's actions according to the original. A difference was made in his conversation with Elizabeth during the evening at her aunt Philips'. It was split in two, so that his false accusations were more gradual. First, Wickham speaks only about Darcy. Later on, he talks about Darcy's sister Georgiana and Darcy's connection to Lady Catherine de Bourgh while walking with Elizabeth in the garden at Longbourn.

The next important event of the story is the ball at Netherfield. Both versions carried out the events at the ball as they are described in the book, only a few details were changed. In the BBC adaptation, we can see Darcy's repressed attraction towards Elizabeth when Darcy watches her through the window entering the house, their eyes meet for a split second, and Darcy quickly turns away with a frowned expression. In the course of the evening, Bingley seems to be present at and well aware of all the ridiculous indiscretions of the Bennet family. The original, however, suggests that Bingley was spared of some of it as Elizabeth rejoices: "... happy did she think it for Bingley and her sister that some of the exhibition had escaped his notice ..." (Austen 82; ch. 18)

The film omitted Sir Lucas' hinting the general expectations of the oncoming marriage: "... especially when a certain desirable event, my dear Miss Eliza (glancing at her sister and Bingley), shall take place." (Austen 75; ch. 18) to Elizabeth and Darcy which triggered Darcy's grave concern about Bingley. Charlotte Lucas, who was not given much space in the story, expresses her opinion on the relationship between Bingley and Jane here (originally in chapter 6 of the book), thus implicitly revealing her general views on marriage. We can hear her words implying her own opinion on marriage: "She should move fast and snap him up. There is plenty of time for us to get to know him after they're married." (*P&P* 2005; 0:42:15) Unfortunately, they are fading away as the camera pans over the room to capture the ballroom atmosphere.

At the final stage of the ball, both versions portray Elizabeth as a rather helpless observer, who does not attempt to do anything to save her family from ridicule, even though her role was originally more active: "In vain did Elizabeth endeavour to check the rapidity of her mother's words, or persuade her to describe her felicity in a less audible whisper ... By many significant looks and silent entreaties, did she endeavour to prevent such a proof of complaisance, – but in vain; Mary would not understand them ... She looked at her father to entreat his interference ..." (Austen 80-81; ch. 18).

Jennifer Ehle in the BBC adaptation at least casts a desperate look at her father to make him act somehow, and save Mary's blushes.

The following events pick up an astonishing speed in the film. Mr Collins' offer of marriage is rejected by Elizabeth; the Bingleys and Mr Darcy leave Netherfield; Jane is sent to London to her aunt and uncle in 'pursuit' of Mr Bingley; and Charlotte comes to inform Elizabeth that she is engaged to Mr Collins. These major events of eight chapters are squeezed into less than five minutes.

Naturally, the miniseries had more time to do these events justice. Most of the original dialogues are preserved. Nevertheless, a few minor changes were made. Charlotte invites Mr Collins to Lucas Lodge right after Elizabeth refuses to marry him because, unlike the original character, Mr Collins played by David Bamber does not want to stay another night at Longbourn. The successful scheme of Charlotte to secure Mr Collins for herself is omitted, but the viewers are informed of her triumph by gossipy Kitty and Lydia.

In both versions – in contrast to the book – the Netherfield party leave the place together, not after Bingley's departure for London intended only for a couple of days. In the film, it is made clear that they have no intention of coming back right from the start – the servants cover the furniture, as their carriage pulls away. In the miniseries, it is the second letter from Miss Bingley which assures Jane of their decision to stay in London.

The subsequent idea of Jane's going to London, originally Mrs Gardiner's suggestion, comes from Elizabeth in both adaptations. The film does not show us anything that happened to Jane in London, the plotline focuses on Elizabeth's story. However, Jane's stay in London is not overlooked in the miniseries. The events which she originally describes in a letter to her sister are realised while Jane's voiceover recites the lines of her letter to Elizabeth.

The next stage of the story brings us to Hunsford. In the original and the miniseries, Elizabeth travels with Sir Lucas and his daughter Maria. In the 2005 film, she travels alone. The events are again compressed because of the time limitations of the film. The numerous visits to Rosings, which are described in the book, were reduced to one dinner. Mr Darcy and Colonel Fitzwilliam appear immediately on the scene, and the conversation between them and Elizabeth at the piano happens the same evening. Afterwards, Mr Darcy comes to see Elizabeth, he tries to pluck up the courage to propose to her but Charlotte's sudden return home drives him away.

