



**UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE MADRID**

FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS

DEPARTAMENTO DE HISTORIA Y TEORÍA DEL ARTE

**TESIS DOCTORAL**

# ***GREAT EXPECTATIONS ON SCREEN***

## **A Critical Study of Film Adaptation**

Violeta Martínez-Alcañiz

Directoras de la Tesis Doctoral:

Prof. Dra. Valeria Camporesi y Prof. Dra. Julia Salmerón

Madrid, 2018

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**A Critical Study of Film Adaptation**

Tesis presentada por Violeta Martínez-Alcañiz  
Licenciada en Periodismo y en Comunicación Audiovisual  
para la obtención del grado de Doctor

Directoras de la Tesis Doctoral:  
Prof. Dra. Valeria Camporesi y Prof. Dra. Julia Salmerón

Madrid, 2018

*“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,  
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,  
it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity,  
it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness,  
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair”*

(Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*)

*“Now why should the cinema follow the forms of theater and painting  
rather than the methodology of language,  
which allows wholly new concepts of ideas to arise  
from the combination of two concrete denotations of two concrete objects?”*

(Sergei Eisenstein, “A dialectic approach to film form”)

*“An honest adaptation is a betrayal”*

(Carlo Rim)

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## Abstract

*Great Expectations on Screen. A Critical Study of Film Adaptation* explores the influence of political, economic and sociocultural factors when adapting a novel to a film. The main objective is to put forth a means to analyse novel-to-film adaptations far beyond traditional questions and criterions applied to this area of research, such as *originality* or *faithfulness* either to the *letter* or to the *spirit* of the source text. Truly enough, for many decades, debates concerning adaptation studies have revolved around questions of *fidelity criticism* and *authorship*, being novels considered touchstones of value for their adaptations. This is especially true for literary classics, which have been usually regarded as *controlling parents*.

Notwithstanding, especially by the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the field has expanded to new forms of *transmediality* and *hybridization*, and the valuable contributions done by some scholars have helped to move from the binary novel-film *fidelity* debate to a non-judgmental and non-hierarchical approach to the relationship between the source text and its adaptation. In spite of a wide range of possibilities for research on adaptation, it is perceived some stagnation following the effort to overcome the one-way literature-to-cinema perspective. Work is needed that provides further theoretical and practical approaches for those interested in the multiple ways in which texts and films may engage, whether as academic scholars, undergraduate students or general public.

This thesis aims to enter more deeply into the new landscape of adaptation studies by exploring this territory through the lens of a historical perspective, in the hope that it will help to establish adaptation as a field of film study in its own right. It will do so by interrogating how the different film adaptations of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* have been understood, responded to and transferred to the screen depending on particular political, economic and sociocultural contexts. Despite such undertaking of novel-to-film adaptation analysis is not completely original, it is noticeable that far too little attention has been paid to it. Moreover, what is original about this approach is the wide time span (from 1909 to 2016) that it covers and the number of films (10) based on the same novel that it examines. By exploring the way in which one single story has been *reread*, *rewritten* and *refashioned* by different filmmakers and production companies, in different film industries, at different moments in history, this work aims to allow the

reader to come away with a better understanding of the complexities and intricacies of the novel-to-film adaptation.

The core of this research is composed of 10 chapters, one of them devoted to study the novel while the rest examines the film adaptations. Each chapter opens with a description and evaluation of the narrative functions, following Roland Barthes' distinction between *cardinal functions* and *catalysers*. Afterwards, the analysis of the narrative discourse focuses on different aspects related to *Mood, Voice, Order, Duration* and *Frequency* as defined by Gérard Genette. Finally, it is explored the way in which each film adaptation engages in conversation with the epoch in which it is produced. Specifically, it examines the impact of political, economic and sociocultural aspects in relation to three aspects: (1) production, distribution and exhibition systems; (2) cinema audience; and (3) film forms and genres. The aim is to find out the extent to which changes at the narrative level in the book-to-film movement may respond to external factors. In other words, the purpose is to illustrate the way in which the particular conditions of a particular time influence the process of adaptation.

To conclude, this thesis does not argue on behalf of an undisputed or definitive theory on adaptation studies. Rather, its objective is to open new ways to understand and analyse this mosaic called film adaptation.

## Resumen

*Great Expectations on Screen. A Critical Study of Film Adaptation* explora la influencia de los factores político, económico y sociocultural en el proceso de adaptación cinematográfica de una novela. El principal objetivo es proponer un método de análisis que vaya más allá de las nociones y criterios que, tradicionalmente, se han aplicado a este campo de la investigación, tales como la *originalidad* o la *fidelidad* a la *letra* o el *espíritu* del texto fuente. Sin duda, durante décadas, los estudios de adaptación han girado en torno a cuestiones de *fidelidad* y *autoría*, y se ha considerado a la novela como piedra angular a partir de la cual valorar la adaptación. Esto es especialmente cierto en lo que respecta a los clásicos literarios, los cuales, tradicionalmente, han sido calificados como *padres controladores*.

No obstante, especialmente en lo que va de siglo, esta área de estudio se ha expandido hacia nuevas formas de transmedialidad e hibridación, mientras que las valiosas contribuciones realizadas por distintos académicos han ayudado a pasar de un debate centrado en la *fidelidad* a un enfoque que no juzga ni establece jerarquías en relación con el texto fuente y su adaptación. A pesar del amplio rango de posibilidades que ofrecen los estudios de adaptación, se observa un cierto estancamiento en el intento por superar el debate que superpone la literatura al cine. Por ello, esta tesis pretende se aproxima al fenómeno de la adaptación desde una perspectiva histórica. Y lo hará preguntándose cómo las diferentes adaptaciones cinematográficas de la novela de Charles Dickens *Great Expectations* han sido recibidas, interpretadas y transferidas a la pantalla dependiendo del contexto político, económico y cultural en el que eran producidas. Aunque tal aproximación al análisis del trasvase libro-película no es completamente original, no es menos cierto que, hasta ahora, ha recibido muy poca atención. Además, lo que hay de original en este trabajo es el amplio arco temporal que cubre (de 1909 a 2016) y el número de filmes (10) basados en una misma novela que examina. Al analizar la manera en que una misma historia ha sido releída, reescrita y remodelada por diferentes cineastas y productoras cinematográficas, en distintas industrias filmicas, y en momentos históricos diversos, este trabajo ofrece una importante oportunidad que el lector obtenga una mayor comprensión de la complejidad y dimensión del trasvase libro-película.

El núcleo de esta investigación está compuesto por 10 capítulos, uno de ellos dedicado al estudio de la novela mientras que el resto examina las diferentes adaptaciones cinematográficas. Cada capítulo comienza con una descripción y evaluación de las

funciones narrativas, para lo cual se ha seguido la distinción que realiza Roland Barthes entre *funciones cardinales* y *catalizadores*. A continuación, el análisis del discurso narrativo se centra en diferentes aspectos relacionados con *Modo, Voz, Orden, Duración* y *Frecuencia*, según han sido definidos por Gérard Genette. Finalmente, se explora el modo en que las adaptaciones cinematográficas *dialogan* con la época en la que son producidas. Específicamente, se examina el impacto de los factores político, económico y sociocultural en relación con tres aspectos: (1) sistemas de producción, distribución y exhibición, (2) audiencia; y (3) estilos y géneros cinematográficos. El propósito es dilucidar hasta qué punto los cambios a nivel narrativo que se producen en el trasvase libro-película pueden responder a factores externos. En otras palabras, si las condiciones específicas de una época particular influyen en el proceso de adaptación.

Para concluir, esta tesis no pretende establecer una teoría final y definitiva sobre los estudios de adaptación, algo que, siendo realistas, resulta bastante improbable de conseguir. Su propósito, en último término, es abrir nuevas vías de entendimiento y análisis de ese mosaico denominado adaptación cinematográfica.

## Chapter 1. Introduction

*Great Expectations on Screen. A Critical Study of Film Adaptation* explores the influence of political, economic and sociocultural factors when adapting a novel to a film. The main objective is to put forth a means to analyse novel-to-film adaptations far beyond traditional questions and criteria applied to this area of research, such as *originality* or *faithfulness* either to the *letter* or to the *spirit* of the source text.

Adaptation as a process in the field of Humanities dates back to classical antiquity. This shape-shifting phenomenon has extended over the centuries as new art forms and genres have appeared. However, at the core of this practice, there is an unchanging principle: something inspiring something else. With the coming of cinema, adaptation took on a new dimension: filmmakers regarded literature as suitable material to be adapted to the new media. Thus, literature-to-film adaptation has been a common practice for more than a hundred years. However, as a field of research, it took a long time for seminal works on adaptation theory to appear. It was not until 1957 that George Bluestone's pioneering *Novels into Film* considered this area in depth. Despite the growing proliferation of adaptation studies, they have found difficulties to locate themselves as a discipline and find their *own voice*. As Leitch (2009) has noted, their influence on film studies, to which they have remained ancillary, have been generally slight. Literary scholars have tackled this issue, but many of them have tended to privilege the source text in the discourse on the quality of its adaptation to the screen, thus assuming literature's superiority to cinema.

For many decades, debates concerning adaptation studies revolved around questions of *fidelity criticism* and *authorship*, being novels considered touchstones of value for their adaptations. This is especially true for literary classics, which have been traditionally regarded as *controlling parents*. An "insistence on treating source texts as canonical authoritative discourse or readerly works rather than internally persuasive discourse or writerly texts" (Leitch, 2009) plays part in refusing the aphorism that texts are constantly rewritten, even if only at the level of the reader's imagination. Ultimately, how people experience a text and what such text signifies vary not only from one historical period to another, but also from one society to another, even if they share the same temporal frame.

Therefore, *fidelity* as a criterion of the quality of the film adaptation is only useful in a context where novel and film are opposed as *original vs. copy*, *high culture vs. low culture*. The same applies to the notion of *authorship*. The publication of recent volumes with titles as *In/fidelity: Essays on Film Adaptation* (Kranz & Mellerski, 2008), *Authorship in Film Adaptation* (Boozer, 2009), *Screen Adaptation: Impure Cinema* (Cartmell & Whelehan, 2010), or *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity* (MacCabe, Warner & Murray, 2011), suggests that these are thorny questions, which still cause controversy. Notwithstanding, especially by the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the field has expanded to new forms of *transmediality* and *hybridization*, and the valuable contributions done by scholars as Brian McFarlane, Deborah Cartmell, Imelda Whelehan, James Naremore, Robert Stam, Sarah Cardwell, Kamilla Elliott, Dudley Andrews, Thomas Leitch or Linda Hutcheon have helped to move from the binary novel-film *fidelity* debate to a non-judgmental and non-hierarchical approach to the relationship between the source text and its adaptation.

In spite of a wide range of possibilities for research on adaptation, it is perceived some stagnation following the effort to overcome the one-way literature-to-cinema perspective. Work is needed that provides further theoretical and practical approaches for those interested in the multiple ways in which texts and films may engage, whether as academic scholars, undergraduate students or general public. This thesis aims to enter more deeply into the new landscape of adaptation studies by exploring this territory through the lens of a historical perspective, in the hope that it will help to establish adaptation as a field of film study in its own right. It will do so by interrogating how the different film adaptations of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* have been understood, responded to and transferred to the screen depending on particular political, economic and sociocultural contexts. It must be conceded that such undertaking of novel-to-film adaptation analysis is not completely original. Some of the aspects observed here have been broached before and, certainly, there have been a few attempts to connect film adaptations with their historical backgrounds. However, up to now, it is noticeable that far too little attention has been paid to this approach. At most, scholars have tackled this issue by confining their studies to one particular film adaptation. Without denying their relevance, it is believed that the limitation to a one case study constrains the focus of the research and prevents from drawing clear-cut conclusions. Ultimately, "The adaptation, through the fact of it being a new version, [...] promises changes and transformations not only of the original source but also of the screen adaptations that have preceded it"

(Geraghty, 2008: 15). Hence, this study is sympathetic to pluralism rather than fixity: what is original about this approach to novel-to-film adaptation studies is the wide time span that it covers and the number of films based on the same novel that it examines. By exploring the way in which one single story has been *reread*, *rewritten* and *refashioned* by different filmmakers and production companies, in different film industries, at different moments in history, this work provides an important opportunity to advance in the understanding of the page-to-screen movement.

As noticed by MacCabe (2011: 8), “the number of variables involved in any adaptation from the linguistic form of the novel or short story to a film’s matters of expression approach infinity”. Any work of art is built from systems, codes and traditions established by previous works and cultures. The *ghosts*, the echoes of ancient cultural forms are present in any adaptation process, while the intertextual purpose is very variable. Moreover, it may or may not involve temporal or cultural relocation, the filmmaker or scriptwriter’s personal view, as much as technological, political or economic limitations. That is the reason why any attempt to taxonomize adaptation studies proves unsuccessful. Notwithstanding, “with a process as nebulous and heterogeneous as film adaptation, theory must arise from practice, from concrete details that rise above the particular to convey something more global about the discipline” (Wells-Lassagne & Hudelet, 2013: 2). It is hoped that the case study materials, each focusing on one of the 10 films adapting *Great Expectations* and its particular context, will allow the reader to come away with a better understanding of the complexities and intricacies of the novel-to-film adaptation.

Most of the adaptations analysed in this thesis appear to locate themselves within the established literary culture of the source text, although there are a few cases where they seem to present themselves as an *assault* on that culture, thus revisiting the novel from perspectives that clearly challenge the notion of *fidelity*. In fact, this work is not engaged with questions of *un/fidelity* or *authorship*. It addresses the page-to-screen movement considering literature and cinema in an equitable manner, as two art forms with the same quality and value, and their own limitations and specificities. It is inevitable, then, a comparison between both the novel and its film adaptations in order to explore their essential nature and to hypothesise upon the elements that may have been transferred or may have the potential to produce similar effects. Nonetheless, this must not be regarded as an attempt to build an insuperable barrier that separate the two media.



Rather, it is a necessary step to determine the innovations and new meanings inspired by the film adaptation, and to what extent they may be related to the context in which it is produced.

Despite this study aims to set up a methodology that combines a theoretical and a practical approach, it demonstrates its shortcomings in wholly bridge the word and the image. One limitation of this thesis' concern with the comparison of the narrative discourse in the novel and in the films is that it falls into imbalances. Films go beyond the convergence of words and motion pictures. In the course of this research, it becomes manifestly clear that film elements of cinematic storytelling add new dimensions and provide different readings of the same plot, but these devices and the use that each case study makes of them do not receive the attention they deserve in this work. Additionally, it must be admitted the preponderance of Anglo-American films and Anglo-American criticism, although it includes three films coming from such different backgrounds as the Danish, the Hong Kong and the Bollywood film industries. Ultimately, the fact that most of the adaptations are British or Hollywood films do not change or undermine the core of this thesis. Even if two adaptations are produced in the same country, and as long as they are released in different years, the political, economic and sociocultural factors typical of a specific period affect the way in which the same story is regarded.

Another limitation might be the restriction to one single case study. However, it is believed that a classic literary text as *Great Expectations* and its multiple adaptations to the screen would serve properly to problematize and (hopefully) to shed new light on the influence of a particular context in the novel-to-film movement. Since this project addresses a wide historical period and several interdisciplinary discourses, the use of numerous novels and films would tend to create analytical scatter and an excessively extensive research. On the contrary, considering in depth and detail *Great Expectations* and the 10 film adaptations produced over more than a hundred years provides greater clarity and force of argumentation, and enables deeper critical study, debates and interpretive connotations. Truly enough, *Great Expectations*, both the novel and the films based on it, responds to specific dynamics and contains idiosyncratic elements. Despite other classical novels may tackle different issues and themes, it is trusted that they do not affect the arguments and conclusions of this work. Any researcher needs to make some choices to avoid infinity. This thesis does not argue on behalf of an undisputed or definitive theory

on adaptation studies. Rather, its purpose is to open new ways to understand and analyse this mosaic called film adaptation.

## ***Chapter 2. Literature Review***

In *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, Jean Mitry (1978) defines literature and cinema as two *means of expression*, which are able to turn the *stream of consciousness* either into words or motion pictures. Both languages share similar structural and aesthetic rhetoric figures, which originally belonged to the oral tradition. Therefore, they derive from a primary verbal language, through which each object was associated with a mental representation. From this assumption, it can be concluded that the written word has simply capitalized on these literary figures rather than created them. At most, it may be argued that their introduction in the written discourse has *refined* and *perfected* their aesthetic value. The same applies to the motion picture. This is an important observation, which provides evidence to the similar status of literature and cinema. In the early days of the motion picture, most studies in the field identified literature with *high culture* and cinema with *low culture*. However, these labels have become blurred over the years, especially in the last decades. Thus, the assumption that cinema is a pastiche that merely borrows the literary devices to translate them to the screen has been generally abandoned.

The complexity of theorizing about the relationship between literature and cinema has increased with the adaptation phenomenon. The book-to-film movement is as old as cinema itself: it was 1897 when the Lumière brothers filmed *Faust, Apparition de Méphistophélès*, based on Goethe's novel. For producers, film adaptations presented two advantages. On the one hand, they could satisfy the audience's demand for new stories. On the other hand, the high status of literature added prestige to the cinema. Nevertheless, the new media was constrained by technical limitations and, often, producers were interested in making profits rather than exploring the aesthetic possibilities of the motion picture. Consequently, most early film adaptations failed in translating the core and the essence of the source text into images. To add a new dimension, this adaptation phenomenon ran also the other way around, as Graham Green's *The Third Man* proves.

## Early expressions: between hostility and passion

At first, many intellectuals regarded cinema and film adaptations as a threat. Distrust or rejection were usual feelings until the 1950s. To give an illustration, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce, or Aldous Huxley, among others, feared that cinema could encroach upon the literary field; consequently, they were hostile toward the new media (Marcus, 2006: 153; *see also* Geduld, 1997). Notwithstanding, there were other authors who showed mixed feelings. Thomas Mann, for instance, argued that cinema was a phenomenon loosely related to art, but he also considered that film techniques offered unique aesthetic and artistic potentialities (Geduld, 1997: 147-8). Over the 1920s, formalist approaches to the theory of film claimed the status of cinema as an independent art. The Moscow Film School became very significant, since relevant filmmakers as Lev Kuleshov, Dziga Vertov, Vsévolod Pudovkin or Sergei Eisenstein were pioneer in the development of editing and narrative techniques. With regard to the latest, it is worth drawing attention to two of his essays. In “Word and image”, Eisenstein (1957: 4) emphasized the fact that “two film pieces of any kind, placed together, inevitably combine into a new concept, a new quality, arising out of that juxtaposition”, meaning that they could create new significances, new effects. This principle applies both to literature and cinema, where the juxtaposition of words or pictures produces an *image* that synthesizes a theme. In this sense, Eisenstein argued that

The task that confronts [the creator] is to transform this image into a few basic *partial representations* which, in their combination and juxtaposition, shall evoke in the consciousness and feelings of the spectator, reader or auditor, the same initial general image which originally hovered before the creative artist.

With this statement, the Soviet director and film theorist suggested the possibility to achieve similar effects both through cinema and literature, which he exemplified by analyzing a passage from Guy de Maupassant’s *Bel Ami* and its transposition to the screen. This assumption is reinforced in “Dickens, Griffith and the film today”, where Eisenstein defended that both arts shared the same origins and cultural background:

Let Dickens and the whole ancestral array, going back as far as the Greeks and Shakespeare, be superfluous reminders that both Griffith and our cinema prove our origins to be not solely as of Edison and his fellow inventors, but as based on an enormous cultured past; each part of this past in its own moment of world history has moved forward the great art of cinematography. Let this past be a reproach to those thoughtless people who have displayed arrogance in reference to literature, which has contributed so much to this apparently unprecedented art and is, in the first and most important place: the art of viewing —not only the *eye*, but *viewing*— both meanings being embraced in this term (Eisenstein, 1977: 232-3).

Moreover, he states that art reaches “its highest level of development in the form of cinema” (Eisenstein, 1977: 193). Overall, during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, theoretical contributions on literature and cinema claimed their distinction as two independent arts. On this matter, Fernand Léger (1973: 42) noted that “filming a novel is a fundamental mistake, one that results from the fact that most of the directors have a literary background and education”. Because of this, filmmakers did not take advantage of the infinite possibilities offered by the cinema. Moreover, by adapting novels to the screen, they became “the victims of the least possible effort”. Apart from this, Léger was also critical of the commercial viewpoint that dominated the film industry. Curiously enough, economic and also political factors favoured synergies between literature and cinema, especially during financial crisis or state censorship. To give an illustration, after the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) enforced the Production Code in 1934, the literary classics became suitable material to meet the moral standards under which films must be produced. Study guides, radio dramatizations or special illustrated editions of the novels were released together with the film adaptation. Producers and editors became aware of the profitability of joining their forces. As suggested by the headline of this news published in *The Motion Picture Herald* (1934: 48), “Filming classics aid tickets and book sales”.

In short, for decades, debates concerning the relationship between literature and cinema remained stuck in a central critical paradox (Elliott, 2003: 113). On the one hand, some scholars defended that both languages were diametrically opposed as *words* and *images*. On the other hand, other scholars drew attention to the historical, narratological

and formal connections that bound these two media, which, additionally, shared the same audience, values, archetypes and sources (Elliott, 2003: 113).

## **Towards a theory on film adaptation**

It was from the 1950s that there existed a true attempt to theorize on the question of film adaptation. In 1950, André Bazin (1967: 67) wrote in “A defense of mixed cinema” that “For the same reasons that render a word-by-word translation worthless and a too free translation a matter for condemnation, a good adaptation should result in a restoration of the essence of the letter and the spirit”. Hungarian-Jewish film critic Béla Balázs (1952: 261-2), in *Theory of the Film*, distinguishes between the *raw material*, “which cannot yet determine its art form”, and the *content*, which “(approaches) reality from the viewpoint of a certain form of art”. Thus, the *raw material* must be arranged to fit the formal characteristics of each art form. This assumption entails that a literary work and a film cannot be compared, even if both of them deal with the same theme, subject or plot. In “A certain tendency of the French cinema”, Truffaut (1966: 13) uses the term *fidelity* to claim that an adaptation of value does not hinge upon its *faithfulness* to the source text, but depends on whether it is written by *a man of the cinema*.

All these statements acquired relevance with the publication of George Bluestone’s *Novels into Film*. This seminal work was the first attempt to theorize on the process to transpose a book into a movie that gained wide recognition. Bluestone (1957: 62-4) defined novels and films as “two intersecting lines that meet at a point, then diverge”. At the intersection, differences between books and shooting-scripts are almost imperceptible. However, where the lines draw apart, what is peculiar to its media cannot be translated without destroying an essential part of it. In line with Balázs, Bluestone argued that there were “crucial differences” between literature and cinema with regard to their origins, conventions and audiences, which made a film adaptation “become a different artistic entity from the novel on which it is based”. There is, therefore, an “inevitable mutation” in every book-to-film movement, which explains why “there is no necessary correspondence between the excellence of a novel and the quality of the film in which the novel is recorded”. Certainly, this “destruction” does not have to be

negative. Ultimately, it recognizes the status of the director as an author in his/her own right rather than a translator of an established author. Despite this feeble attempt to match the prestige of literature and cinema, along his study, Bluestone favours the assumption that cinema cannot compete against the artistic value of the high literature.

It was during the same period that Siegfried Kracauer published *Theory of Film*. The German film theorist recovered the concept of *fidelity*, and defined *faithful adaptations* as those which attempt “to preserve intact the essential contents and emphases” of the source text. Nevertheless, what stands out from his study is the distinction between *cinematic* and *uncinematic* novels. According to this author, novels present varying degrees of *adaptability* depending on the aspects and themes they bring into focus. Thus, novels that explore physical reality favour cinematic adaptations. On the contrary, those which deal with situations and relationships that cannot be translated to material phenomena are remote from film (Kracauer, 1960: 239-42).

## **Story and discourse: semiotics and structuralism**

For more than two decades, adaptation studies were very much influenced by Bluestone’s treatise. Overall, they focused on the comparison between literature and cinema at a narrative level. Thus, by the end of the 1960s, semiotic and structuralist theories, led by authors as Christian Metz or Jean Mitry, emphasized the differences between the nature of language (verbal) and the nature of images (iconic). From this observation, it was concluded that any film, even if adapted from a novel, was necessarily a new creation. Next to this, it is Roland Barthes’ well-known essay “The death of the author”. Barthes (1977: 146-7) describes a utopian scenario where the act of writing is released from the notion of author, for “to give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text”. Hence, every text becomes a *hypotext*, which can be modified by each reader in numerous ways. In his own words:

a text does not consist of a line of words, releasing a single “theological” meaning (the “message” of the Author-God), but is a space of many dimensions, in which are wedded and contested various kinds of writing,

no one of which is original: the text is a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture.

Julia Kristeva agrees with Barthes on this subject. She coined the term *intertextuality* to claim that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (1986: 37). This stance states that there are no *new* or *original* creations: every text is inspired by previous texts and influences subsequent texts. Moreover, everything has been already read: “there is no *first* reading, even if the text is concerned to give us that illusion by several operations of suspense” (Barthes, 2002: 16).

Once the Author is removed, the question of *fidelity* in film adaptations becomes pointless. Furthermore, it makes no sense to talk about *adaptation*: each text would work simultaneously as *hypotext* and *hypertext*, in an *ad continuum* where it turns into a rhizome with no beginning or end (1987: 21). This statement finds its legal basis as early as 1931. That year, Theodore Dreiser went to the Supreme Court to restrain Paramount from releasing a version of his novel *An American Tragedy*, which, according to him, did not portray its original. Justice Witschief ruled that whether the film remains faithful to the book or not depends on one’s point of view, adding that many critics found the picture a true representation of the *letter* and *spirit* of the novel (Bluestone, 1957: 217). Additionally, the Supreme Court considered that the audience’s interest should prevail over the author’s right to determine if a film version respected or not the meaning of his/her work (Maltby, 1992: 567). This sentence must be understood in the Hollywood of the mid-1930s, where the film industry chose self-censorship to face the pressure of the US Congress, as well as of certain religious and social organizations. Still, it opened the way to a new understanding of the book-to-film movement, which was supported by the semiotic theory and has currently regained popularity, as will be shown. Film theorists as Metz, Barthes or Mitry centred on the relationship between the *sign* (the *signifier* or *sound-image*) and its *meaning* (the *signified* or *concept*). As Metz (1991: 61-4) noted, in cinema, the distance between them is too short. If, in an image, it is isolated one single element, it is necessary to isolate both the signifier and the signified of that element. Cinema, therefore, becomes a sort of Esperanto, since “visual perception varies less throughout the world than language do”. However, its universal character has a negative implication: it entails a joining of a signifier to a particular signified, meaning that it prevents the audience to attribute their own meaning to a sign, as it happens in literature. On this



subject, Wolfgang Iser (1972: 288) argued that, while reading a novel, people may never have a clear conception of the hero's appearance, but on seeing the film, such possibility vanishes:

With the novel the reader must use his imagination to synthesize the information given him, and so his perception is simultaneously richer and more private; with the film he is confined merely to physical perception, and so whatever he remembers of the world he had pictured.

These observations seem to support the idea that words and image result in different effects. "The dissimilarities between novel and film are so great that it is surprising how many films —and successful ones— have been derived from novels" (McFarlane, 1983: 11). James Monaco (2000: 172-95) summarized such differences thus:

- a. Both the spoken and the written languages are subdivided into minimal units of meaning (the word), which, when juxtaposed or combined, result in bigger units (a sentence, which connected to other clauses form a paragraph). This does not apply to cinema. Following Metz, Monaco rejects the standard theory which suggested that the shot was the word of film, the scene its sentence, and the sequence its paragraph. A shot contains various number of images, which offer a potentially infinite amount of visual information, to which soundtrack must be added. Rather, film shot would be something like a sentence.
- b. Cinema is a continuum of meaning, which communicates in two different manners: denotatively and connotatively. Compare to the written language, it has a denotative meaning to a greater degree, for a film image "is what it is" and "can give us such a close approximation of reality". With regard to its connotative abilities, film is, on the one hand, influenced by the general culture and the resonances that go beyond the *diegesis*. On the other hand, cinema has its own unique techniques and storytelling resources, which offers filmmakers a wide range of possibilities. Depending on his/her own specific choices (editing, camera movement, camera lenses, music, wardrobe...), the significante of a shot may be different. Monaco defined it as *paradigmatic* connotation. In addition, he

speaks of *syntagmatic* connotation when the meaning of a shot hinges upon its comparison with other shots that precede or follow it. He argued against those who criticized cinema for “leaving nothing to the imagination”, claiming that “most of its meaning comes [...] from an ongoing process of comparison of what we see with what we don’t see”.

- c. In written/spoken language systems, syntax is concerned with the “linear aspect of construction”, that is, the juxtaposition of words to form sentences. Film syntax, nevertheless, can include both development in time (*montage*) and development in space (*mise-en-scène*).
- d. There are culturally derived codes and shared artistic codes that filmmakers simply reproduce. However, cinema has developed its own codes. Their combination makes up the syntax of film. Ultimately, it is “because they have meaning for us outside the narrow limits of [one] particular scene—in films, in other arts, in the general culture—that they affect us”.

Notwithstanding, it is noticeable that, despite literature and cinema has developed their own storytelling techniques, they share rhetoric devices, aesthetic values and structural patterns. As noted above, the word (iconic sign) and the image (visual sign) allude, ultimately, to the same *reference* or *mental concept*. It is because of their ability to produce narrative discourses, to tell stories, that both languages may be compared. According to Umberto Eco (1968: 204), they are *arts of action*, that is, they arrange a series of events (*actions*) to transmit a message (*meaning*). Therefore, they take the raw material of a *story* (*fabula*) and organize it into a structured *discourse* (*syuzhet*). With regard to the *story/discourse* dichotomy, adaptation studies have traditionally focused on the second aspect. Curiously enough, it is likely to find more differences between literature and cinema at the *discourse* level, since the *story* does not depend upon language and, therefore, it remains intact in the adaptation process.

This tendency changed in the 1980s, when film theorists as Gérard Genette, Seymour Chatman, André Gaudreault or Francesco Casetti centred on the differences between literature and cinema at the *discourse* level. In Thomas Leitch’s words (2008: 106), this approach is identified with a “persistent model”, meaning “the one-to-one case study that takes a single novel or play or story as a privileged context for its film adaptation”. It examines whether cinema has appropriated the literary rhetoric devices or has

developed its own, as well as if these film elements arouse, in terms of *aesthetic*, the same emotions as a novel. On this subject, some scholars have proposed different classifications depending on the type of adaptation. To give an illustration, Pio Baldelli (1964: 11-60) distinguishes between: *saccheggio* ('sacking') of the source text, intended for commercial exploitation; films that are *faithful* to the source text (*a servizio dell'opera letteraria*); *mezadria* ('partnership') between literature and cinema; and films that take the source text as a point of departure to create a new work. Similarly, Geoffrey Wagner (1975: 219-231) classified films in proximity to their source text as: *transposition*, in which the source text is transposed to screen with a minimum of apparent interference; *commentary*, where the source text is altered in some respect, either purportedly or unintentionally; and *analogy*, where the source text is used as a point of origin to make another work of art. Another example is Dudley Andrew's classification (1984: 98-100). Despite the multiple levels of proximity between novels and films, he defined three typological categories: *borrowing*, where "the artist employs, more or less extensively, the material, idea or form of an earlier, generally successful text"; *intersection*, which involves "a refraction of the original", meaning that there is no attempt to *cinematize* the source text; and *fidelity of transformation*, which deals with the question of *faithfulness* to the *letter* and to the *spirit* of the source text.

It is noticeable that all these typologies are closely related; ultimately, they deal with the equivalence in meaning between a novel and its film adaptation. However, it can be argued that the question of *fidelity*, either to the *letter* or the *spirit* of the source text, might entail two further implications, namely that: (a) it is possible to metaphysically define *spirit* as a corporeal entity that can be aesthetically measured; (b) the "digest phenomenon" (Bazin, 2000:19) (that is, the condensation, summary or alteration of the source text) taking place in every film's narrative discourse only responds to the intrinsic characteristics of the medium rather than to other elements, such as the historical context in which it is produced or the audience it addresses. Additionally, fidelity criticism often involves a "rhetoric of possession" (Sheen, 1999: 3), whereby critics and academics see themselves as possessors of the novel's true meaning and judge the film adaptation in terms of the adequacy to that meaning, and an 'articulation of loss' (Sheen, 1993: 3; *see also* Hodgdon, 2002: v), in which the critic or academic notes what is not on the screen.

## New perspectives

Over the last years, new approaches have explored ideological, theoretical or historical issues which overstep the binary or “inter-semiotic transposition” (Raitt, 2010: 47) that opposes “cinema versus literature, high culture versus mass culture, original versus copy” (Naremore, 2000: 2). Instead of considering both art forms as two relatives who share a similar root, much of the literature has embraced a new conception in which “there is no such thing as faithful adaptation”, as Robin Wood has stated (quoted in Boswell, 2007: 147). According to this new approach that since literature and cinema are different languages, even when appealing to the same plot or idea, they create different meanings.

To begin with, it is worth mentioning Brian McFarlane’s *Novel into Film*. Here, the author claims that focusing on fidelity criticism prevents from exploring other potential approaches to the question of film adaptation. McFarlane (1996: 10-14) centres on those aspects which are especially difficult to cinematize because of their literary nature; in contrast, he barely refers to the context in which a film is produced and its possible implications. Following Roland Barthes, he points out the distinction between two main groups of narrative functions, *distributional* and *integrational*, which he applies to cinema in order to clear up “what may be transferred (from novel to film) from that which may only be adapted”. Thus, the former is the most important in the book-to-film movement. This category comprises *cardinal functions* (*beats* or *hinge-points* that open up the story to multiple alternatives that make the plot advance) and *catalysers* (small actions that fill the gaps between *cardinal functions*). What is striking in McFarlane’s seminal contribution is that, despite drawing attention to the limitations of a theoretical approach centred on fidelity, it is mainly concerned with this thorny question. This trend will reverse with authors as Robert Stam (2005: 8-9), who favours the Derridean deconstructivist trend that breaks away from the assumption that the *original* is superior to the *copy* or, in this case, to its *transposition*. Following Mikhail Bakhtin and Michel Foucault, Stam suggests that every work is a hybrid influenced by a multiplicity of media and discourses. An implication of this argument is that *originality* does not exist any longer.

It is also of great interest Julie Grossman’s contribution, *Literature, Film, and Their Hideous Progeny*, and, specifically, her approach to what she has denominated *elasTEXTity*. Grossman (2015) thinks about texts “as extended beyond themselves, merging their identities with other works of art that follow and precede them”. Adaptations, therefore,

must be understood as creative works of arts that resituate previous texts in a different context. As a result, they provide further perspectives, raise additional questions and reshape stories for new audiences. The preexisting text is not regarded as the “authority” or the “controlling parent” anymore; rather, both sources and adaptations form a *rhizome*, following Deleuze and Guattari’s terminology. They shape a non-hierarchical, horizontal multiplicity whose elements establish random networks and connections one with each other, as well as with the context in which they are produced. This recent way of understanding film adaptations helps to provide cinema with a new status that places it at the same level as literature. In this scenario, it makes no sense to speak about *faithfulness* or *betrayal*; on the contrary, this approach opens new possibilities, many of them encompassed under the prefix *-trans*: *transtextuality*, *transmediality*, *transnational*, *transculturalism*, etc.

The multiple forms in which texts relate with each other suggests the impossibility of reaching a conclusive theory on film adaptation. As Pérez Bowie (2004: 278) has rightly noted, there is not even a compromise on whether the book-to-film movement should be denominated as *adaptation* or may be defined with another label as *translation*, *transposition*, *transference*, *rewriting*, *recreation*, *refashioning*, *remediation*... Ultimately, all these terms are euphemisms, which try to minimize any possible understanding of cinema as inferior to literature. Nevertheless, what seems more important to further progress on this theme, and to move definitively away from the question of *fidelity*, is to look beyond the text and the media. More precisely, it is necessary to examine the text from a historical perspective, that is, to put it in a context. It can be argued that the existing research has failed in determining the reasons behind the process of creation and destruction taking place en route from source text to its adaptation. In this respect, it is believed that the practice of adaptation has been very much influenced by the historical context in which it has been produced. In other words, that the economic, political and sociocultural factors of an epoch affect and orient the book-to-film movement as much as (and, sometimes, even more than) the auteur of the film. Those aspects have remained, however, rarely discussed. In order to properly address this question, the present research proposes a methodology based on: (a) a comparative analysis between Charles Dickens’ *Great Expectations* and all its film adaptations; (b) a study of the context in which each movie was produced in order to figure out which deviations from the source text may

respond to political, economic or sociocultural factors. This procedure will be explain in depth in the following section.

## Chapter 3. Methodology

This chapter is concerned with the research methodology used either to verify or to refute the proposed hypothesis. Considering the aim of this work, which is intended to analyse the impact and influence of political, economic and sociocultural factors in the process of film adaptation, a constructivist approach has been chosen to address the fundamental questions. It is founded on the basis that knowledge and reality are a product of their cultural context: the *true* adaptation (the one considered more *faithful* to the source text) is a social construction, which means that what it is regarded as *successful* in terms of *fidelity* is relative to a particular social formation, in a particular context and a particular time. It also implies that an adaptation may not work for the audience for which it has been produced, as well as that its status can vary over the years.