The miniseries depicts the events at Rosings and Hunsford parsonage as faithfully as possible, even though the dialogues had to be shortened or adjusted; the visits take place according to the original. Particularly the scene of Darcy's proposal to Elizabeth was given special attention as far as accurateness is concerned – the dialogue between Darcy and Elizabeth is nearly a verbatim transcript of Jane Austen's words.

In contrast to the original, the lead-up to the scene of proposal in the film – Elizabeth's conversation with Colonel Fitzwilliam in which he discloses the role Darcy played in separating Bingley and her sister – is set inside (not in Rosings park), in a church during Mr Collins' sermon. The sound of thunder prepares us for the clash between Darcy and Elizabeth. The place where the two meet sharply contrasts with the original passionless atmosphere of the room at Hunsford parsonage – a secluded temple in the gardens veiled by a torrential rain. Elizabeth, completely drenched by the rain, is surprised by equally soaked Darcy who immediately starts spilling out his declaration of love. He pours his feelings out so fast we can hardly comprehend him. Elizabeth's anger at his words is evident. Their passionate quarrel in which Darcy uses some of the explanations he originally wrote in the subsequent letter ends up in a near kiss. The tone of this scene is completely different to what Austen had written. The strong emotions and sexual magnetism between the characters tinged with the wet and thundery setting appears to be rather taken out of Bronte's passionate *Wuthering Heights* than Austen's comparatively rational *Pride and Prejudice*.

The following day that brings enlightenment to Elizabeth in the form of Darcy's explanatory letter was dealt with quite differently in each of the adaptations. The film-makers of the miniseries present Darcy's emotional perspective of the whole affair. We can see him rushing to Rosings while Elizabeth's voice keeps resonating in his ears. In his room, the (women) viewers are lured by the sight of his bed with enormous canopy, candlelight, and Darcy's loosened shirt. His words of vindication transform into images, and Darcy's voiceover describes the past events. Unlike in the original, Darcy starts justifying his dealings with Wickham first; and only then talks about Bingley and Jane. This changed order of events contributes to make him appear more righteous. After receiving this letter, Elizabeth does not change her opinion on Mr Darcy so easily, her scornful reactions to his claims: "insufferable presumption … oh, very impartial" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 4; 0:10:28) illustrate her feelings.

We can clearly observe Jennifer Ehle's feelings while she is reading Darcy's letter, whereas Keira Knitghley's emotions on the subject are hidden to the viewer. The

emotional outburst in the scene of the proposal in the film is followed by a rather poetic and quiet section, where Elizabeth broods over the things Darcy told her. The viewers are not allowed to see her face most of the time. The letter she receives from Darcy starts again with Wickham, but Darcy had already told Elizabeth his point of view on Bingley and Jane in the proposal scene, so he does not add much in the letter. However, he does not enter the subject of his concealing Jane's being in town from Bingley as he does both in the original and in the miniseries. His actions thus seem to be less blameful. Elizabeth reads the letter without uttering a word. While Darcy's voiceover recites the lines, we can see him riding away at full speed through a dusky forest – this adds to the romantic darkness of the whole section. When Charlotte enters Elizabeth's room to ask if she is all right, Elizabeth replies in a weak tearful voice: "I hardly know." (*P&P* 2005; 1:12:58) The viewers are again deprived of seeing her face in this moment; the focus is on the letter she is trying to hide from Charlotte. This whole section suggests that Elizabeth already realises that she actually has strong feelings for Darcy, which is absolutely contrary to the original: "She studied every sentence; and her feelings towards its writer were at times widely different. When she remembered the style of his address, she was still full of indignation; but when she considered how unjustly she had condemned and upbraided him, her anger was turned against herself; and his disappointed feelings became the object of compassion. His attachment excited gratitude, his general character respect; but she could not approve him; *nor could she for a moment repent her refusal, or feel the slightest inclination ever to see him again.*" (Austen 165; ch. 37, italics mine)

The next events – Elizabeth's return home to Longbourn and Lydia's journey to Brighton – are again much more condensed in the film version (the miniseries minutely follows the original, and only very few dialogues are omitted). The most evident changes in the film as far as the story goes are as follows. Instead of being open to her sister, Jane tries to persuade her that she does not think of Bingley anymore. In parallel, Elizabeth does not confide the events that happened at Rosings to Jane; even though she mentions seeing Mr Darcy, she does not venture to say more. We can perceive from the tear she secretly sheds that she regrets losing Darcy.