### Methodological approach and material

In order to accomplish the task proposed, this investigation takes the form of a case-study of the Charles Dickens' classic novel *Great Expectations* and the way in which different filmmakers have approached its transposition to the screen. One reason for this choice is because there exist 10 film adaptations: *The Boy and the Convict* (D. Aylott, 1909), *Great Expectations* (R.G. Vignola, 1917), *Store Forventninger* (A.W. Sandberg, 1922), *Great Expectations* (S. Walker, 1934), *Great Expectations* (D. Lean, 1946), *Gu Xing Xue Lei* (Chu Kei, 1955), *Great Expectations* (J. Hardy, 1974), *Great Expectations* (A. Cuarón, 1998), *Great Expectations* (M. Newell, 2012), and *Fitoor* (A. Kapoor, 2016). Interestingly enough, academics have often included in this classification a Swiss production from 1971, titled *Great Expectations*. Depending on the source, either Leonhard Gmür or Leopold H. Ginner are credited with the authorship; however, no further information is provided. It is clear from emails exchanged with Leonhard Gmür<sup>1</sup> that 1971's *Great Expectations* is a

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<sup>1</sup> I contacted Leonhard Gmür first in October, 2016 and, later on, in March, 2017.

film-essay about film-making, which has nothing to do with the Dickens novel. Besides, Leopold H. Ginner seems to be a misspelling of his name.

Being said that, it is noticeable that there is almost one film per decade, which allows to cover a period longer than a hundred years, from the early days of cinema up to the present day. Besides, most of the films have been produced and released in critical, thorny or unstable political and economic scenarios, or during periods of change at either social or cultural levels. This facilitates the task to deduce possible implications of a certain context for the production of a film adaptation. As stated by Hammond (2015: 2), “*Great Expectations* has come to represent a remarkable number of things in a remarkable number of different contexts” since its first appearance. But what this story has come to specifically represent in each book-to-film movement is the question that must be answered in the following pages.

Another reason to choose Dickens is his close relationship to the cinema. Not only because of his suitability for the media industry demands: he had gained a certain moral status, was familiar to many readers and his novels were copyright free by the time the film industry was born. Rather, Dickens’ descriptions of characters and the world surrounded him, as much as the structure of his novels, inspired filmmakers to create and introduce film elements of cinematic storytelling. David W. Griffith, who is credited pioneer of modern cinematic techniques, considered Dickens to be the *master storyteller*. It was 1908 when the American filmmaker directed *After Many Years*, an adaptation of the poem *Enoch Arden*. He showed the film to the members of the Biograph Company, who were astonished that the film did not include any chase. In the previous years, the chase format “[had cut] across genres, propelling both comedies and melodramas” (Gunning, 1994: 131). Furthermore, the use of the cut-back technique made in them a strong impression. They doubted that the audience could follow the plot if the film jumped about like that. “Well, doesn’t Dickens write that way?”, asked Mr Griffith. Biograph members answered: “Yes, but that’s Dickens; that’s novel writing; that’s different”. However, Griffith had already realized what Eisenstein (1949: 206) would lately denominate the “visual images of Dickens”. In this sense, Griffith replied to his superiors: “Oh, not so much, these are picture stories; not so different” (Arvidson, 1925: 66). It is likely that Dickens’ *adaptability* is the reason why almost of his novels has been transposed to the screen, many of them in several occasions. Focusing on *Great Expectations*, the large number of *remediations* may be related to what Malik (2012: 485) has



denominated its *capsular* mode of narrative. With this term, she means that the novel “comprises several different narratives in several different versions, delicately interlinked, narratives which generate their own rhythms and momentums and endings too”. Being said that, it has to be noted that both the novel and the film adaptations are analyzed using the same parameters, as it is explained subsequently.

## **Research design**

The core of this research is composed of 10 chapters, one of them devoted to study the novel while the rest examines the film adaptations. 1917's and 1922's *Great Expectations* are comprised in the same chapter since they were produced almost in the same period. The aspects that are considered in this comparative analysis are described in the following pages.

### **Factual narrative vs. Telling narrative**

As pointed out by Phelan (2017), a narrative entails somebody who tells something to somebody else. In this *something*, it is possible to distinguish between the chronological succession of events as they actually occurred in the time-space story world and the manipulation of those events to determine the audience's reception of the story. Academics have used different terms to name this duality. Aristotle referred to *praxis* and *mythos*, Gérard Genette distinguished between *discourse* and *story*, while David Bordwell followed the Russian formalists in using the concepts of *fabula* and *syuzhet*. To avoid any confusion or semantic difficulty, it is proposed the concept *factual narrative* for the chronological sequence of events and *telling narrative* for the manipulation of the story. This proposal is made with caution, since a new term “should not only be clearly tied to a concept, but it should also facilitate the understanding and the deployment of the concept” (Phelan, 2017). Nevertheless, it is believed that they can define more accurately the two moments that are to be found in any narrative: the moment of the happening (based on facts) and the moment of the telling. Besides this, *diegesis* is used to refer to the

fictional world where the *factual narrative* happens, while *narrating process* relates to the act of transmitting the *telling narrative*.

## Narrative functions

The main target of this research is concerned with literary and cinematic storytelling. Considering the narrative levels that have been cleared above, the *telling narrative* is the one that can provide more information and is the key tool of examination available to carry out a textual analysis. Each chapter opens with a description and evaluation of the narrative functions. For this purpose, it is followed Roland Barthes's classification. In "An introduction to the structural analysis of narrative", Barthes (1975: 244-8) distinguishes three levels in any narrative work: the level of "functions", the level of "actions" and the level of "narration". All these levels are progressively integrated one into the other; namely, a function takes place in the general line of an action, while this action is assigned to a narration. Although a narrative is made up "solely of functions", not all the function units are equally important. Barthes denominates as *cardinal functions* the ones which act as hinges of actions, thus affecting the development of the *factual narrative*. In contrast, he uses the term *catalysers* to refer to the actions that fill in the narrative space between *cardinal functions*. The former are both consecutive and consequential, while the function of the latter is merely consequential. Hence, while *catalysers* could be changed for similar narrative units without changing the essence of the *factual narrative*, *cardinal functions* cannot be substituted, for they are the "risk-laden moments of narrative". In short, Barthes's classification has proved to be useful to isolate the key moments in a *factual narrative* from other episodes that could be omitted or altered without modifying the core of the plot. Accordingly, the *cardinal functions* of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* and all the film adaptations are separated from the *catalysers* and listed on a table for their comparison. Because of its accuracy and good sense, it is used the classification of the *cardinal functions* of the novel proposed by Brian McFarlane in *Screen Adaptations. Charles Dickens's Great Expectations* (2008), with minimum variations. For the *cardinal functions* of the films, it is developed a classification best suited to each one. Finally, the *cardinal functions* present in the novel are compared to the *cardinal functions* present in each film. Full or almost full correspondence between them are

highlighted in bold type. On the contrary, sentences appearing in italics mean a significant change in both narratives.

## Mood, Voice, Order, Duration and Frequency

Afterwards, the analysis of the narrative discourse focuses on different aspects related to *Mood, Voice, Order, Duration* and *Frequency*. Despite the large number of academics that have contributed to the study of narrative, the great influence of Gérard Genette's *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method* makes his theoretical approach suitable to reach the aim of the present research. Some of the aspects examined by Genette in his study have been driven out, for they do not apply to the narrative of *Great Expectations*. This is especially true for the films, where the specificity of the media makes that certain film elements cannot be expressed in literary terms. Ultimately, the chapters follow this structure:

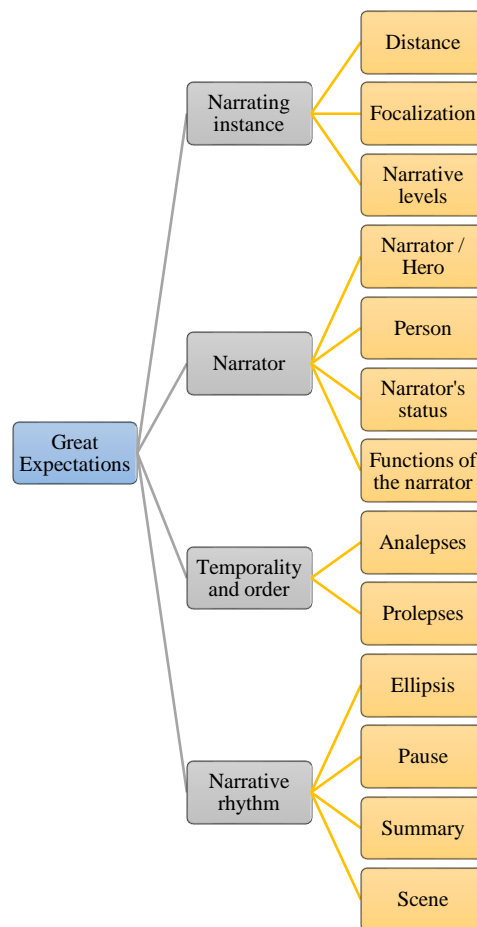


Fig. 1. Structure of the analysis of the narrative discourse

In order to clarify the implications of these choices, it seems necessary to further develop each aspect or category of the proposed structure.

The *narrating instance* refers to the narrative matrix, composed of human, temporal and spatial conditions, in which the *factual narrative* is produced. In this sense, it is noticeable that the narrator's degree of involvement in a story is certainly variable. In Book III of *The Republic*, Plato (1873: 80-1) distinguishes three narrative modes. He calls the first mode *imitation* or *mimesis*, that is, "when the poet speaks in the person of another", assimilating the style of the person who talks. He recognizes the second mode as simple *narration*, in which "the poet is speaking in his own person; he never leads us to suppose that he is any one else". In this sense, *narration* implies a major distance between the narrator and the reader than *mimesis*. A third form corresponds to a combination of both, *mimesis* and *narration*. On the basis of Plato's classification system, Aristotle (2008) writes in *Poetics* that "the poet may imitate by narration (in which case he can either take another personality as Homer does, or speak in his own person, unchanged) or he may present all his characters as living and moving before us". In current narratology, the *telling* vs. *showing* distinction is widely spread, although there is no consensus about its interpretation. There is relative agreement, however, on that the *telling* mode implies large distance between readers and the events, while the *showing* mode entails small distance. Moreover, the *telling-showing* opposition has received other names. *Diegetic mode*, *partiality* or *large distance* are labels attached to the *telling* mode, while *mimetic mode*, *dramatic mode*, *scenic mode*, *objectivity* or *small distance* are used as synonyms of the *showing* mode. Ultimately, the question of distance is here analysed in terms of the association/dissociation between the narrator and the leading character: either the narrator's report marks his differences with the character's perspective, or he merely describes behaviours and actions, or privileges the character's perception.

In order to avoid any confusion between *mood* and *voice*, this research follows Genette in distinguishing between *focalization* or *focus of narration*, and narrator. He also proposes a three-term typology. *Internal focalization*, which can be *fixed* (limited to a single character's point of view), *variable* (if the *focal character* changes within the same chapter or along the novel), or *multiple* (when the same event is echoed several times according to the *point of view* of different characters). *External focalization*, which takes place only when the reader knows the characters' behaviour, but not their thoughts or feelings. Lastly, Genette suggests a third category that he calls *non-focalized* or narrative with *zero focalization*, which

he compares with the *omniscient* narrator. This classification proves to be particularly useful in the analysis of the film adaptations, where it is clear that the *focus of narration* does not remain steady. While in the novel the *I-narrator* and the *I-character* are the same person, and the narrative is focalized through the hero, this is not the case in most of the adaptations.

At this point, it has to be noted that film scholars have not reached any compromise about the existence of a narrator in motion pictures. Two opposed lines of research can be distinguished in this respect. On the one hand, some authors, as David Bordwell (1985: 62) or Edward Branigam (2005), have argued that it must not be attributed a narrator to every film. They claim that audiences are influenced by the communication model, which implies a traditional notion of biological *person* or *personality* that functions as a narrator. Thereby, spectators need to construct a *deus absconditis*, that is, an artificial and anthropomorphic narrator according to their mental sets, which does not imply his/her real existence. On the other hand, some scholars as Francesco Cassetti, Christian Metz, André Gaudreault, François Jost or Seymour Chatman, among others, conceive the notion of narrator as an essential element of the film discourse (Stam, Burgoyne and Flitterman-Lewis, 2005: 111). This work hinges upon the latter premise, for it is considered more appropriate from a narratological perspective and, furthermore, because it is widely endorsed by numerous theorists of film studies. Being said that, there are two areas where the narrator of a film may operate: at the *intradiegetic* and at the *extradiegetic* level. The first one coincides with the notion of *biological person* that Bordwell and Branigam relate to the traditional communication model and, specifically, with the literary tradition. It is the easiest to recognise and to define, but is also the most difficult to transfer to a film. In fact, the discourse of the *intradiegetic* narrator can never comprise the whole story, but must be necessarily inserted in an upper narrative level, the one where the *extradiegetic* narrator operates. At an *extradiegetic* level, it is possible to distinguish between *biological person* narrator (usually identified with the use of the *voice-over*) and an objective and impersonal narrator. The latter has received different names, including Metz's "*grande imagier*", Gaudreault's "*fundamental narrator*", Kozloff's "*image-maker*" or Black's "*intrinsic narrator*" (Stam, Burgoyne & Flitterman-Lewis, 2005: 105). In order to avoid confusion, the term *image-maker* is used along this research to refer to this kind of narrator. Beyond these considerations, what seems of importance is to point out the functions of this abstract instance: to select the scenes and to arrange the order in which

they will appear on the screen, to give the narration a perspective and a point of view (that is, to choose the *focalization*), or to combine it with sound elements.

With regard to the questions of *Temporality and Order* and *Narrative rhythm*, the analysis takes into consideration the duality *factual narrative-telling narrative*, which points out the temporal opposition between *erzählte Zeit* (story time) and *Erzählzeit* (narrative time) (Genette, 1980: 33). In Metz's own words: "There is the time of the thing told and the time of the narrative —the time of the significate and the time of the signifier" (1991: 18). The *story time* relates to the duration of the *factual narrative*, while the *narrative time* relates to the *telling narrative*. The *story time* is the real time, free from any *anachrony* or rupture of the temporal order. However, the *narrative time* rarely observes the *story time* completely, as the study of *Great Expectations* and its film adaptations suggests. Additionally, it can be added a third element to this doubly temporal sequence: the reading/watching time, that is, the time required to peruse the *telling narrative*. For the purpose of this research, the time needed for *consuming* a novel or a film is not taken into consideration, since it is not within its scope. Finally, it must be noted that both the *telling narrative* of the novel and the film adaptations is divided into short episodes. Such division is made based on a proposal of the main narrative articulations present in each work.

*Temporality and Order* analyzes the possible existence of *analepses* or flashbacks (that is, anachronies that reach into the past), and *prolepses* or flashforward (that is, anachronies that anticipate a future event) in the *telling narrative*. Furthermore, these *anachronies* are classified as *internal* or *external*, depending on whether they deal with episodes encompassed within the first narrative (Pip's story) or they refer to episodes that are earlier or subsequent. *Narrative rhythm* considers changes in the *speed* of the telling narrative by examining the four canonical narrative movements: ellipsis, pause, summary and scene.

- a. Ellipsis stands for a period of *story time* to which no section in the narrative text belongs to. From a temporal point of view, there are *definite* or *indefinite* ellipses, depending on whether the duration of the *story time* elided is indicated or not. From a formal point of view, it can be distinguished between *explicit* and *implicit* ellipses. *Explicit* ellipses indicates a lapse of time that has been suppressed, where the indication can either constitute the textual section elided or refer to a pure suppression of the story time. *Implicit* ellipses refer to those ellipses whose

existence is not indicated in the text, but the reader can still infer them because of the presence of gaps in the temporal succession of the events.

- b. Pause indicates a section in the narrative discourse, which does not correspond to any duration in the *story time*.
- c. Summary entails the narration of an event with no details of action or speech. This sort of acceleration in the narrative discourse is generally used as a transition between two dramatic scenes whose role in the action is decisive.
- d. Scene indicates full correspondence between *story time* and *narrative time*. The alternation scene/summary provides the narration with rhythm and offers a contrast between action/non-action and dramatic/non-dramatic.

## Historical context

The second part of this research explores the way in which each film adaptation engages in conversation with the epoch in which it is produced. Specifically, it examines the impact of political, economic and sociocultural aspects in relation to three aspects: (1) production, distribution and exhibition systems; (2) cinema audience; and (3) film forms and genres. Subsequently, the aim is to find connections between this particular background and the variations found in the film with regard to its source text. As noticed in the introductory chapter, the purpose is to find out the extent to which changes at the narrative level in the book-to-film movement may respond to external factors. In other words, the purpose is to illustrate the way in which the particular conditions of a particular time influence the process of adaptation.

## **Chapter 4. Charles Dickens and Great Expectations**

### **Charles Dickens: the man and the writer**

*“His was a character very hard for any man of slow and placable temperament to understand;  
he was the character whom anybody can hurt and nobody can kill”*

G. K. Chesterton, *Charles Dickens*

“People must be amused”, states the Dickensian rhetoric of entertainment. It is noticeable that irony and sense of humour emanate from the Dickens’ novels. Nevertheless, his narrative also deals with the constant tragedy of private life. It is this mixture between *light* and *darkness* what has attracted the reading public over the years. Now as in the past, people search for the description of what they see in their everyday life: a balance between poverty and wealth, luck and misfortune, morality and immorality.

#### **A biographical note**

Charles Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, the second of eight children to Elisabeth and John Dickens. His family was “representative of the social and class tensions which had existed for many generations in English society” (Smith, 2001: 3). This is especially true for the Victorian period, when pressure groups and parliamentary forces aimed at constitutional, political, economic and social reform bills. Dickens’s family, through his mother’s side, had connections with both the Army and the Navy. On his father’s side, he was descendant of a couple serving in an aristocratic family as a butler and as a housekeeper, respectively, of a superior kind. This condition gave to the family a stable prosperity as well as an access to aristocratic influence, what John Dickens utilized to become a clerk in the Navy Pay Office. However, his numerous promotions were troublesome for the family since they never stayed anywhere for very long. This instability turned into the experience of strong contrasts in Charles Dickens’ childhood, which became lately fundamental material to his novels. This is not the only evidence of the



writer's childhood experiences that one might find in his works. As stated by Connor (2014: 1), "Dickens gives us too much [of his essence], too indefatigably, in too many versions". London as the great expanding metropolis defines his fiction, next to the lack of support that he felt from his parents, which is reflected in his novels through the question of orphanage. Another key issue has to do with the financial difficulties of the Dickens' family from 1822 on. Two years later, John Dickens was confined in Marshalsea debtors' prison. His wife Elisabeth and their youngest children came to live with him inside the jail, while Dickens was removed from school to work at Warren's blacking factory. He perceived this episode as a condemn to shame and misery, apart from a risk of wasting his talent. Although Dickens only worked 6 months in the blacking warehouse, this experience caused him a deep trauma from which he would suffer all his life. He explained it in these terms in a document he gave to his friend, John Forster (2008: 53):

No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship; compared these every-day associates with those of my happier childhood; and felt my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man, crushed in my breast. The deep remembrance of the sense I had of being utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my position; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe that, day by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing away from me, never to be brought back any more; cannot be written. My whole nature was so penetrated with the grief and humiliation of such considerations, that even now, famous and caressed and happy, I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear wife and children; even that I am a man; and wander desolately back to that time of my life.

During a Christmas party that took place the winter before Dickens died, his son, Henry Dickens, realized, for the first time, the intense agony that this experience produced in his father. Even at that time, when the stroke from which the writer suffered was defeating him, his mind returned to "Warren's Blacking, 30, Strand", the place he had never been able to entirely escape from (Wilson, 1941: 98). Additionally, Dickens became obsessed with prisons. The anxiety of imprisonment is a recurrent theme that permeate several of his novels, as *Pickwick Papers* (1836-37), *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), *Little*

*Dorrit* (1855-57), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) or *Great Expectations* (1860-61). With regard to this issue, Mee (2010: 2) has pointed out that the structure of his own novels caused in Dickens a nervous desire to burst out of confinement, which shows how much he became filled with this idea. It can therefore be assumed that a large reference of Dickens's life lies at the core of his literature.

### Some remarks on Dickens' literary works and their reception

Both the British and the American reading public praised Dickens after the publication of his first early works. His travel to Boston in January 1842 provides a good illustration. An extract from a letter, addressed to his friend Mr Thomas Mitton, bears witness of the American people's kind welcome to Dickens:

I can give you no conception of my welcome here. There never was a king or emperor upon the earth so cheered and followed by crowds, and entertained in public at splendid balls and dinners, and waited on by public bodies and deputations of all kinds. I have had one from the Far West—a journey of two thousand miles! If I go out in a carriage, the crowd surround it and escort me home; if I go to the theatre, the whole house (crowded to the roof) rises as one man, and the timbers ring again. You cannot imagine what it is. I have five great public dinners on hand at this moment, and invitations from every town and village and city in the States (Dickens & Hogarth, 2008: 59).

What is striking is that, despite Dickens' popularity among the masses, the conservative elite expressed certain reservations about his methods and themes. Similarly, after *Sketches by Boz* started appearing, a deluge of commentaries on their quality began to run in newspapers, and not all the initial reviewers were positive (Mazzeno, 2008: 12-14). The Edwardians and Bloomsbury could not stand Dickens because of "his sentimentality, uncontrolled and, sometimes, ungrammatical prosings, stagy plots and impossible heroines" (Patten, 2001: 24). Along his career as a writer, and long after his death, reviewers and commenters could not agree on the value of the Dickens's narrative did not reach a compromise. To give an illustration, it is worth mentioning Henry James'

review of *Our Mutual Friend*, published on *The Nation*, on December 21, 1865. There, James complained about Dickens's charlatanism and use of vulgar words, the weak conception of the plot and the creation of melodramatic commonplaces that added nothing to the understanding of human character. He concluded by saying that "it were, in our opinion, an offence against humanity to place Mr Dickens among the greatest novelists" (quoted in Grass, 2017: 194). For many contemporary commentators, his characters were perceived as hardly rounded and mature, being simply categorised as *good* or *bad*. On this matter, Forster (2016) argued that all Dickens's characters could be summarized in a sentence, what made of them nearly flat caricatures. However, he also observed that readers could easily identify with them. This assumption suggests that Dickens was an author who knew how to get through the public. It is of importance to highlight that he acquainted himself with the topics he wrote about; that is, there is enough evidence that he took interest on being familiar with the themes he used in the books. In February 1838, he made an expedition with some friends to investigate the real conditions of the Yorkshire school, which he depicted in his third novel, *Nicholas Nickleby*, published one year after. Another example is dated during his stay at New York in March 1842. There, Dickens took the opportunity to visit prisons, police offices, watch-houses, hospitals, workhouses, brothels, thieves' house, murdering hovels and sailors' dancing-place (Dickens & Hogarth, 2008). Here lies the reason of his powerful and concrete descriptions, as well as the *visuality* of his narrative. To give an illustration, in *Great Expectations*, Pip, as a *camera man*, gives the reader a detailed definition of what he experiences:

It was fine summer weather again, and, as I walked along, the times when I was little helpless creature, and my sister did not spare me, vividly returned. But they returned with a gentle tone upon them that softened even the edge of Tickler. For now, the very breath of the beans and clover whispered to my heart that the day must come when it would be well for my memory that others walking in the sunshine should be softened as they thought of me (Dickens, 2005: 278).

Dickens, through Pip's voice, expresses that summer time softens the bad memories and soothes the grieving. Warmness and nature gives the reader a new perspective, and there is a sensation of hope and peace when "walking in the sunshine". In addition, there

is an explicit divergence between opposite adjectives and concepts: “fine”, “gentle” or “soft” in contrast to “helpless” and “spare”. Further readings of Dickens show that categorization of characters as *good* or *bad* seems to be an oversimplification for an author who is capable of mixing the *funny* and the *grotesque* in his novels, turning the most dramatic events into the most hilarious ones and filling pages with a pure sense of *life*. Caricaturing was Dickens’ strategy to denounce social inequalities between the upper and middle classes and the labour class. Specifically, humour, in all its possible varieties (irony, burlesque, farce or sarcasm) was Dickens’s favourite method to attack a *wrong*, as well as his defence against the *ugliness* surrounding him. In addition, the public reading consumed his novels as a form of entertainment, driven by the latent idea that real life was not so bad after all, despite the evil in human hearts.

The perception of Dickens’s literary figure started to change already by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1898, George Gissing published an extensive essay entitled *Charles Dickens: A Critical Study*. Gissing reviewed Dickens’ literary career by analysing critical aspects of both his life and his writing. He carried out a deep revision of his biography, with special emphasis on Dickens’s early childhood experiences and their influence on his later works. This was accompanied by an analysis of the most relevant features of Dickens’ narrative, from the moral and didactical purpose of his books to his “Radicalism”. According to Gissing (1898: 269), such Radicalism “consisted in profound sympathy with the poor, and boundless contempt of all social superiority that is merely obstructive”. Despite Dickens’ lack of education and low interest on political issues (which proved to be a disadvantage in his books from time to time), these deficiencies were largely surpassed by his capacity to *paint* human beings characterized by “dullness, prejudices, dogged individuality and manners, to say the least, unengaging”. Ultimately, no matter how much time passes, Dickens’s characters “forever proclaim themselves the children of a certain country, of a certain time, of a certain rank” (Gissing, 1898: 13-14). To those who claimed Dickens’s vulgarity, Gissing (1898: 46-7) answered that “Vulgarity was, of course, inseparable from his subject. [...] [B]ut the tone of his works is far from vulgarity». He never departed from his duty of teaching moral lessons, carrying out such a real portrait of his country and his people that, even today, Dickens means England.

Similarly, Gilbert K. Chesterton, in *Appreciations and Criticism of the Works of Charles Dickens*, acclaimed Dickens’ capability to express changes in the English society with greater solemnity than his educated contemporaries did. In a previous essay, Chesterton

(1906: 14) had stated that “He was the voice in England of this inhumane intoxication and expansion, this encouraging of anybody to be anything”. Interestingly enough, he already anticipated that Dickens would be at the highest place of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, arguing that his success was intimately related with a common sense and an extraordinary sensibility to approach people and portrait their reality. Despite Chesterton showed his disapproval with some of the Gissing’s opinions on Dickens, both authors agreed that the English writer humanized people and was the only one capable, at that time, to portray human beings and their social conditions.

Positive views on Dickens’ works continued to grow after the publication of Gissing and Chesterton’s essays. The most remarkable illustration was the publication of an extra number of the journal *The Bookman* in 1914. Several authors, as F. G. Kitton, B. W. Matz, W. de Morgan, R. Hichens, G. S. Street or, again, G. K. Chesterton agreed on the strengths of Dickens’ fiction: construction, characters, pathos and humour. For them, his novels have passed the test of time, for they had not lost their humanity. As George Bernard Shaw pointed out: “Dickens was one of the greatest writers that ever lived. Yet he is, by pure force of genius, one of the great writers of the world” (*The Bookman*, 1914: 103). This belief is also supported by Richard Whiteing when writing that Dickens “is the greatest in his line the world has seen since Aristophanes” (*The Bookman*, 1914: 110) or by Lucas Malet, who argued that “Dickens is not only the greatest of English novelists, but probably the greatest of all novelist, save Balzac” (*The Bookman*, 1914: 113). Opinions apart, all of them concluded that there was some sort of eternity in Dickens, something that remained beyond generations.

Over the 1940s and the 1950s, critical authors as George Orwell, Edmund Wilson or Humphrey House revisited Dickens’s literary figure. While, in the past, his novels had been accused of lacking complexity and creating caricaturized characters, now he was believed to have depicted eternal personages that the reading public would never forget. In 1941, Wilson published the study “Charles Dickens: The Two Scrooges”, included in his book *The Wound and The Bow*. According to this author, Dickens suffered from a manic-depressive personality, which caused him mental instability, heavy moods of deep depression and intense nervous irritability. That would be the reason why his novels presented a dark-and-light polarization. From then on, British scholars reviewed Dickens’ works more seriously. Old thesis, defending that he was an unstructured writer who debased himself by appealing to the popular taste in order to reach social status and

wealth, were reconsidered. Wilson (1941: 47), additionally, wrote openly about Dickens' sentimental life: Maria Beadnell's rejection, the engagement with Catherine Hogarth and the grief that Mary Hogarth's early death caused him. He also examined the impact that Dickens' relationship with Ellen Ternan had in his life, concluding that he was not only "lonely in his household, [but] he was lonely in society".

In *The Dickens World* (1942), House paid particular attention to the question of time in Dickens. He argued that many of his stories comprised events and descriptions that seemed to have taken place several years before the time of writing. One of the implications emerging from this statement is that Dickens' novel were not illustrative of the contemporary conditions of the society in which he lived. In line with this, Wilson had also drawn attention to the fact that the historical episode, the contemporary moral and Dickens's emotional pattern did not always match properly. Nevertheless, as Orwell (1940) stated in his essay *Charles Dickens*, "there are no rules in novel writing", and the fact that the context of Dickens' novels was no temporarily connected to the story itself is, actually, a characteristic of his own. Matters leading his books were mostly repeated in several ways, so the attitude to life he showed in them did not need to correlate exactly with the society in which he lived by. In this sense, Mee (2010: 16) claimed that "Absent or defaulting parents are almost a precondition of the Dickens novel, one which means the plot is always forcing the action into the *roaring streets*". Orphanage or other constant themes, as crime, justice, moral values, ambition or self-improvement, are timeless and always subjected to criticism. This assumption may support the fact that Dickens' criticism of society was predominantly moral and intended for a change of spirit rather than a true change of structure. That is what made him succeed in attacking everybody and antagonizing nobody (Orwell, 1940). He was not interested in reproofing society on a real level, but on the safety of a textual one. In *Portrait of an Age*, Young (1936: 50) defended that the group of novels following *The Pickwick Papers* shared

the Radical faith in progress, the Radical dislike of obstruction and privilege, the Radical indifference to the historic appeal. But they part[ed] from the Radicalism of the Benthamites in their equal indifference to the scientific appeal. Dickens's ideal England [...] was to be built by some magic of goodwill overriding the egoism of progress.

Gissing, Chesterton or Orwell agreed that Dickens was not interested in politics. Nevertheless, he was able to put the visual accent on the oppression of the working class. His critical spirit highlighted the injustices committed by the English governing classes, which did not rule for the necessities of the real people. Young (1936: 29) argued that “The political satire of Dickens is tedious and ignorant. But it registers the disillusionment which followed on the hopes of 1830”. Dickens studied his countrymen, realizing his suffering and the regime of tyranny and hypocrisy that led the English society. However, his own suffering along boyhood taught him to commend this reality to the sympathy and glee of an everlasting large audience, for “people must be amused”.

### ***Great Expectations: a very fine, new, and grotesque idea***

*“With the ancients, beauty was the highest law of the imitative Art. [...] Everything else by which the imitative Art can, at the same time, extend its influence must, if it does not harmonise with beauty, entirely give place to it, and if it does harmonise, at least be subordinate to it”.*  
(Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoon*)

*Great Expectations* is Charles Dickens’s thirteenth novel and the second one, after *David Copperfield*, to be fully narrated in the first person. It was first published in serial form, along 36 weekly instalments of *All the Year Round*, from December 1860 to August 1861. His first intention was to write a short sketch or story, following John Forster’s suggestion that “he should let himself loose upon some single humorous conception, in the vein of his youthful achievements in that way”. Dickens replied: “For a little piece I have been writing [...] such a very fine, new, and grotesque idea has opened upon me, that I begin to doubt whether I had not better cancel the little paper, and reserve the notion for a new book” (Forster, 1904: 355). That was the germ of Pip’s story, which, eventually became a novel of 59 chapters. Each instalment was lately to conform one or, more commonly, two chapters of the novel as it was finally edited. As McFarlane (1996: 107) has rightly pointed out, the serial novel has implications for the novelist’s conception of his work, for he “must retain a grip on his readers’ interest from instalment to instalment”. Furthermore, the fact that one single instalment could turn into two chapters

shows Dickens' skill with the use of turning points<sup>2</sup> to maintain the interest of the reading public. When *Great Expectations* was finally published as a whole book, it was divided into three parts of, respectively, 19, 20 and 21 chapters. The novel includes three main turning points, each one coinciding with the end of each part. Additionally, little turning points or *beats*, both positive and negative, make the plot advance.

Part one opens with Pip at the churchyard of the Hoo peninsula in Kent, which he calls the "marsh country" (Dickens, 2005: 3). He contemplates there the tombstone of his parents, Philip and Georgiana, and his brothers Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias and Roger. Thus, Pip introduces himself as an orphan boy who lives with his sister, Mrs Joe Gargery, wife of the blacksmith Joe Gargery. Orphanage is, indeed, one of the main themes of *Great Expectations*, which is closely connected to Pip's constant search for an authoritarian voice. The *inciting incident* of the story occurs when the boy is attacked by an escaped convict (Abel Magwitch), who threatens him to death if he does not take him a file and some food. Despite the fear to be punished for his crime, Pip obeys the convict. This traumatic experience weighs him down until Uncle Pumblechook announces that Miss Havisham, "a lady who [lives] in a large and dismal house barricaded against robbers, and who [leads] a life of seclusion" (Dickens, 2005: 51), wants Pip to visit Satis House. There, he meets the very pretty and insulting Estella (Dickens, 2005: 61), with whom he falls in love. But his expectations of gaining her love breaks when Miss Havisham asks him to become Joe's apprentice at the forge. Pip starts an unpleasant and monotone life that is only interrupted when Mrs Gargery is knocked and loses the capacity of movement. This part ends when lawyer Mr Jagger informs Pip that he will be brought up "as a young fellow of great expectations" (Dickens, 2005: 138), for which he must move to London. This event entails the first turning point of the novel.

Part two begins with Pip's arrival to London, where he meets his roommate Herbert Pocket, and quickly forgets about Joe, Biddy and her sister. Convinced that Miss Havisham is her benefactor, Pip assumes that he will marry Estella while he wastes his money and lives with no occupation. However, at 23 years of age, Magwitch returns to reveal himself as his real benefactor. Pip's expectations suddenly breaks as he finds out that Miss Havisham has used him as a teaching device for revenge on men (second

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<sup>2</sup>In a narrative work, *turning point* means a situation of highest tension or drama, in which the linearity of the plot is broken and there is a point of no return in the life of one or more characters.



turning point). Pip starts realizing that his new life as a gentleman, based on social advancement, wealth and class, has not been more satisfying and moral than his previous life as a blacksmith's apprentice. As he feels guilty for having deserted Joe (Dickens, 2005: 323), Pip also learns to pass over Magwitch's public status as a criminal and value his inner nobility.

In part three, Pip ascertains Miss Havisham's past story (involving Compeyson and Magwitch) and discovers that the convict is Estella's father. Orlick sets a trap for him and tries to kill him after revealing that he was the one who attacked Mrs Gargery. With the help of Herbert, Pip manages to escape. The plan to save Magwitch from the criminal justice system fails, so the convict is put on trial and sentenced to die on the gallows. However, he dies in prison before the execution. All these events make Pip to fall ill. During his convalescence, Joe takes care of him and pays all his debts. Once he is recovered, Pip goes back to the marshes to ask Joe and Biddy for forgiveness and to marry the latter. However, his old friends have got already engaged and Pip resolves to sell all his belongings, repay the money to Joe and join his friend Herbert at the company Clarriker and Co. After 11 years, he returns to his hometown and runs into Estella, now divorced, and he "[sees] the shadow of no parting from her" (Dickens, 2005: 484).

## **Narrative discourse**

*Great Expectations* is full of the spirit of disillusion and distress of Dickens' boyhood. As noted by Brook (1980: 505), the novel opens with a scene that is precedent to the main plot, but that is necessary as an incite incident of that plot. Pip Pirrip, a poor and orphan eight-year-old boy, introduces himself as "the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry" (Dickens, 2005: 4). He looks for an *authoritarian voice* that defines his identity and justifies the plot of his life. The first *authority* to which Pip refers is that of his father's tombstone ("I give Pirrip as my father's family name, on the *authority* of his tombstone" [Dickens, 2005: 3; our emphasis]); interestingly enough, his mother's grave remains secondary. The shape of the letters on their tombstones gives Pip an odd idea about how they were like. It is remarkable that while he imagines his father as "a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair", his mother is defined as a "freckled and

sickly” (Dickens, 2005: 3) woman, showing her weakness as opposed to the father’s stoutness. The adult narrator confesses that this interpretation of the appearance of his lost parents from the shape of the letters of their tombstones is unreasonable. This mimetic representation of graphic symbols involves a misreading, likely caused by Pip’s “infant tongue”. In the absence of his parents, Pip discards his surname Pirrip and identifies himself with the name *Pip*: “I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip” (Dickens, 2005: 3). Pip’s self-identification subverts whatever *authority* he could find on the tombstone of his father. Nevertheless, this is a veiled, unaware recognition of his own *authority*, which he is not yet ready to handle. The use of the palindrome *Pip* suggests a round trip, that is, the need of a personal development and growth before a whole knowledge of the true self. Thus, without a leading voice to guide his steps, Pip lives in search of an *authoritarian figure* —the mysterious benefactor—until he becomes aware of his *own authority*. On this subject, Morris (1987: 945) has pointed out that Pip’s *self-naming* conceals a fallacy.

It holds out hopes for signification in general and for some continuously stable self in particular, but it simultaneously denies these hopes by emphasizing the arbitrary and fictive nature of its language and of language in general.