Further, the story takes us to Derbyshire where Elizabeth spends holiday together with her aunt and uncle Gardiner. While Elizabeth travels through the country in the miniseries adaptation, we are offered a free interpretation of Darcy's activities. The camera shows the hero in a sweaty shirt practicing fencing – an emphasis of his

masculine qualities, and announcing his intention of going to the north. He cannot help venting his frustration, his angry comment "I shall conquer this. I shall!" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 4; 0:35:46) clearly alludes to Elizabeth. This scene is a free interpretation of Mr Darcy; and has no support in the original. Meanwhile Elizabeth agrees to visit Pemberley, and on seeing the house for the first time is confronted by, owing to her aunts jestingly spoken: "Perhaps the beauty of the house renders its owner a little less repulsive, Lizzy." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 4; 0:39:10), her own change of feelings. The crucial meeting of Elizabeth and Darcy is preceded by a scene of Darcy in a less restrained position, which was probably added to satisfy the romantic expectations of the audience. Mr Darcy arrives on horseback and, after undressing his coat and waistcoat, he plunges into the lake. The astonishing meeting thus happens while he is heading towards the house in his wet shirt clung to his chest. This aspect of Darcy's physicality adds to the attractiveness for the (women) audience, but reduces 'Austenian' authenticity.

However, the film interpretation of this scene is in some aspects even much bolder than in the miniseries. On arriving to Pemberley and seeing its grandeur, Elizabeth remains speechless, but lets out a short bitter laugh realising the irony of fate. Joe Wright decided to confront Elizabeth with a sculpture rather than just a picture of Darcy, and situated most of the scene in the sculpture gallery where Elizabeth admires the individual works of art (and thus implicitly Darcy's good taste).

The conversation with the housekeeper which is so important for the original Elizabeth in helping her understand Darcy's character, is disregarded in the film, because Elizabeth needs no further logical proofs of Darcy's nature. Here, the emphasis is put on the emotional perception of his character. There is a heightened sense of sensuality, even sexuality which is achieved by extreme close-ups on the naked bodies of individual sculptures - as if the viewers followed Elizabeth's intent gaze.

Eventually, Elizabeth becomes so engrossed in the bust of Darcy that she does not notice the Gardiners and the housekeeper already left the place. While wandering about the house, Elizabeth enters one of the rooms neighbouring with the music room. Suddenly, music starts to emanate from the room and Elizabeth draws closer to the door left ajar. Joe Wright chose the same melody which he used for the first scene at Longbourn in order to create a feeling of home in Elizabeth – to underscore that Darcy is the right person for her, and Pemberley the right home. Peering through the door Elizabeth sees first Georgiana playing the piano, and then Darcy embracing his sister

cordially. The intruder is spotted and takes to her heels. Darcy catches up with Elizabeth in front of the house; their short conversation depicts Elizabeth's evident embarrassment, and Darcy's almost undisguised admiration of her. The scene ends up with a close-up on Darcy's hand, not dissimilar to the farewell scene at Netherfield where they touched for the first time. This time touching Elizabeth remains just wishful thinking.

The next course of events deviates only in details from the original as far as the miniseries is concerned. Mr Darcy comes to introduce his sister Georgiana, and to invite Elizabeth and the Gardiners to Pemberley again. The main focus is undoubtedly on Elizabeth because the Gardiners have been cleared out of the scene. It is interesting to notice that Elizabeth and Georgiana are dressed in the same colours as if to imply that the two will go together extremely well. Elizabeth is also less embarrassed than the original suggests. The subsequent meeting happens in the evening instead of in the morning. During the meeting, Miss Bingley's jealousy is given full play. Her vicious remarks directed to Elizabeth are nevertheless more painful to Darcy and his sister which Caroline is obviously not aware of. Even though "in Darcy's presence she dared not mention Wickham's name" (Austen 206; ch. 45) in the original, she is more inconsiderate in the miniseries and ventures to allude to him quite openly: "I understood that certain ladies found the society of Mr Wickham curiously agreeable." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:06:36) Yet, Elizabeth cannot be provoked by that, and the long look she exchanges with Darcy shows not only understanding, but their mutual affection as well. Darcy's unchanged feelings are further displayed to the viewers in his evening recollection of Elizabeth's smiling face, and his indecision of what to wear in the morning on the following day.