This fictitious nature and significance of language is related, furthermore, with Pip’s double role as narrator and hero of the story. It is remarkable that, in many occasions, the retrospective narrator enters into his lived experience as a child to a great degree, giving the impression that he *disappears* behind the character. As noted by Galbraith (1994: 138), adult Pip behaves “as a witness narrator rather than as a memoirist”. His ability to merge with *old versions* of himself gives reliability to his narration, even if it may be discordant at some points. “The reader loves and trusts Pip, a boy of great goodwill, and accepts his darkness of spirit as a Gothic element in this romance”, writes Bloom (2001: 165). *Great Expectations* is a story of moral redemption that works by means of repetitions. Such repetitions are both “returns to and returns of: for instance, returns to origins and returns of the repressed” (Brooks, 1980: 512). According to this premise, the past, once it is understood, serves as a revelation to move ahead and face the future. Graphically, it might be identified with a circle: Pip’s journey starts and finishes at Kent; Satis House

marks the beginning and the end of Pip's expectations; and it is in its ruined garden where Pip said goodbye to Estella and, years later, he "saw the shadow of no parting from her" (Dickens, 2005: 484). Brooks (1980: 524) argues that Pip is "continuously returning toward origins in order to know the plot whose authority would lead him to the right end, never recovering origins and never finding the authoritative plot". The term *plot* gets different meaning in *Great Expectations*. It is used literally with the significance of 'story or plan of a novel'. Pip is, according to this meaning, writing the plot of his life. The word also refers to an 'area of the cemetery that contains the remains of one person'. With this sense, *plot* alludes to the tombstones of Pip's parents. As noted previously, they constitute the first symbol in which Pip searches for an authoritarian voice that defines the plot of his life. It is also in the cemetery where he meets Magwitch for the first time. Interestingly enough, when the convict returns after several years to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor, he tells him "I'm your second father. You are my son" (Dickens, 2005: 320). Likely because of its similarity with the word *complot*, *plot* also gets the meaning of 'conspiracy' or 'secret plan to accomplish some purpose'. Indeed, two secret and opposed plans lead the novel. On the one hand, it is a recompense to Magwitch "to know in secret that [he] was making a gentleman" of Pip (Dickens, 2005: 321). On the other hand, Miss Havisham's teachings "stole [Estella's] heart away and put ice in its place" (Dickens, 2005: 399). Used with the architectural meaning of 'floor plan', plot becomes the *Satis House dream*, that is, Pip's hope that Miss Havisham intends him and Estella for each other. Finally, the word *plot* can be related to the military and defined as a 'representation of a tactical setting'. This last sense may allude to the metaphors concerning education and upbringing. These concepts are associated in the novel with repression, criminality and the fear of deviance. Moreover, all the meanings of the word *plot* reflected in *Great Expectations* shape most of the themes and motifs of the novel. They lead Pip through a circular path, which opens when the "morning mists [have] risen long ago" and ends when "the evening mists [are] rising now" (Dickens, 2005: 484). At the end, he "returns to an improved infancy with the Gargerys and their child, his godson, little Pip" (Bloom, 2009: 1).

Being said that, it is noticeable that Pip's search for authority affects his relationship with Miss Havisham and Magwitch. The "immensely rich and grim lady [...] who led a life of seclusion" (Dickens, 2005: 51) seems to fill the role of the absent mother, which Mrs Gargery is not able to occupy, for "It's bad enough to be a blacksmith's wife (and

him a Gargery) without being your mother” (Dickens, 2005: 9). When Mr Jaggers, who has the confidence of Miss Havisham “when nobody else has” (Dickens, 2005: 177), announces Pip that he will come into a handsome property due to the generosity of a mysterious benefactor, he mistakenly believes that she is his benefactress. Similarly, people surrounding Pip also accept this assumption as true or, at least, do not put into question. Behind this self-delusion, it lies Pip’s desire to marry Estella. Miss Havisham fans the flames of Pip’s mistake and begs him to “Love her, love her, love her!” (Dickens, 2005: 240). When Magwitch reveals himself as Pip’s benefactor, he realizes that he “only suffered in Satis House as a convenience” and merely became “a model with a mechanical heart to practise on” (Dickens, 2005: 323). The Satis House dream vanishes as it does Miss Havisham’s *authoritarian voice*. Pip is not able to feel anything when she runs at him “with a whirl of fire blazing all about her”. There is a metaphorical contradiction in Pip’s attempt to save her, for the coats he uses to cover Miss Havisham’s body and switch off the flames also imprison her, and makes them to struggle “like desperate animals” (Dickens, 2005: 402). The collapse of the Satis House dream drives Pip to subvert his scale of values. Magwitch’s story teaches Pip that loyalty, affection and consciousness are more valuable than self-improvement and ambition. He is able to *see* the convict’s inner nobility far beyond his social status as a criminal; moreover, Pip puts into question the justice of the legal system. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that there is some sort of selfish interest in Pip’s helping Magwitch. As he discovers that the convict is Estella’s father, he recovers part of his expectations to gain her love. As noted by Friedman (2010: 5), the “extraordinary consequence strangely induces Pip to find a new hope and greatly affects his subsequent behaviour”. It is remarkable that, when threatened by Orlick, Pip refers to his benefactor as *Estella’s father*, instead of using previous names as *Magwitch*, *Provis* or *Abel*. In that precise moment, Pip also reflects on the consequences of an early death and confesses to the public reading both his suffering and the need for forgiveness:

Estella's father would believe I had deserted him, would be taken, would die accusing me; even Herbert would doubt me, when he compared the letter I had left for him with the fact that I had called at Miss Havisham's gate for only a moment; Joe and Biddy would never know how sorry I had been that night, none would ever know what I had suffered, how true I had meant to be, what an agony I had passed through (Dickens, 2005: 425).

Authors as Harold Bloom, Stanley Friedman or Graham Ingham have drawn attention to the question of guilt and punishment in *Great Expectations*. “Pip’s sufferings seem disproportionate to his earlier moral errors” (Friedman, 2010: 11) and manifests “a tendency to feel excessively guilty [...] that he simply d[oes] not deserve” (Bloom, 2009: 1). However, it can be argued that this feeling of guilt is what makes the reader empathize with Pip. By succouring Magwitch, Pip does not simply settle in full his debt with his benefactor, but his own debt with Joe. In contrast, it can be stated that there is a selfish interest in saving Magwitch, for his death means the end of Pip’s life as a gentleman as well as the loss of the last bond with Estella. Yet because Pip never quite accounts for his conviction of guilt, he spends eleven years paying his financial and emotional debts. His punishment, in fact, mirrors the one suffered by the convict. Albeit shortly described, Estella also lives her own penitential besides Bentley Drummle, “who used her with great cruelty” until she was “bent and broken” (Dickens, 2005: 482-4). Ultimately, both characters “undergo parallel periods of self-imposed suffering and regret”. However, what stands out is that “Estella’s conversion through pain and sorrow comes as a surprise to some readers” (Meckier, 2002: 32). Truly enough, it is in Chapter 44 when Estella confirms Pip that she will marry Drummle, and there is no more information about her until the end (Chapter 59). In the original ending, unpublished in Dickens’s lifetime, Estella’s life during this period is summarized in three paragraphs, as follows:

I was in England again (in London, and walking along Piccadilly with little Pip) when a servant came running after me to ask would I step back to a lady in a carriage who wished to speak to me. It was a little pony carriage, which the lady was driving; and the lady and I looked sadly enough on one another.

“I am greatly changed, I know; but I thought you would like to shake hands with Estella too, Pip. Lift up that pretty child and let me kiss it!” (She supposed the child, I think, to be my child).

I was very glad afterwards to have had the interview; for, in her face and in her voice, and in her touch, she gave me the assurance, that suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham’s teaching; and had given her a heart to understand what my heart used to be (Dickens, 2005: 509).

There is a perverse flavour in Pip's writing that "in her face and in her voice, and in her touch, she gave me the assurance, that suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham's teaching", as if he took pleasure in her misery.

Following the advice of his friend Bulwer-Lytton, Dickens rewrote this ending (in Gissing's words [1898: 73], "he was induced to spoil his work through a brother's novelist desire for a happy ending"). He increased Estella's role by inserting "four brief paragraphs in chapter 59 just before he sent the final instalment to *Harper's*, publisher of the serial version in America" (Meckier, 2002: 32). In this revised ending, she finally answers Pip's question "When should I awaken the heart within her, that was mute and sleeping now?" (Dickens, 2005: 244). Estella has learnt to value what she "had thrown away when I was quite ignorant of its worth" and has given it a place in her heart (Dickens, 2005: 484). It is her the one who claims that suffering has been stronger than all other teachings, including not only Miss Havisham's education, but also the conflict with her upbringing and her marriage with Drummle. However, her proposal that they will continue being friends apart elicits no verbal response from Pip. Only the adult narrator informs us that "I saw the shadow of no parting from her" (Dickens, 2005: 484). This last phrase, published in *All the Year Round*, was lately changed in the one-volume edition published in 1862 to read "I saw the shadow of another parting from her" (Dickens, 2005: 507). According to Friedman (2010: 11), it seems an improvement since the first statement "may bring to mind the humorous possibility that the prospect of not being able to part from Estella ('no parting') might now be seem as a 'shadow', as a problem, facing Pip". And yet, the end is quite ambiguous, although it seems to suggest a joint future for Pip and Estella, meaning that Pip's expectations have finally come to a good term. It is likely to argue, at least, that in the revised ending, Dickens relieved both characters from the cannibalistic world of Victorian England where they were being consumed. In the repetition, in the re-reading of their plots, both characters have returned to their origins (Satis House) and have changed their fates.

Apart from orphanage and authority, criminality and justice, or ambition, the novel tackles the question of self-improvement and education. Education remains at the centre of Pip's personal involvements. As part of his new condition as a gentleman, he receives certain teachings and polite tips about proper manners. Pip's growing snobbism drives him to reject his humble origins at Kent. He feels embarrassed not only because Joe does not know reading or writing, but also because of his clothing or his speech. It means, as

well, a mark of his moral superiority. By the end of the novel, Pip realizes that his new life has not been more satisfying or moral than his previous life as a blacksmith's apprentice. Moreover, education has not prevented him from misreading the *plot* of his life. In the end, Pip's suffering has been also stronger than all other teaching, and has made him to understand that morality and nobility cannot be taught.

## Narrative functions

The table below proposes a possible listing with the narrative functions that can be found in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. It will be used in following chapters in order to compare them with the narrative functions present in each film adaptation.

Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard
Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch
Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson
Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file
Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek
Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham
Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad
Mrs Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)
Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House
Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman
Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'
Pip tells the news to Miss Havisham
Pip goes to London
He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.
Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting

Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket.

Pip gets money from Jaggers to set himself up

Pip dines with Jaggers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle)

He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)

Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn

Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)

Pip re-meets Estella

Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella

Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House

Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets

Pip meets and escorts Estella in London

Pip and Herbert fall into debt

Mrs Joe dies

Pip returns to village for funeral

Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age

Pip takes Estella to Satis House

She and Miss Havisham argue

At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle

Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor

Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers

Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape

Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)

Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella

Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle

Wemmick warns Pip of being watched

Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape

Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert

Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)

Pip goes to deserted sluice house

Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house

The scape plan for Magwitch fails

Pip loses fortune

Magwitch is tried

Magwitch dies in prison

Pip becomes ill



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Joe looks after Pip

Biddy and Joe get married

Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.

Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House

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## The narrating instance

*Great Expectations* is modelled as a biography where the protagonist narrates traumatic early experiences and the way in which these incidents affect his growth and adult life. In this novel, both the *I-narrator* and the *I-character* are the same person: they share the name of Philip Pirrip and the first-person pronoun. However, they are placed in a different time and place, which entails further questions on knowledge and distance. The narrator-character relation does not remain steady, but it is continuously changing along the novel. For instance, in the following example, there is a complete identification between narrator and character, since adult Pip is able to relive what he felt in a particular moment in the past and in a particular situation.

As we looked full at one another, I felt my breath come quicker in my strong desire to get something out of him. And as I felt that it came quicker, and as I felt that he saw that it came quicker, I felt that I had less chance than ever of getting anything out of him (Dickens, 2005: 289).

Occasionally, the narrator distances himself from the character, providing a dramatic description of the event rather than speaking from a psychological perspective:

In effect, we had not walked many yards further, when the well-remembered boom came towards us, deadened by the mist, and heavily rolled away along the low grounds by the river, as if it were pursuing and threatening the fugitives.

“A good night for cutting off in,” said Orlick. “We’d be puzzled how to bring down a jail-bird on the wing, to-night.”

The subject was a suggestive one to me, and I thought about it in silence. Mr Wopsle, as the ill-requited uncle of the evening's tragedy, fell to meditating aloud in his garden at Camberwell. Orlick, with his hands in his pockets, slouched heavily at my side. It was very dark, very wet, very muddy, and so we splashed along. Now and then, the sound of the signal cannon broke upon us again, and again rolled sulkily along the course of the river. I kept myself to myself and my thoughts. Mr Wopsle died amiably at Camberwell, and exceedingly game on Bosworth Field, and in the greatest agonies at Glastonbury. Orlick sometimes growled, "Beat it out, beat it out,—Old Clem! With a clink for the stout,—Old Clem!" I thought he had been drinking, but he was not drunk.

Thus, we came to the village. The way by which we approached it took us past the Three Jolly Bargemen, which we were surprised to find—it being eleven o'clock—in a state of commotion, with the door wide open, and unwonted lights that had been hastily caught up and put down scattered about. Mr. Wopsle dropped in to ask what was the matter (surmising that a convict had been taken), but came running out in a great hurry.

"There's something wrong," said he, without stopping, "up at your place, Pip. Run all!"

"What is it?" I asked, keeping up with him. So did Orlick, at my side.

"I ca't quite understand. The house seems to have been violently entered when Joe Gargery was out. Supposed by convicts. Somebody has been attacked and hurt."

We were running too fast to admit of more being said, and we made no stop until we got into our kitchen. It was full of people; the whole village was there, or in the yard; and there was a surgeon, and there was Joe, and there were a group of women, all on the floor in the midst of the kitchen. The unemployed bystanders drew back when they saw me, and so I became aware of my sister,—lying without sense or movement on the bare boards where she had been knocked down by a tremendous blow on the back of the head, dealt by some unknown hand when her face was turned towards the fire,—destined never to be on the Rampage again, while she was the wife of Joe.

It is noticeable that the narrative here gives descriptions of actions and events, while the use of short descriptive modifiers (as *dark, wet, muddy, greatest*) and adverbs (*heavily*), helps the reader in picturing the scene. The child's belief, thoughts and feelings are suppressed, thus emphasizing Pip's impossibility to "become aware" of his sister "lying without sense or movement". The effects of this traumatic experience on Pip are dramatized or reported, rather than expressed by the child's perception. Neither the narrator is allowed to express his thoughts or perceptions, but he describes the scene from a metaphysical worldview. Here, the narrative style produces a distance between the adult narrator and the child's own consciousness. However, there are other times when the adult narrator reports the character's belief and perceptions, but mixed with his own evaluative commentaries:

We walked to town, my sister leading the way in a very large beaver bonnet, and carrying a basket like the Great Seal of England in plaited Straw, a pair of pattens, a spare shawl, and an umbrella, though it was a fine bright day. I am not quite clear whether these articles were carried penitentially or ostentatiously; but I rather think they were displayed as articles of property,—much as Cleopatra or any other sovereign lady on the Rampage might exhibit her wealth in a pageant or procession.

When we came to Pumblechook's, my sister bounced in and left us. As it was almost noon, Joe and I held straight on to Miss Havisham's house. Estella opened the gate as usual, and, the moment she appeared, Joe took his hat off and stood weighing it by the brim in both his hands; as if he had some urgent reason in his mind for being particular to half a quarter of an ounce.

Estella took no notice of either of us, but led us the way that I knew so well. I followed next to her, and Joe came last. When I looked back at Joe in the long passage, he was still weighing his hat with the greatest care, and was coming after us in long strides on the tips of his toes.

Estella told me we were both to go in, so I took Joe by the coat-cuff and conducted him into Miss Havisham's presence. She was seated at her dressing-table, and looked round at us immediately.

"Oh!" said she to Joe. "You are the husband of the sister of this boy?"

I could hardly have imagined dear old Joe looking so unlike himself or so like some extraordinary bird; standing as he did speechless, with his tuft of feathers ruffled, and his mouth open as if he wanted a worm (Dickens, 2005: 97-8).

In paragraph 1, while describing the scene from the character's perspective, the narrator inserts his adult perception, which is introduced by the use of the present tense and the disclaimer *I think*. On the contrary, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 are rather descriptive, although the child's perspective is not cancelled by adult Pip. Finally, it is noticeable that the last paragraph aims to represent the character's psychological perception. The use of evaluative elements (*extraordinary, speechless, ruffled...*) are attributable to Pip's *infant tongue*, although his consciousness mixes with the comic style of the narrator. In short, it can be argued that the adult narrator bears with his own past tense is variable, going from a witnessing position that focuses on external events and behaviours from a complete reliving of his early experiences and perceptions. Despite the narrator's identification with his past self is not always complete, the narrative is mostly characterized by a *fixed internal focalization*, in which Pip becomes the focal character and everything passes through him. Internal focalization, nevertheless, cannot be taken in a strict sense; that would imply "that the focal character never be describe or even referred from the outside" (Genette, 1980: 192). As noted above, there are sections in *Great Expectations* where the adult narrator provides evaluative commentaries on the character's perception. As Genette (1980: 193) notices, *internal focalization* is fully realized only in the narrative of *interior monologue*. Here, adult Pip, the autobiographical narrator, chooses *focalization through the hero*, which can be considered as a *paralipsis*. This means that "the narrator, in order to limit himself to the information held by the hero at the moment of the action, has to suppress all the information he acquired later" (Genette, 1980: 199).

Ultimately, the fact that the *I-character* and the *I-narrator* does not share the same time and space implies the existence of two narrative levels: the *extradiegetic* level, where the narrator is placed in an undetermined location; and the *intradiegetic* level, where the character takes part in the story world, which occurs among Kent and London. The distance, measured in time, between the two levels is not specified; it is only possible to speculate on the time span covered by the *factual narrative*. Some authors have pointed out that the story begins on December 24, 1812 and finishes at some point during the winter

of 1840. This assumption is based on the latest two temporal references offered by the narrator: in chapter 39, Pip declares that he is 23 years of age (Dickens, 2005: 312), while in the last chapter he mentions an 11-year gap. On his behalf, Dickens's working notes mark that Pip is about 7 at the opening of the story while he is 23 by the last stage of his expectations (2005: 509-510)<sup>3</sup>. However, the question remains whether, at the end of the *factual narrative*, the age of the *I-character* matches the age of the *I-narrator*. The fact that the adult narrator still uses the past tense in the last paragraph of the novel suggests that there is no convergence between the two *I*'s. At most, it can be argued that the narrator brings his own story to the point when the hero is beginning to become the narrator (Genette, 1980: 226).

Besides this, attention must be drawn to the existence of *metalepses* or transitions from the *extradiegetic* level to the *intradiegetic* level, or vice versa. In the last paragraph of chapter 38, there is a transition from the *intradiegetic* level to the *extradiegetic* level:

A great event in my life, the turning point of my life, now opens on my view. But, before I proceed to narrate it, and before I pass on to all the changes it involved, I must give one chapter to Estella. It is not much to give to the theme that so long filled my heart (Dickens, 2005: 299).

This example marks a clear distinction between the *I-character* (who finishes the previous paragraph saying that “I did really cry in good earnest when I went to bed, to think that my expectations had done some good to somebody”) and the *I-narrator* (who uses the present tense to highlight the temporal gap with young Pip). Indeed, to stress his role as a narrator, he uses the formula “before I proceed to *narrate* it”, emphasizing the fact that, in this paragraph, he is not functioning as a character, but as a narrating agency. Finally, it is likely to find in the same sentence a transition from the *intradiegetic* level to the *extradiegetic* level, in first place, and then to the *intradiegetic* level again. This happens when the narrator makes a clarification within a sentence, as the following example illustrates: “Upon this, the Aged — who I believe would have been blown out of his arm-chair but for holding on by the elbows — cried out exultingly...” (Dickens,

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<sup>3</sup> For further information, see Meckier, J. (1992). “Dating the action in *Great Expectations*: A new chronology”. *Dickens Studies Annual*, 21: 157-194.

2005: 209). Here, adult Pip offers his own perception (using the present tense “I believe”) about an event that took place in the past.

## Narrator

*Great Expectations* is an autobiographical novel with a first-person leading character, who is also the narrative agency. The distance in time and space that separates the *I-narrator* from the *I-character* makes possible to distinguish between the “narrating I” (*erzählendes Ich*) and the “narrated I” (*erzähltes Ich*). According to Genette (1980: 252), the difference in age and experience “authorizes the former to treat the latter with a sort of condescending or ironic superiority”. As discussed above, adult Pip includes numerous evaluative commentaries on his early beliefs, thoughts and perceptions, or uses a comic style to narrate traumatic experiences from his childhood.

The novel, therefore, presents a *first-person, extra-homodiediegetic* narrator. Compared to an *omniscient* narrator, the *first-person* narrator has a restricted field of vision. Adult Pip’s account is based on his own experiences and his perception about them. But, paradoxically, as an *autobiographical* narrator, he has to constrain or limited himself to the information that the *I-character* knows at the moment of the action. As the *factual narrative* moves forward, the *I-narrator* (the voice of understanding) and the *I-character* (the voice of tribulation) get closer. It is after Magwitch’s decease and subsequent Pip’s illness that the two voices seem to merge. At that moment, the narrator tells that “I knew that [illness] was coming on me now, and *I knew very little else*, and was even careless as to that” (Dickens, 2005: 461, our emphasis). As Pip recovers, the process of *enlightenment* becomes apparent:

That I had a fever and was avoided, that I suffered greatly, that I often lost my reason, that the time seemed interminable, that I confounded impossible existences with my own identity; that I was a brick in the house-wall, and yet entreating to be released from the giddy place where the builders had set me; that I was a steel beam of a vast engine, clashing and whirling over a gulf, and yet that I implored in my own person to have the engine stopped, and my part in it hammered off; that I passed through these phases of disease, *I know* of my own

remembrance, and *did* in some sort *know* at the time. That I sometimes struggled with real people, in the belief that they were murderers, and that I would all at once *comprehend* that they meant to do me good, and would then sink exhausted in their arms, and suffer them to lay me down, I also *knew* at the time. But, above all, I *knew* that there was a constant tendency in all these people,—who, when I was very ill, would present all kinds of extraordinary transformations of the human face, and would be much dilated in size,—above all, I say, I *knew* that there was an extraordinary tendency in all these people, sooner or later, to settle down into the likeness of Joe (Dickens, 2005: 462, our emphasis).

The use of thinking verbs as *comprehend* and *know* bespeaks consciousness, while the constant jump from the past to the present tense denotes association and continuity between the *I-character* and the *I-narrator*. It is over this process of *enlightenment* that Pip learns that social standing and educational improvement are less important than loyalty and affection. There is also a subversion of his moral standards when he finally disregards his inner ethical conscience from the institutional legal system. Hence, by the end of the *factual narrative*, it can be argued that both *I's* meet in *understanding*.

The narrator in *Great Expectations* plays three functions, being the most outstanding the *narrative function*, “which no narrator can turn away from without at the same time losing his status as narrator” (Genette, 1980: 255). When adult Pip expresses the feelings that one episode awakens in him, or inserts some evaluative commentary, there is an *emotive* or *testimonial function*, as in the following example: “I know of my own remembrance, and did in some sort know at the time” (Dickens, 2005: 462). Furthermore, it is likely to speak of a *directing function* in the next passage, where adult Pip marks the internal organization of his account:

A great event in my life, the turning point of my life, now opens on my view. But, before I proceed to narrate it, and before I pass on to all the changes it involved, I must give one chapter to Estella. It is not much to give to the theme that so long filled my heart (Dickens, 2005: 299).

The syntactic and semantic content of this passage highlights also the narrator’s awareness of being writing for a *narratee* (that is, for a reading public). The narrator in

*Great Expectations*, because of its *extradiegetic* character, can address only to an *extradiegetic* *narratee*, “who merges with the implied reader and with whom each real reader can identify” (Genette, 1980: 260). In the section quoted above, the narrator is oriented toward the *narrative*, thus privileging a *function of communication*.

The last aspect to be discussed concerns the degree of *reliability* of the *I-narrator*. This question is related to the axis of identification/dissociation between hero and narrator, and to the extent to which adult Pip re-enters faithfully his past self. It can be stated that the nature of the narrator in *Great Expectations* fits into Cohn’s category of *discordant narrator*, that is, the one whose *perspective* can induce readers to look for a different meaning from the one he provides in the *narrating process*. The *discordant narrator*, then, differs from the *unreliable narrator*, that is, a narrator unable to tell what actually happened or that consciously twists the story (Cohn, 2000: 307). The following example provides an illustration of this *discordancy*, in which the narrator distrusts his own memories:

I really do not know whether I felt that I did this for Estella’s sake, or whether I was glad to transfer to the man in whose preservation I was so much concerned, some rays of the romantic interest that had so long surrounded her. Perhaps the latter possibility may be the nearer to the truth (Dickens, 2005: 408).

Lately in the novel, he admits another oblivion:

I found out [...] that Mrs. Pocket was the only daughter [...] who had invented for himself a conviction that his deceased father would have been made a Baronet but for somebody's determined opposition arising out of entirely personal motives,—I forget whose, if I ever knew... (Dickens, 2005: 189)

Sometimes, the narrator inserts his own perception to emphasize a behaviour or a situation: “I nodded at the old gentleman until it is no figure of speech to declare that I absolutely could not see him” (Dickens, 2005: 209). On other occasions, he expresses some confusion, as when the convict tells young Pip “what fat cheeks you ha’ got” and the narrator makes the following reflection: “I believe they were fat, though I was at that time undersized for my years, and not strong” (Dickens, 2005: 4). As the example



illustrates, there is a contradiction between perception (“I believe”) and knowledge (“I was”). Ultimately, discordances in *Great Expectations* might be explained by the fact that, despite the narrator’s superior awareness, there are many sections where adult Pip identifies with the character and enters into his lived experience, thus restricting his own knowledge on the *factual narrative*.

## Temporality and order

The distinction between the *extradiegetic level*, where the adult narrator is placed, and the *intradiegetic level*, where Pip works as a character, suggests that the *telling narrative* (that is, the narrator’s remembrance of his life) is an *anachrony* that reaches into the past, for it deals with episodes that occurred many years ago. Pip’s double nature as hero and narrator favours the overlap between past and present. In the following example, it is noticeable the existence of two temporal conditions: (1) *then*, and (2) *now*.

O dear good Joe, whom I was so ready to leave and so unthankful to (1), I see you again, with your muscular blacksmith's arm before your eyes, and your broad chest heaving, and your voice dying away (2). O dear good faithful tender Joe, I feel the loving tremble of your hand upon my arm (2), as solemnly this day as if it had been the rustle of an angel's wing! (1) (Dickens, 2005: 141)

The temporal condition *then* marks the narrative starting point, while the temporal condition *now* is the *result* or the *repercussion* of this narrative in Pip’s present. Similarly, the example below illustrates the opposition between (2) *once*, and (1) *now*.

Once, it had seemed to me that when I should at last roll up my shirt-sleeves and go into the forge, Joe’s ‘prentice, I should be distinguished and happy (2). Now the reality was in my hold, I only felt that I was dusty with the dust of small-coal, and that I had a weight upon my daily remembrance to which the anvil was a feather (1). There have been occasions in my later life (I suppose as in most lives) when I have felt for a time as if a thick curtain had fallen on all its interest and romance,

to shut me out from anything save dull endurance any more. Never has that curtain dropped so heavy and blank, as when my way in life lay stretched out straight before me through the newly entered road of apprenticeship to Joe (Dickens, 2005: 107).

In this case, it is possible to distinguish among different temporal sections considering the chronology of the *story time*. Section *A* goes in position 2 (“Once, it had seemed to me that when I should at last roll up my shirt-sleeves and go into the forge, Joe’s ‘prentice, I should be distinguished and happy”), and *B* in position 1 (“Now the reality was in my hold, I only felt that I was dusty with the dust of small-coal, and that I had a weight upon my daily remembrance to which the anvil was a feather”). The distinction is very clear because both sentences are introduced by adverbs of time. Here, the temporal condition *now* (section *B*) emphasizes the starting point of the narrative, while the temporal condition *once* (section *A*) functions as *retrospective* in relation to the former. That is, section *A* is temporally subordinated to *B*, because it refers to an episode earlier than the moment in which adult Pip narrates the *telling narrative*. So far, the hero-narrator has moved first to an indefinite moment in the past in order to return to his present thereafter. However, after section *B*, the hero-narrator jumps to a future moment which is marked by the use of the temporal condition *later* (3): “There have been occasions in my later life when [...] anything save dull endurance any more”. This sentence makes up section *C*, which includes a bracketed phrase (“I suppose as in most lives”) or section *D*. This is a reflection of the hero-narrator at his present. Thus, taking section *A* as the starting point of the narrative, both sections *C* and *D* are *prolepses* or anticipation of future events. Last sentence or section *E* (“Never has that curtain dropped so heavy and blank...”) goes again in position 1, that is, it returns to the point of departure of the narrative. In short, the schema would be as follows:

A2 | B1 | C3 (D3) | E1

Thereupon, *analepses* and *prolepses* taking place at the *intradiegetic* level will be analysed in depth.

## *Analepses*

*External analepses*, that is, *analepses* that deal with episodes earlier than the point of departure of Pip's *factual narrative*, are used to report Magwitch's past story and the narrative of Miss Havisham's jilting (both of them involving Estella's parentage). Nevertheless, it is remarkable that these *anachronies* connect to the present of Pip's character, thus affecting his own narrative.

The first *analepsis* occurs in the second part of the novel, after Pip meets Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn. His roommate tells Pip about Miss Havisham's jilting and Estella's adoption. A few chapters later, Magwitch returns and reveals Pip and Herbert his past story. In his account, he mentions Compeyson "the man, dear boy, what you see me a pounding in the ditch" (Dickens, 2005: 347). This quotation is an illustration of an *external analepsis* that becomes *internal*. Through Magwitch's story, Pip and Herbert come to the conclusion that Compeyson was the showy-man who abandoned Miss Havisham on her wedding's day. Eventually, while dining at Mr Jaggers's house, Pip concludes that Molly, Mr Jagger's housekeeper, is Estella's biological mother. This idea is reinforced when Wemmick narrates Pip her story (Molly was accused of murder, but Jaggers assured her that she would be found non-guilty if she handed her child over him in secret). Lately, Pip confirms his hypothesis when Herbert tells him that Magwitch and a woman who had been accused of murdering (but had been acquitted due to Mr Jaggers' defence), had had a child. In reference to the first encounter between Pip and the convict at the churchyard, Herbert states that "You brought into his mind the little girl so tragically lost, who would have been about your age" (Dickens, 2005: 407). Again, this is an *external analepsis* that becomes *internal*. After that, Mr Jaggers provides his own version of Molly's story. These *analepses* function as *recalls* or repetitions of the same facts, with different interpretations or *point of views* in order to create redundancy.

Additionally, there is an *internal analepsis* when Orlick confesses Pip that he attacked Mrs Gargery, for it works as a *recall* of a period that has been already accounted. Moreover, this confession makes Pip to revive the memory of the night when her sister was attacked:

It was not only that I could have summed up years and years and years while he said a dozen words, but that what he did say presented pictures

to me, and not mere words. In the excited and exalted state of my brain, I could not think of a place without seeing it or of persons without seeing them. It is impossible to overstate the vividness of these images (Dickens, 2005: 427).

After being saved, Herbert tells Pip how he came to know about his kidnapping. This *internal analepsis* gives Pip information that he cannot know as hero-narrator: “I learnt that I had in my hurry dropped the letter, open, in our chambers, where he [...] found it, very soon after I was gone” (Dickens, 2005: 431). Another example is Joe’s account about Miss Havisham’s death and Orlick’s confinement in the county jail. In this case, both retrospections work as *recalls* or repeated *analepses*.

### *Prolepses*

Pip’s double nature as hero and narrator of the story provides him with a whole knowledge of the *factual narrative*, which allows him to anticipate events that have not taken place yet: “...intending to communicate with Mr Matthew Pocket only, and leave him to do as he liked about informing the rest. *That I did next day*” (Dickens, 2005: 403, our emphasis). After that, Pip adds that “...I decided in the course of the night that *I would return by the early morning coach*: walking on a mile or so, and being taken up clear of the town” (Dickens, 2005: 403). Thus, he pre-empts what he is going to do next day.

In the following example, the adult narrator informs the reader of a change in the order of succession of the events:

A great event in my life, the turning point of my life, now opens on my view. But, before I proceed to narrate it, and before I pass on to all the changes it involved, I must give one chapter to Estella (Dickens, 2005: 299).

In other occasions, the narrator hides behind the character, and it is heard young Pip’s voice hypothesizing about the future. Thus, some days before accomplishing the plan for Magwitch’s escape, Pip truly believes that he will be discovered:

I persuaded myself that I knew he was taken; that there was something more upon my mind than a fear or a presentiment; that the fact had occurred, and I had a mysterious knowledge of it (Dickens, 2005: 432).

Similarly, after recovering from his illness, Pip informs the reader of his next decisions: going back to the marshes and asks Biddy to marry him. Both *prolepses* deal with events that have not happened yet. However, while the first anticipation takes place actually, the second one never happens (for Biddy gets married with Joe).

Occasionally, the anticipation is less obvious because the reader only realizes its importance later in the novel. Despite seeming insignificant when mentioned, they become increasingly important along the narrative. The two most important instances in *Great Expectations* are the first appearance of Magwitch and Herbert at the beginning of the novel. The former appears under the appellation of “the convict”. Along the first volume, it works as a kind of *leitmotif* which makes arise in Pip feelings of fear, guilt and punishment. Magwitch does not appear again until the end of the second volume, when he reveals himself as Pip’s benefactor. On the other hand, Herbert plays a little role in the first volume, when he asks Pip to fight a duel at Satis House. After Pip is informed of his great expectations and moves to London, Herbert becomes his best friend. Thus, the roles they play in the first part of Pip’s expectations is only recognized retrospectively as they gain relevance in the second and third parts.

## Narrative rhythm

Genette (1980: 87) notes that “We must thus give up the idea of measuring variations in duration with respect to an inaccessible, because unverifiable, equality of duration between narrative and story”. The alternative is to analyse the temporal dimension of the story and the spatial dimension of the narrative; in other words, to compare the duration of the events that shape the story —(measured in terms of seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, years, centuries...) and the length of the text including these events (measured in lines, paragraphs, pages or chapters). The relationship between the duration of the story and the length of the narrative does not remain steady, but it is constantly altered. In order to examine the variations in the narrative rhythm of *Great Expectations*, it must

be decided what to consider as large narrative articulations and established a coherent internal chronology. With this purpose, it is featured below a proposal, based on the delimitation of important temporal brakes pointed out in the novel.

1. *Pip and the convict (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42)*. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.
2. *At Satis House (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99)*. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.
3. *The blacksmith boy (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133)*. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.
4. *Great expectations (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160)*. Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations. We will use the name of.
5. *The Londoner gentleman (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277)*. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.
6. *Mrs Gargery's funeral (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285)*. Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.
7. *End of great expectations (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421)*. Temporal (several years) and spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.
8. *Attempt of murder (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433)*. Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.
9. *Magwitch's decease (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460)*. Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.
10. *Return to the marshes (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480)*. As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.
11. *Clarriker and Co. (Chapter LVIII, p. 480)*. Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).
12. *Second return to the marshes (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484)*. Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.

Despite the difficulty of measuring the temporal dimension, that is, the *story time* of the novel, it is possible to suggest an indicative chronology in order to compare it with the *narrative time*:

1. Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.
2. At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
3. The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.
4. Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
5. The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
6. Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
7. End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
8. Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
9. Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
10. Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
11. At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
12. Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

From this structure, it is noticeable that the *speed* of the narrative is rather unsteady, going from 27 pages for 1 hour to 2 paragraphs for 11 years. Furthermore, some of these narrative articulations also contain internal variations. To give an illustration, *End of great expectations* starts when Pip comes on age. 27 pages are devoted to narrate Pip's debts, his relationship with Wemmick and a meeting with Estella, all these events accounting for some days. After that, there is a temporal ellipsis: Pip is now 23 years old. The rest of the pages cover some months. Ultimately, there are other specific variations or narrative movements distributed along the text, which are considered below.

### *Ellipsis*

There is an *explicit definite* ellipsis in Pip's saying that "For eleven years, I had not seen Joe nor Biddy..." (Dickens, 2005: 481). In other occasions, temporal gaps are rather imprecise. They are introduced by indefinite indications as "one night", "when the day came round", "one day"... It is also possible to find examples of *implicit* ellipsis, where the temporal break is not indicated, but the reader may still infer it. To give an illustration, after describing the first two visits to Satis House, adult Pip tells that "We went on this way for a long time" (Dickens, 2005: 98), meaning that he continued visiting Miss Havisham for an undetermined period of time.

## *Pause*

The opening of Chapter 7 might be regarded as an example of a descriptive pause. There, Pip informs the reader about his limited knowledge on reading, writing and ciphering when he was a kid. To illustrate it, he evokes episodes from his childhood, which are not isolated from the diegetic narration, but evade the temporality of the story:

At the time when I stood in the churchyard reading the family tombstones, I had just enough learning to be able to spell them out. My construction even of their simple meaning was not very correct [...]. Neither were my notions of the theological positions to which my Catechism bound me, at all accurate; for, I have a lively remembrance that I supposed my declaration that I was to "walk in the same all the days of my life," laid me under an obligation always to go through the village from our house in one particular direction, and never to vary it by turning down by the wheelwright's or up by the mill (Dickens, 2005: 43).

Pip's description of his inner feelings when Bidley informs him about Joe's visit, or when he sees the corpse of his death sister, provide further examples of pause.

## *Summary*

The clearest example of summary in *Great Expectations* is found at the end of the penultimate chapter, in between the first and the second return to the marshes. After being informed that Bidley and Joe will get married (the *narrative time* takes 8 pages to cover one day of the *story time*), Pip resumes in 2 paragraphs an 11-year period of his life working at Clarriker and Co. together with Herbert. After that, he goes back to the marshes and, finally, meets Estella at the ruins of Satis House (4 pages of the *narrative time* to cover a few hours of the *story time*).



## *Scene*

The example described above provides also an instance of how scenes usually work in between summaries. There are other illustrations over the novel where the *story time* matches up with the *narrative time*, especially with regard to dialogues.