In the film, the events are changed a great deal. Darcy comes to the inn by himself, and addresses the Gardiners without being introduced to them by Elizabeth. She avoids meeting him by hiding behind a curtain. Neither Bingley nor his sister Caroline is present at Pemberley which facilitates the concentration solely on Darcy and Elizabeth. Darcy accompanies the Gardiners and Elizabeth to the inn at the end of the day, and waits together with her aunt and uncle till she reads the fatal letter from Jane.

The BBC scene with Jane's letter respects the original 'script' and uses the original dialogues. Darcy's pensive and seemingly offhand phrasing: "I am afraid you have long been desiring my absence." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:18:11); "I have stayed too long. I shall leave you now." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:18:49) persuades Elizabeth

that he does not want to associate with her because of the disgrace. Her regret at that is evident in her tearful sigh: "I shall never see him again." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:19:11) The viewers are, however, not left in doubt of Darcy's further conduct (in contrast to the original). We can see his irritation at Caroline's teasing him in the evening about Elizabeth's departure. Later on, the events happening to Elizabeth are intercut with Darcy's attempt to discover Wickham and Lydia in London. Unlike in the book, the viewers are thus spared the surprise at Lydia's revelation.

The new dialogues which were created for the corresponding scene in the film convey the same message, but they slightly change the tone and behaviour of Mr Darcy. Both Darcy and Elizabeth think they are to blame. There is no (even if only seeming) reserve on his side, he openly acknowledges: "This is my fault. If only I had exposed Wickham when I should." (*P&P* 2005; 1:27:55) He even adds after a few moments: "Would I could help you." (*P&P* 2005; 1:28:18) When Darcy leaves the room, the sense of Elizabeth's losing Darcy by this unfortunate event is not as evident in the film as it is in the original.

The following period of crisis at Longbourn, which ends up in Lydia's visit as a finally married woman, is a faithful copy of the original with most of the original dialogues preserved in the miniseries. Nevertheless, some alterations were made.

Firstly, Elizabeth and Jane have several private discussions, in which the consequences for all the sisters are highlighted by Elizabeth: "Jane, do you not see that more things have been ruined by this business than Lydia's reputation." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:27:48), and "All I know is that now he [Darcy], or any other respectable man, will want nothing to do with any of us." (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:30:31).

Secondly, instead of receiving a letter of condolence from Mr Collins, he turns up at Longbourn to condole in person. Thus, the Bennet girls have to endure his repulsive presence for one last time. This scene, namely Mr Collins' speech delivered in his usual pompous manner, Kitty's avoiding him and later peeping through the window to see if he is still there, and his departure hastened by Elizabeth's suggestion, adds humorous effect to this passage, and further illustrates Mr Collins' absurdity.

Finally, apart from the intercuts showing Darcy in search of Wickham and Lydia, we can also take a look at them hiding in London. Lydia's immaturity and silliness can be traced in her exclamation: "Lord, it makes me want to burst out laughing when I think that I have done what none of my sisters has. And I – the youngest of them all!" (*P&P* 1995 – episode 5; 0:37:14)

The crisis at Longbourn is very economically depicted in the film: before we are able to digest Mrs Bennet's grief, a letter arrives from Mr Gardiner, and in the next instant Mr Bennet himself returns home. Elizabeth takes the initiative of reading the letter to her father and her sisters informing them of the conditions for the marriage. Surprisingly, it is Elizabeth who estimates that Mr Gardiner must have assisted with at least ten thousand pounds. When she informs her mother of this fact, Mrs Bennet dismisses her claim by pointing out: "He is far richer than us and has no children."[8] (*P&P* 2005; 1:31:11) During these events, Elizabeth never talks to Jane about what happened to her in Derbyshire. The next shot brings us the married couple, and the whole mystery is spilled out by Lydia at the dinner table – Elizabeth is the only one who learns the truth. Lydia informs her of all the details, so Elizabeth does not have to write to her aunt to learn them. She does not speak to Wickham either, and the newly-wed couple leaves as quickly as they came. The film-makers clearly wanted to get over this part as quickly as possible in order to get to back to the central romantic plot.

The last stage of the story consists of Bingley's return to Netherfield, his proposal to Jane, Lady Catherine's inquiry of Elizabeth, Darcy's renewed proposal, and a report of the engagement to the Bennet family.