## ***Chapter 5. The Boy and the Convict (1909): What the Dickens!***

### **Early cinema, the chase film and *The Boy and the Convict***

*The Boy and the Convict* is a one-reel British production from 1909 directed by David Aylott for the Williamson Kinetograph Company. It was not until 2001 that Graham Petrie<sup>4</sup> recognized this short film as a partial reworking of *Great Expectations*. Differences between the source text and this motion picture exist not only with regard to the title, but at the content level, as it will be proved. However, it is at least worth mentioning the film's refusal to keep the title of the novel. Cinema of the early twentieth century capitalized on adaptations of literary sources in an attempt to legitimate the new media, in addition to the fact that much of the audience was familiar to them. That this film adaptation changed its name for *The Boy and the Convict* is noteworthy enough. The novels of the British author were not under copyright protection any longer, and even whether the teens meant a period of general critical disinterest in Dickens, a faithful body of popular support kept burning (Hammond, 2015: 80-1). Certainly, it can be argued that the connections between the two stories are rather weak to keep the same title. Hammond (2015: 87) suggests that "at this time the book's title was not considered much of a draw". However, this argument overlooks that cinema relied too heavily in literature in order to gain certain status, and if one regards the list of the films based on Dickens novels that were made in the first decade of the twentieth century, (s)he will notice that they keep the same name. In a period in which the film industry was about business rather than about art, the name of Dickens would have been an excellent lure to attract spectators.

Another issue is the length of the film. Given that the very earliest motion pictures were only from fifty seconds to three minutes long, lengthening first to one reel (10-12

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on this, see Petrie, G. (2001). Silent Film Adaptations of Dickens Part I: From the Beginning to 1911. *The Dickensian*, 97(453): 7-21,6.

minutes) and, later on, two reels (20-24 minutes), condensing a whole book in one film was unfeasible. Filmstrip limitations forced filmmakers to focus on short episodes from well-known novels that the audience could easily recognize. Selectivity in plot and characters was fundamental in a period in which screenplays evolved from mere technical aids to its definitive format<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, the book-to-film movement hanged on technical constraints rather than on the filmmaker's expertise to carry out the adaptation process.

*The Boy and the Convict* does not escape these difficulties. The plot is reduced to the relationship between a young boy and a convict he helps to escape from the officers. Apart from them, only three characters more stand out during the film. At the forge, a character playing the boy's father substitutes both Joe and Mrs Gargery. Towards the end of the film, the kid (now a good-looking young man) meets the convict's wife and daughter. These characters do not belong to the source text, although they are reminiscent of Miss Havisham and Estella from Dickens' *Great Expectations*. The film consists of thirteen scenes divided by twelve titles. The camera remains static and relies on single and medium long-shots. That is significant considering that the Williamson Kinetograph had been a pioneer company in film narrative. His founder, James Williamson, had introduced several innovations in film punctuation during the first years of the twentieth century. For example, he had developed a primitive form of the race against time by cutting from one shot to another in *Attack on a China Mission* (1901). *Stop Thief* (1901) had become the first movie chase of more than one shot. And *Fire!* (1901) presented a logical narrative action sequence of cutting from one shot to shot (Sopocy, 2015). Williamson had continued making films until 1908, when he transferred his production duties first to Jack Chart and, subsequently, to David Aylott.

The period in which the film was released was one of major changes for the film industry. In the following sections, they are considered aspects concerning the narrative discourse of *The Boy and the Convict*, and how they relate to political, economic or sociocultural factors. For this purpose, it is used the UK version of *The Boy and the Convict* provided by the BFI Collection *Dickens Before Sound* (2006).

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<sup>5</sup> Bálazs (1952: 248) points out that early scripts were a mere list of scenes and shots with information about what was to be in the picture, but nothing about how it should be presented. Over time, they developed into a set of numbered scenes including the name of the characters, an indication of whether the shot was day or night, as well as a little scene description (Norman, 2008: 42).

## **Narrative discourse in *The Boy and the Convict* (D. Aylott, 1909)**

### Narrative functions

The copy of *The Boy and the Convict* used in this study relies upon twelve intertitles to foreground narration. Each one summarizes the action that comes after, and one of them marks a time ellipsis between scenes. They are expository titles, very laconic, similar to chapter titles in a book (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 44):

1. The blacksmith's boy
2. His mothers [sic] grave
3. Food for the convict
4. An errand of mercy
5. Freed from his shackles. The pursuit
6. The warders baffled
7. Seven years after. Convict now a wealthy colonial thinks of the boy who befriended him
8. Receiving the letter
9. Realizing his ambition — the convict's return and recapture
10. Finding the convict's wife and daughter
11. A dying prisoner's confession — convict's innocence proved
12. A happy ending

Given the length of the *The Boy and the Convict* (ca. 12 minutes) and the extension of *Great Expectations* (ca. 550 pages), it is expected to find wide differences between the cardinal functions present in the novel and in the film. Selectivity in plot and characters, an arrangement of the events different from the order in which these events are placed in the novel, as well as an oversimplification of the narrative are necessary steps in the conversion of the book into a one-reel film, as it is subsequently explained.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (NOVEL)	<i>THE BOY AND THE CONVICT</i> (FILM)
	Officers at the forge ask for an escaped convict
<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>	<b>A boy meets a convict in the cemetery</b>

<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>	<b>The boy steals food and a file for the convict</b>
<b><i>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</i></b>	<i>The convict escapes from officers</i>
Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella	
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file	
Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek	
Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham	
Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice	
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
Mrs Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)	
Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House	
Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman	The convict sends to the boy an amount of money to thank him for his help
<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>The boy (now a young man) receives a letter bringing news of his 'great expectations'</b>
<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>	<b>The young man tells the new to his master/father</b>
Pip goes to London	
<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>	<b>He (now a gentleman) sets up in a luxury house</b>
Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting	
Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket.	
Pip gets money from Jagers to set himself up	
Pip dines with Jagers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummlle).	
He meets Molly, Jagers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)	
Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn	

Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)	
Pip re-meets Estella	
Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella	
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
Pip meets and escorts Estella in London	
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	
Mrs Joe dies	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age	
Pip takes Estella to Satis House	
She and Miss Havisham argue	
At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle	
<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>The convict returns to reveal himself as the gentleman's benefactor</b>
Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers	
<b>Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape</b>	<b>The gentleman helps the convict to escape</b>
Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)	
Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella	
Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle	
Wemmick warns Pip of being watched	
Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape	
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	
Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)	
Pip goes to deserted sluice house	
Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house	
<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>	<b>The scape plan for the convict fails</b>
Pip loses fortune	
<i>Magwitch is tried</i>	<i>A prisoner's confession reveals the convict's innocence.</i>

<i>Magwitch dies in prison</i>	<i>The convict is released</i>
Pip becomes ill	
Joe looks after Pip	
Biddy and Joe get married	The ex-convict goes back home
Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.	The gentleman asks the ex-convict for his daughter's hand
Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House	The ex-convict accepts the proposal

As the table shows, turning a complex and long novel as it is *Great Expectations*, with multiple subplots, into a one-reel film demands a good deal of compression. *The Boy and the Convict* focuses on the Pip-and-Magwitch relationship, thus removing other storylines as the Satis plot. Besides, it avoids to explore what it is likely the major theme of the novel, that is, Pip's moral degradation towards snobbery and shame.

An explanatory title precedes the first scene (i.e. "The blacksmith's boy"), suggesting that the boy is either the son or the apprentice of the blacksmith. The first time he appears on the screen, he is crying, although no explanation is given for that. Sopocy (2010) has suggested that there can be some possible abridgment from a previous version. Without denying completely this option, it is arguable that the plot is consistent enough. The boy's sorrow works as a prolepsis that anticipates the second scene. In fact, a subsequent title explains the reason of this sorrow: his mother is dead. Thus, while in *Great Expectations* Pip has lost both his mother and his father, in the film, the boy is a single-orphan child. Similarly, in the book, Pip lives with his sister and her husband, Joe Gargery. The latter represents kindness and empathy, while the former is a sort of wicked stepmother. In *The Boy and the Convict*, the blacksmith seems to play the role of both Joe (as a male figure, a black) and Mrs Gargery (as a strict and punishing authority). Furthermore, Aylott offsets the removal of the Satis plot by introducing two female characters as the wife and the daughter of the convict. Inevitably, they remind us of Miss Havisham and Estella. In the same way, the young worker at the forge that we can see in the first scene might be Orlick's counterpart. However, these comparisons seem of less importance, for the film does not dig into the psychology of the characters. Any potential similitude or correspondence may respond to a narrative need rather than a decision taken on purpose.

The inciting incident of both the novel and the film is the convict's escape from the justice. However, *Great Expectations* opens with the powerful image of the tombstone of Pip's parents, in the churchyard at the marshes. There, Magwitch threatens Pip with death

if he does not bring him some food and a file. No more information about the convict is provided until he is captured and the officers request Joe Gargery's aid. On the contrary, the film opens with two officers asking for the blacksmith's help. The meeting between the boy and the convict happens in second place, while it is in the fifth scene when the spectator discovers that the two officers and the blacksmith are looking for the convict, who, eventually, manages to escape. It seems of importance to pay some attention to the word "pursuit" appearing on the fifth intertitle. The pursuit was the main storytelling device in chase films. The chase had been the predominant film form from 1904 to 1908. It played a key role in the transition from the cinema of attractions to a cinema based on a narrative model (Keil, 2001; *see also* Abel, 2005; Beaver, 2006; Zimmer, 2015). However, contrary to common chase films, no reason for the pursuit is provided here. Therefore, *The Boy and the Convict* lacks a pre-chase scenario that reveals the nature of the crime that the convict has supposedly committed. Keil has argued (2001: 48-49) "the single reel forma (...) would push filmmakers to consider ways of formulating the central components of narrative other than those established within the chase film". In *The Boy and the Convict*, the chase merely functions as a triggering factor to make the plot advance through different scenarios.

While in *Great Expectations* Magwitch is captured (although he escapes again later on), in *The Boy and the Convict*, the convict escapes from the very beginning. This decision accelerates the narrative rhythm of the story and drives out other events present in the novel. The convict runs away towards a quay, where he dresses as a sailor and pretends to be working so the officers do not recognize him. After seven years, he has turned into a wealthy man in Australia and sends to the boy (now a young man) an important sum of money to make of him a gentleman. Time after, he visits his protégée to reveal himself as his mysterious benefactor (albeit, contrary to *Great Expectations*, the audience already knows this information). The convict is recaptured and his gentleman decides to visit his wife and daughter in order to give them the bad news.

The film introduces at this point a major twist, which makes the story deviate wholly from the source text: a prisoner's confession reveals the convict's innocence. Dickens' open ending is here substituted by a happy resolution of the plot: the convict is finally released and allowed to go back home, where he re-meets his wife and daughter, as well as his gentleman. The latter asks him for his daughter's hand, which the ex-convict gladly accepts. This departure from *Great Expectations* may respond to the process of



legitimation of cinema that evolved together with its *narrativization*. According to this, films were supposed not only to entertain, but also to educate the audience.

As will be shown, cinema became the most popular leisure activity, especially among the working class, which made the new media an object of scrutiny. Especially in the United States, concerns for morality resulted in attempts at regulation of films through legislation. In 1909, it was created the National Board of Censorship, whose policies were accepted both by the Motion Picture Patents Company and the independent producers (including John J. Murdock's International Projecting and Production Company). Hence, it is reasonable that *The Boy and the Convict* presents a happy ending where the convict can demonstrate that he was falsely accused. Indeed, the kindness that characterize the main characters (the boy helps the convict to escape, the convict gives him an important amount of money in return) contrasts to Pip's moral decline in *Great Expectations*, which leads him to a constant search of redemption.

### The narrating instance

Despite by the end of the 1910s filmmakers were introducing certain film elements for storytelling purposes, cinema was constrained by technical limitations and most of the storytelling devices that are well-known today had not been explored yet.

As it had been common so far, in *The Boy and the Convict* the camera remains fixed and static in all the scenes. It is placed 12 to 16 feet back, thus showing the actors from head to toe. Consequently, the film capitalizes on long shots where characters are placed at the center of the frame. Actors are forced to make exaggerated gestures, clearly visible at stage distance, in order that the audience can follow the action. They use resources as pointing at some direction to indicate where the convict has escaped, or look directly to the camera. In general, the film is full of excessive pantomime, reflected in continuous shaking of hands, exuberant movements of arms and stagey soliloquy. The same trend is observed in another Dickens adaptation from the same year, Stuart Blackton's *Oliver Twist* (Vitagraph, 1909).

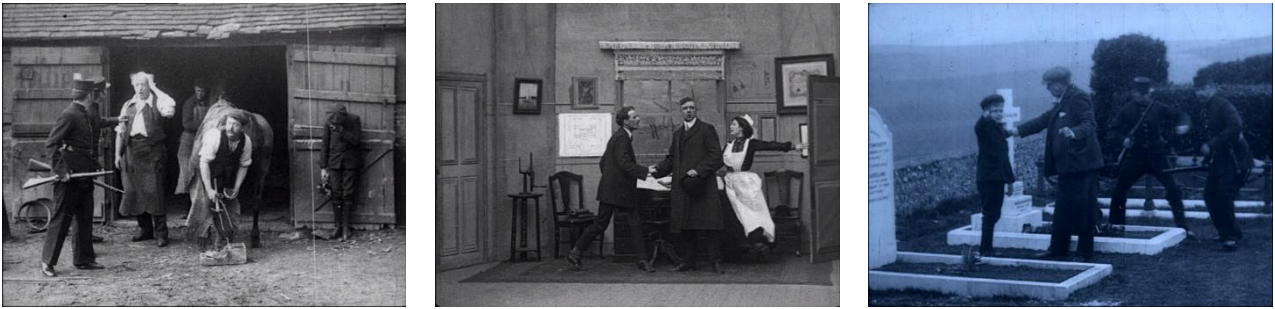


Fig. 2. Excessive pantomime in *The Boy and the Convict*

Nevertheless, by 1909, the “9 foot-line” is introduced, meaning that the camera is now placed only 9 feet away (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 48). Actors’ facial expression is strengthened while former stage pantomime and traditional gestures are increasingly abandoned. In fact, spectators demand a more natural acting. A film like David W. Griffith’s *Cricket on the Hearth* (Biograph, 1909) provides a good example of the transformations taken place at that time. Indeed, it is not without a reason that Griffith is often referred as one of the major innovators in the development of film narrative and editing techniques. In this feature, he implements the parallel editing and show characters moving in consistent directions in the contiguous spaces. The camera still remains static, but it is placed closer to the actors, so that their facial expressions and movements are visible. Characters do not look directly to camera any longer. The aim is to imitate real life: no grand entrances and exits, no eloquent conversations, or interaction among characters.

*The Boy and the Convict* might not be, therefore, in line with the newest trends of the epoch, although it is not either an old-fashioned film that uses long-time abandoned techniques. What remains of importance at this stage is the implications of the fixed, long-distanced position of the camera with regard to the narrative instance of this film. Except for one close-up of a letter, the film only uses long-shots or medium long-shots for each scene. That entails the use of a *non-focalized* narrative, or narrative with *zero focalization* (Genette, 1980: 189), where the narrative agency works as an objective observer of the events taking place in the diegesis. The narrative instance is placed outside the diegesis and does not participate in the story; hence, it has an extra-heterodiegetic character. Moreover, it is identified with the *image-maker*, who, in such an early silent film as it is *The Boy and the Convict*, cannot rely on many storytelling techniques but camera framing, colouring, setting or acting, likewise on the use of inter-titles. In fact, it is

through the use of the camera that the narrative instance induces the audience to look at some specific directions, while the inter-titles help to understand the narration. On the contrary, no character's perspective is favoured, which, of course, clearly departs from the first-person narrator and the fixed internal focalization that characterizes *Great Expectations*.

## Narrator

As previously argued, *The Boy and the Convict* presents a *non-focalized* narrative where the omniscient narrator is extra-heterodiegetic. There is also an identification between narrator and *image-maker*. Stam, Burgoyne and Flitterman-Lewis (2005: 101) claim that this sort of impersonal narrator possesses an automatic authentication authority, for it does not lie, makes mistakes or distorts the events of the fictional world. Similarly, Kozloff (1988: 110) states that (s)he "is condemned to constant reliability, constant authority". These authors accept the existence of some exceptions, very rare examples where the narrative instance becomes an unreliable narrator. However, even in those cases, they refuse to call it an inadequate narrator. Rather, discrepancies between the image and sound tracks or lapses of continuity have to be interpreted as purposeful anomalies or even as pure mistakes. Anyhow, it is not the case of *The Boy and the Convict*: there are no discrepancies between what the intertitles tell and what the camera show. Furthermore, the film provides the audience with information that characters do not know. As an example, we are informed that the convict becomes the boy's benefactor (scene 7) before the boy himself discovers it (scene 9). In conclusion, the narrative instance is a reliable narrator.

## Temporality and order

The fact that *The Boy and the Convict* is characterized by an *extra-heterodiegetic* narrator has profound consequences for temporality and order issues. This film shows equivalence between the time of the *factual narrative* and the time of the *telling narrative*, or, in Genette's words (1980: 36), "a kind of zero degree that would be a condition of perfect temporal

correspondence between narrative and story”. The narrative is linear and does not include any *analepsis* (flash-back) or *prolepsis* (flash-forward).

## Narrative rhythm

Due to the technical limitations of early cinema, *The Boy and the Convict* provides an example of a balanced narrative rhythm, and perhaps there is little more to say on this matter. In fact, the reader might find the comparison with the narrative rhythm in *Great Expectations* rather disappointing. Ultimately, the intrinsic characteristics of this film (short, silent, with all the constraints of a newborn media) makes it different enough from the novel to find out many coincidences.

<p><i>The blacksmith's boy</i> (00:00 – 00:30). Officers come to the forge and ask for the blacksmith's help.</p>	
<p><i>His mother's grave</i> (00:31 – 00:56). First encounter between the boy and the convict.</p>	<p><i>Pip and the convict</i> (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42). First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.</p>
<p><i>Food for the convict</i> (00:57 – 01:33). The boy steals some food and a file for the convict.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House</i> (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>
<p><i>An errand of mercy</i> (01:34 – 02:06). The boy leaves the house without being noticed.</p>	
<p><i>Freed from his shackles. The pursuit</i> (02:07 – 03:49). The boy gives the convict the food and the file. The convict sets free from his shackles. The boy lies to the officers about the convict's whereabouts.</p>	<p><i>The blacksmith boy</i> (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>

<p><i>The warders baffled</i> (03:50 – 04:56). The convict misleads the officer and manages to escape.</p>	
<p><i>The wealthy colonist</i> (04:57 – 05:45). Temporal (seven years) and spatial (move to Australia) breaks. The convict, now a wealthy colonist, sends the boy a letter with a sum of money.</p>	
<p><i>Receiving the letter</i> (05:46 – 06:30). Spatial break (move to London). The boy, now a young man, receives the news of his great expectations.</p>	<p><i>Great expectations</i> (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160). Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>
<p></p>	<p><i>The Londoner gentleman</i> (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277). Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>
<p></p>	<p><i>Mrs. Gargery's funeral</i> (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285). Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>
<p><i>The convict's return</i> (06:31 – 08:44). Temporal (undetermined) and spatial break (undetermined). The convict returns to reveal himself as the boy's secret benefactor. Officers come and the convict is recaptured.</p>	<p><i>End of great expectations</i> (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421). Temporal (several years) and spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>
<p><i>Finding the convict's wife and daughter</i> (08:45 – 10:05). Spatial break (undetermined). The boy, now a gentleman, tells the convict's wife and daughter the news about his recapture.</p>	<p><i>Attempt of murder</i> (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433). Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.</p>
<p><i>The convict's innocence</i> (10:06 – 11:07). Spatial break (undetermined). A dying prisoner's confession proves that the convict was innocent.</p>	<p><i>Magwitch's decease</i> (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460). Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.</p>
<p></p>	<p><i>Return to the marshes</i> (Chapters LVIII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480). As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes</p>

	(spatial break). Joe and Bidy inform him that they are going to get married.
	<i>Clarriker and Co</i> (Chapter LVIII, p. 480). Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).
<i>A happy ending</i> (11:08 – 12:00). Spatial break (undetermined). The ex-convict returns home. His gentleman asks for his daughter’s hand. The ex-convict accepts.	<i>Second return to the marshes</i> (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484). Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.