The miniseries has the whole 48 minutes to relate the events of the final stage of the story, and it does so at some length. Among the other things which follow the original, Lydia's wedding is depicted, and later on Mrs Gardiner's explanatory letter to Elizabeth - we can see Mr Darcy explaining his reasons to Mr Gardiner, and the final close-up of their shaking hands to seal the arrangement proves his gentlemanly qualities. After Wickham and Lydia's departure, we can see all the inhabitants of Longbourn at their usual employments; everything is back to normal until the news come to the town of Bingley's coming back. The several visits of Mr Bingley to Longbourn, which were described in the original, were reduced to only two, but an additional scene is in between in which Darcy confesses to Bingley that he concealed from him Jane's stay in London, and expresses his conviction of Jane's genuine affection for Bingley. As in the original, Mrs Bennet's ploy to leave Mr Bingley alone with Jane is successful, and although we do not see Bingley's actual proposal, we can watch her happiness when she shares the news with Elizabeth.

[8] In the original, Mr and Mrs Gardiner have several children.

In contrast, the film adaptation timespan for the last stage is approximately 20 minutes, so everything happens very quickly. Bingley and Darcy come to Longbourn without further ado (quite surprisingly on foot), and Bingley's attachment to Jane is so strong that he returns the same day, and quite straightforwardly asks Mrs Bennet for a tête-à-tête with Jane. This scene is preceded by a comical filler in which Bingley and Darcy analyse their visit and rehearse the proposal to Jane. This scene which was probably intended to ease the atmosphere and add some humour, rather puts Bingley again into the position of an ass (– an expression the character himself uses to describe his own behaviour). The actual proposal is being eagerly eavesdropped by the whole family except for Elizabeth who is unable to share her sister's happiness when her own heart is in despair. We can see Jane's relief and absolute happiness when she answers 'Yes', and in the next shot the contrasting sadness of her sister hidden in the garden outside. Darcy, who appears equally troubled, watches Longbourn from a distance as if saying farewell.

The next turn of events is brought by Lady Catherine de Bourgh's arrival. The miniseries conducted the scene according to the original. In the film, however, it is set at night when the Bennets are already in beds. The camera allows us to peer through the windows of Longbourn to see Mr and Mrs Bennet's loving relationship, Mary and Kitty's sisterhood, and the renewal of closeness between Jane and Elizabeth in the quiet atmosphere of the evening. This serenity is broken by Lady Catherine's unexpected arrival – this interpretation underscores how high and mighty Lady Catherine feels herself.

Whereas the miniseries follows with the scene of Mr Collins' letter, the film does not keep the viewers in suspense any longer. Elizabeth is sleepless at night, and after broodily watching the candlelight sets out for a walk with the first sound of a bird. She walks in the early morning haze across the moors, the sun is on the verge of rising, and suddenly she sees Darcy walking towards her, his open coat flying around him, his shirt provokingly unbuttoned – the scene certainly does not lack romantic attributes. Not a single word is mentioned about their behaviour at Rosings when Darcy first proposed to Elizabeth – the atmosphere would probably be spoiled by any explanations or reasonings. Darcy's emotional declaration: "You have bewitched me, body and soul, and I love… I love… I love you" (*P&P* 2005; 1:50:37), and their touching foreheads in the rising sun seem to be a little over the top.

What a contrast it is with the totally unromantic environment of the country lane with Jane and Bingley walking in the front, and a farmer adjusting the harness of his horse in the background which serves as the setting of the second proposal scene in the miniseries. The lines of their dialogues were taken from the original, although they were shortened considerably. The six pages in which Jane Austen described this event are almost exclusively filled with conversation of Darcy and Elizabeth, and not a single word of their embracing, or even touching is mentioned. The sense of romance is hidden in their heads, hearts, and words – it is a spiritual, not a physical moment for Jane Austen. The miniseries fully complies with that.

The previous scene is definitely the climax of the story, but to have it complete we have to look at the coda as well. The film adaptation does not dwell on this final part very much. We can see Darcy leaving Mr Bennet's study, and giving a supportive smile to Elizabeth who is about to enter it. Meanwhile Jane and Mrs Bennet wonder at this unexpected turn of events because unlike in the original, where Elizabeth talks to her sister first, and after speaking to her father, announces the news to her mother as well, Keira Knightley as Elizabeth keeps everything to herself until the very last moment.

Elizabeth's conversation with her father is true to the original with the exception of the emphasis that was put on Elizabeth's feeling of being wrong about Darcy. As in the original, she reveals the secret of Darcy arranging Lydia's marriage with Wickham, and his paying all the expenses. The film-makers might have realised that the meeting of the two main heroes on the moors was so romantic it would have been unwise to top it by another romantic scene, so the last word belongs to Mr Bennet rejoicing at the happy news in his study.

In the BBC adaptation, Elizabeth first shares her happiness with Jane according to Austen's version. Her conversation with her father differs from the original 'script' in that she does not reveal Darcy's assistance in Lydia's case, and she does not explain why she changed her opinion on Darcy, but Mr Bennet seems to know his daughter so well that even such a laconic explanation as hers is enough to persuade him of Elizabeth's true feelings. Andrew Davies decided not to disappoint the viewers who were eager for their share of grand romantic finale, and depicted a double-wedding of Bingley and Jane, and Darcy and Elizabeth as the final full stop at the end of the whole story. To compensate the lack of romantic aspects in the scene of Elizabeth's engagement to Darcy, the miniseries ends with a close-up of Darcy and Elizabeth enjoying their first marital kiss.

3.4 Alternative US ending

It is worth noting that the film version did not escape a rather schmatlz ending. It was decided that the American audiences should not be deprived of the final kiss of Darcy and Elizabeth for reasons which the director Joe Wright summed up by pertinently remarking: "I guess, in America, you just like a little more sugar in your champagne."(qtd. in Stanley)

The final scene of the American version is thus set at Pemberley presenting us the newly-wed couple in the dim glow of torchlight, both of them sporadically dressed sitting on the terrace with the view of the lake occupied by several swans. Their final kiss is preceded by a conversation about endearments which Darcy should use for Elizabeth. The whole spectacle seems to disregard all the principles of Austen's books, and is likely to make every devoted admirer of Jane Austen shiver with disgust.

4 Conclusion

In this diploma thesis, I have tried to show the growing trends in the contemporary film adaptation production, namely the emphasis on the romantic elements of the story, toning down of the realistic background and social satire of its literary antecedent, and reduction of the psychology of individual characters, an approach which caters to the minimalist expectations of the 21st century audience – a trend which can arguably be labelled as postmodern. I have demonstrated this phenomenon on the two latest versions of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. My assumption was that the ten years' difference between the two adaptations would be reflected in the manner with which the film-makers approached the story and that the 'older' version would betray fewer signs of having being romanticised and disposed of the realistic underpinnings. My aim was to carry out a comparative analysis which would substantiate this assumption.

In my opinion, this aim has been achieved, because both the character study and the study of the storyline showed that the film version is demonstrably more marked with the mentioned trends. Although the psychological reduction is not necessarily the result of time compression, as seen in the case of Mr Collins; it was particularly evident in the characters of Mr Wickham and Caroline Bingley in the film. In contrast, reductionism was not detected in the miniseries. Next, the film characters of Mr and Mrs Bennet underwent radical changes which led to the loss of much of the original satire. Both main characters – Elizabeth and Mr Darcy – were distinctly more emotional than the original suggested, which can be attributed to the romanticisation of the film version. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the development and free interpretation of Mr Darcy's character in the miniseries also point to a certain emphasis on the romantic aspects of the plotline.

The second part, where I mainly focussed on the comparison of the corresponding scenes of the adaptations, further confirmed the assumption. Minimalism and immense reduction of many of the scenes are easily perceptible in the film. Both versions stress the romance between Darcy and Elizabeth through various close-ups of the two main characters, but the film more so by several adjustments in the storyline and setting, as can be clearly seen in the first and second proposal of Mr Darcy. The reductions and omissions in the film concern the parts of the original where realism was

particularly influential, for instance Wickham's scheming, Charlotte's part in the story or the crisis in the Bennet family after Lydia's elopement. Thus, even though the analysis may not be entirely exhaustive, it brings sufficient evidence for substantiation of the primary assumption.

Nevertheless, it may be objected that had the chosen adaptations been separated by a longer period of time, the differences between them and the original might have been more substantial. However, there were two main reasons why I have chosen these two. The first reason was of a technical kind. The adaptations created prior to these two were produced for television broadcasting, and are neither available for purchase, nor rental. The other reason was connected to the audience I had in mind when forming the idea of this thesis. As a teacher of the English language, I am aware of the fact that films have become a popular pedagogical tool. Especially young students are susceptible to this visual medium. Many of them rather borrow a film than a book to finish their reading assignment. I wanted to point out (not only) to the students of English the potential threat of taking film adaptations as a replacement of their literary originals. Naturally, such an audience would hardly struggle to find an old and almost forgotten adaptation, but would choose a new one which is easily available on the market. In this thesis, my object was to demonstrate the crucial changes the classics have recently undergone through their transmission from the pages of the book to the film screen, and to help the potential audience to realise we have to read the films critically, and watch them with awareness.

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