According to this chronology, the main variations of speed in the narrative of *The Boy and the Convict* with regard to the novel work out approximately like this:

The blacksmith’s boy: around 30 seconds for about 30 seconds.	
	Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.
His mother’s grave: around 25 seconds for about 25 seconds.	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
An errand of mercy: less than 40 seconds for around 40 seconds.	
Freed from his shackles. The pursuit: around 30 seconds for about thirty seconds.	
The warders baffled: around 1 minute and 40 seconds for 1 minute and 40 seconds.	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.
The wealthy colonist: around 1 minute for 1 minute.	
Receiving the letter: around 45 seconds for about 45 seconds.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.

	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
	Mrs. Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
The convict's return: above 2 minutes for around 2 minutes.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
Finding the convict's wife and daughter: above 1 minute for around 1 minute.	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
The convict's innocence: around 1 minute for 1 minute.	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
A happy ending: around 50 seconds for about 50 seconds.	Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

As stated above, the comparison between the film and the novel sheds little light on the question of the narrative rhythm. It seems pointless, with regard to the film, to differentiate three parts in the same way that the book is divided in the three stages of Pip's expectations. Still, it is possible to distinguish three sections. The first one covers the episodes concerning the encounter between the boy and the convict, the convict's escape, and the news of the boy's great expectations. That means around 6 and a half minutes of the running time of the film (52,5 per cent). The second section deals with the return of the convict to reveal himself as the boy's mysterious benefactor, and his subsequent arrest. This episode covers around 2 minutes of the running time of the film (17,5 per cent). Finally, the third section includes the boy's visit to the wife and the daughter of the convict, the prisoner's confession about the convict's innocence, and the return of the ex-convict. That means above 3 minutes of the running time of the film (less than 26 per cent). The observation to emerge from these data is that *The Boy and the Convict* pays major attention to the episodes concerning the relationship between the two

characters during the boy's childhood. This should come as no surprise, for it is a means to settle the storyline, the pace and the tone of the film in order to make the plot understandable. Moving on now to consider the narrative movements concerning the four canonical forms: ellipsis, pause, scene and summary.

### *Ellipsis*

*The Boy and the Convict* comprises several years in the life of the protagonists in a few minutes, which implies, necessarily, the use of some abridgments. The transitions between scenes mark the presence of temporal ellipsis. They are suggested through the explanatory inter-titles, which informs the audience of the changes in the scenario. Notwithstanding, an implicit seven-year gap appear in the seventh inter-title (namely, "Seven years after. Convict now a wealthy colonial thinks of the boy who befriended him"). The actor who played the role of the boy is now substituted by a young man to evidence the time lapse. This actor is subsequently replaced by an adult man to portray the role of gentleman. In this case, there is no implicit indication of the temporal ellipsis, but the transformation of the character obviously suggests that some years have passed.

Temporal ellipsis are also marked through the use of hand-colouring techniques in some scenes. Between 1900 and 1920, tinting<sup>6</sup> and toning<sup>7</sup> were the most usual practices. *The Boy and the Convict* makes use of these techniques to indicate temporality. The third scene, which takes place inside the boy's house, is orange-coloured. Amber colours were usually utilized for night interiors. The next two scenes are blue-coloured, indicating that they take place at night. This implies the pass of time from the first to the second time that the boy visits the cemetery. Interestingly enough, the following scene, concerning the convict's pursuit, is again black-and-white. This suggests that the action takes place at daylight, so there is again a temporal gap between the previous scene and this one. The rest of the film remains black-and-white.

### *Pause*

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<sup>6</sup> This method consisted on bathing the black and white print in a coloured dye.

<sup>7</sup> This technique used a chemical process to replace the silver metal image by a coloured mechanic compound. Although more complex than tinting, it afforded a richer variety of colours.



There are no examples of pauses.

### *Summary*

There are no examples of summaries.

### *Scene*

Due to technical limitations, all the scenes present full correspondence between narrative time and story time.

## **Political, economic and sociocultural background**

### **Production, distribution and exhibition systems**

Up to 1905, the commercial exploitation of cinema settled on the basis and the conditions necessary for the international growth of the industry. An increase in film production, the exploration of new storytelling techniques, the opening of theatres devoted to film exhibition, the development of new markets or the emergence of filmmaking on a smaller scale were some of the elements that contributed to the stabilization of the new-born media. At European level, France positioned itself as the largest film industry. Pathé became one of the first companies in combining strategies of vertical and horizontal integration: it took the control of the production, distribution and exhibition branches while opening new studios in several countries. Despite Pathé's leadership, the increasing demand for new films allowed the coexistence of smaller firms during this period. As of 1905, both the Italian and the Danish film industries experienced a rapid growth. In Italy, numerous production companies were founded in a few years, such as Società Italiana Cines (1906), Società Arturo Ambrosio (1906), Cinematografi Riutini (1906) or Società Carlo Rossi (1907). By the end of 1910, this figure was estimated to have grown to over sixty. As a result, the exhibition branch also expanded and new theatres opened

permanently. Besides satisfying the inner demand, Italian films were competitive at international level, surpassed only by France. The Italian industry left also a rich legacy based upon two important contributions: on the one hand, it standardised films of more than one reel (that is, longer than fifteen minutes); on the other hand, it promoted the creation of a star system and exalted the role of the *diva*. However, from the 1910s on, the number of films produced declined gradually. After the First World War, Italian cinema fell into a crisis, which would not be overcome until the emergence of Neorealism in 1945.

Albeit all the Scandinavian countries experienced similar development to Italy, Denmark stood out among the rest. Ole Olsen, an exhibitor owner of the Malmö Tivoli (one of the first movie theatres in Copenhagen), foresaw the possibilities of the new media and founded his own production company, the Nordisk, in 1906. In a few years, it positioned itself at European level, only behind Pathé Frères. Its huge success led on to the creation of new Danish companies, as Kosmorama, Kinografen or Dansk Biograf Kompagni. However, they never reached the same figures and, according to Thompson and Bordwell (1994: 30), “Olsen eventually managed either to buy them or to drive them out of business”. As happened in Italy, the First World War wreaked havoc in the Danish film industry, cutting off many of its export markets.

The development of the European market contrasted with the instability of the American film industry, plagued by infighting. The Edison Company had managed to own the patents of motion picture cameras, projectors and paper film. Consequently, all the companies were supposed to pay a license fee in order to avoid any patent infringement lawsuit. Only American Mutoscope & Biograph (AM&B) was exempt from this payment: an appeal court stated in 1907 that its camera was different enough from the Edison's. Both companies engaged in a struggle for power that hindered film production. Hence, it became difficult to meet the demand of the increasing number of film theatres, the so-called nickelodeons<sup>8</sup>. Aware of the need to find a solution, Edison and AM&B came to an agreement during the summer of 1907 to create the Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC). The aim was to control competitors “by owning and charging licensing fees on all the existing patents” while limiting “the number of foreign

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<sup>8</sup> Admissions usually cost a nickel; hence the name of nickelodeons.

firms which could join and import films” (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 34). With this agreement, they made sure of their total control over film production, distribution and exhibition. The trust included ten members apart from Edison and AM&B: Armat, Eastman Kodak, Essanay, Kalem, Kleine, Lubin, Méliès, Pathé Frères, Selig and Vitagraph. The Williamson was left out of consideration, for the agreement excluded those foreign producers or agents who had been in the American market as recently as July 1908 (Bowser, 1990: 73). The official announce was made in December 1908. The reaction was swift: new independent companies started to produce and rent their own films, as well as to rent films from those European countries not included in the trust. That was the case of the John J. Murdock, which organized the International Projecting and Producing Company and signed up the Williamson Kinetograph Company. To be competitive, companies excluded from the agreement either used cameras and filmstrip imported from abroad or violated the patents of the MPPC. Although the trust won the first lawsuits, a sentence from 1915 tipped the balance in favour of the independent companies. A federal decision court ruled that the MPPC had tried to monopolize the film industry, thus committing an illegal restraint to protect the use of patent. The MPPC started its decline while the independent firms created a more stable industry that would lead to the development of Hollywood.

## Cinema audience

Cinema became the highest social and aesthetic pleasure for the early twentieth century public. Despite the rise of a wide range of commercial recreations, as amusement parks, dance halls, billiard parlours, vaudeville and burlesque houses, and professional sports, the low cost of attending movie theatres made it the most popular one. Additionally, films changed each day, thus encouraging daily attendance, and shows ran from morning to night (Butsch, 2000: 141). More than any other art form, they reflected reality as perceived by the human eye. In a time where most of the people either could not afford or did not have time enough to travel abroad, the new media allowed viewers to know places where they would probably never go. It reduced geographical distances, figuratively speaking, and promoted the process of globalization.

Central to this question is cinema's key role in the construction of the discourse of modernity, global culture and public sphere. Singer (2009: 37) has argued that "intertwined with modernity technologically, sociologically, and phenomenologically, cinema seemed to epitomize and encapsulate modern experience more vividly than any other form of cultural expression". According to this conception, films become «the very emblem of modern life, the quintessential manifestation of modernity». However, these claims raise a critical question: whether it was cinema what defined the modern spirit, or whether it was modernity the trigger for the advent of cinema. Truly enough, the motion picture was a reality in the late 1890s. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the development of the film industry has been tied to the preferences of modern life.

According to Jowett (1983), the audience was made up from three groups. The first one was composed by members of the middle-class who had not previously attended any amusement activity due to religious beliefs, but who were now free to enjoy new entertainments after church restrictions were relaxed. The second group came from those members of the middle- and upper-working-class who regularly attended live theatres. Their desire for a major realism create a demand favourable to the introduction of the motion picture. Finally, the third group was formed by the large urban working class, including immigrants, who regarded cinema as the ideal form of recreation: ticket prices were affordable and the silent films proved no language barrier. As argued by Butsch (2000: 143), the division of the viewership by social class also

indicates an early differentiation of houses: the small, dark and crowded neighbourhood nickelodeon seating only a couple hundred people; the larger houses on commercial blocks, some formerly vaudeville or drama theatres; and the spare but respectable small-town movie theatre.

The growing interest in motion pictures transformed the realm of exhibition with the proliferation of specialized storefront moving picture theatres. But other reasons must be necessarily adduced to explain this phenomenon: the convergence of modern technology, the development of an extensive communications and transportation infrastructure for the mass distribution of films, the implementation of economies of scale to reduce costs, or the vertical integration of production, distribution and

exhibition. Ultimately, the development of cinema can only be understood in a context of social-industrial underpinnings of advanced capitalism.

As stated above, different ticket prices and locations of theatres, vaudeville and film houses appealed to a variety of consumers. These three entertainments perceived the other's audience as a potential market, so they focused on mixed programs of film and vaudeville acts. Overall, the main purpose was to attract the middle-class family trade. Specialized moving picture theatres had played a key role in democratising cinema to integrate spectators from different social classes; nevertheless, labouring men's problem with hygiene and discipline made difficult to attract the better-paying middle class audience. This issue disposed some entrepreneurs towards the conversion of large-capacity theatres into luxurious movie houses as opposed to the proliferation of small, sawdust-floored dives devoted to cinema. The exhibition system made its move, and so producers must react to meet the demand of a competitive environment where programs had to be changed very frequently. Moreover, once the illusion of motion vanished, audiences became bored of the narrative redundancy of early films. The film industry had to turn to more complex stories, exploiting the expressive possibilities of the medium for a truly *narrativization* of cinema. As will be shown, several types of films were developed in order to target niche audiences. Furthermore, an attempt to legitimate cinema as a respectable cultural form led to the production of literary adaptations or *films d'art*.

## Film forms and genres

In the United States, the Edison Company began producing films primarily for men, dealing with men and carried out by men. However, they addressed themes more appropriated for mixed-sex audiences when the first commercial exhibitions started. In general, subject matters favoured dancing girls, boxing matches, bullfights or vaudeville acts. French company Lumière, on the contrary, offered wider types of subject matter that cater to different tastes, but were usually aimed to a more elevated audience (Musser, 1990: 140). There was another significant distinction between both companies: whilst the Edison looked for a theatrical appearance of its films, which were usually recorded at the Black Maria studio, the Lumières shot the outside world as a reproduction of non-manipulated reality. Contrary to what might be expected, such a difference in the way to

approach filmmaking responded to economic rather than aesthetic reasons, as claimed by Williams (1983: 161). Edison found little troubles to get bank financing and focused his efforts on the mass marketing of his equipment (for what he needed ready access to adequate capital) instead of on exhibition. The French organization, however, developed their activities in an unfavourable economic environment. French banks were unwilling to give loans, whereas they requested high interest rates for the capital given in advance to develop and market new products. Therefore, the Lumières were forced to self-financing. Besides, they decided to exploit its equipment themselves instead of selling or licencing it, thus emphasizing exhibition to raise funding. These two opposed socioeconomic scenarios explain the differences between the Edison and the Lumière machinery. Interested in profits from sales rather than in technological development, the Edison camera was bulky and too heavy for a single operator to move. Hence the decision to shoot in a studio. The Lumières designed a camera that could take, print and project films; in addition, it was light enough to be portable by a single person, thus allowing filmmakers to record in the outside world. According to Ellis (1979: 34), these different ways to understand filmmaking “suggest the two main and divergent aesthetic impulses that have continued up to today”: fiction and non-fiction films.

Comedies became the most successful fiction films. Part of the success was due to the minimum narrative support they required. They were based on an infraction-pursuit-punishment structure that the audience could easily follow, and capitalized on three main roles: the *enfant terrible*, the redneck and the tramp. Biblical and hagiographic themes were also very recurrent. The *féerie* was characterized for fantasy plots and spectacular visual elements, which, ultimately, would turn into the science fiction genre. Finally, melodramas were rapidly used by filmmakers to exploit the conflict between good and evil through key issues as alcoholism, crimes of passion, eroticism or traffic in women.

The changes brought by modernity inspired non-fiction films, namely, the growth of urban cities, the development of industrial processes and new means of transport, tourism, science, or fashion and prêt-à-porter. Albeit the wide variety of themes, these pictures can be categorized in three main thematic clusters: travelogues, actualities and trick films. Travelogues were shot on board trains, cars, ships, hot-air balloons, trams, funiculars... to offer *distance tourism* to those who could not travel. Actualities were the precedent of TV news and covered an almost unlimited range of themes, including sport, politics, fashion, spectacles, war or any event of public interest. Finally, trick films

incorporated numerous themes and spectacles from the variety theatre: scenes of clowns, acrobats, contortionists and magicians, exhibitions of trained animals, traditional dances from different countries or mime and conjuring acts.

Both film forms developed simultaneously over the early 1910s, albeit fiction film would prevail in the end. Before 1907, films were conceived as *cinema of attractions*, in Gunning's definition (1990: 58). With *attractions*, he means that early cinema was a spectacle that incited visual curiosity and provided both pleasure and interest in itself. However, once the novelty worn off, spectators asked for more complex stories. The period from 1907 to 1912 represented the true *narrativization* of cinema. Comedy and melodrama stood out as the most successful film forms. Feature-length film started to predominate over short films, and a star system was developed. It was, in fact, a period of transformation, especially in the United States. Of great interest for this research was the exploitation of the book-to-film movement with two purposes: the search for new plots well-known by the general audience, and for the respectability given by the adaptation of canonical literature. It is in this context that *The Boy and the Convict* was released in the United Kingdom in May 1909 and likely distributed in the United States in September, since the film was reviewed in the *New York Dramatic Mirror* on 13 September 1909. The review, which appeared unsigned, heavily criticized the acting and the scenery of the picture:

The story of this dramatic subject is not without interest but this dramatic [sic] is of the cheapest melodramatic kind that is being abandoned by the better class of producers. The waving of arms is not pantomime, and when the players in this film are not wildly gesticulating they merely walk through their parts. The scenic interiors are of the cheapest sort of painted canvas. The story tells of a wrongly imprisoned convict, who escapes by the aid of a youth. He then makes a fortune and returns to his home, where he is captured but is saved by the discovery of the true criminal. Much of the action is not clearly indicated (quoted in Sopocy, 2010: 326).

That the dramatic subject of *The Boy and the Convict* was “of the cheapest melodramatic kinds abandoned by a better class of producers” suggests that the film remained very primitive in comparison to others. Of course, distinctions between films

were not absolute, so that claim deserves further consideration. It is true that by 1907, most of the producers had understood the power of story films for the modern audience. However, many of these films presented their scenes in such a way that the spectators found difficulties in following the plot and, consequently, they lost interest. Even in the case of film adaptations of renowned novels or plays, not all the spectators had access to the original. Furthermore, the same film could be projected in different markets where the frame of reference for the audience was not equal. Filmmakers and producers could no longer expect the majority of the audience to recognize the narrative discourse without any explanation.

An editorial in *Moving Picture World* (“Linked sweetness long drawn out”, 1909: 711) stated that “the producers have failed to get the narrative story over the footlights”. Technically, some of the films were still “too long drawn out”, “disconnected” and lacked “real dramatic action”. Those claims would suggest that the number of films where “much of the action (was) not clearly indicated” was high and *The Boy and the Convict* was not the exception. Besides, considering how the reviewer perfectly summarizes the plot, (s)he seems to have understood the film despite considering the action hard to follow, as Sopocy (2010: 326) has rightly noticed. Was *The Boy and the Convict*, in fact, such an old-fashioned film? For a wider understanding, it seems worth it to bring back the other two Dickens adaptations released in 1909: James Stuart Blackton’s *Oliver Twist*, produced by the Vitagraph Company, and David W. Griffith’s *Cricket on the Hearth*, produced by the Biograph Company. It has been already argued that, in terms of film style and storytelling techniques, only Griffith’s picture introduces real innovations. Among others, it implements the parallel editing; the camera gets closer, so the actors’ movements and facial expression are visible; and outside locations mix in three-dimensional settings with real furniture. In fact, *Cricket on the Hearth* was warmly welcomed by the critics. Griffith’s adaptation was said to “evinced the true atmospheric tenderness intended by Dickens. The settings are typical and the scenes have the local colour, while the characterization is of the quaint of old English type. All this is vivified by superb photography” (“Stories of the films”, 1909: 682; “Biograph Films”, 1909: 37). Apart from praising the acting, *Moving Picture World* (“Stories of the films”, 1909: 682) stated that “technically the film is almost beyond criticism. [...] The picture is clear and the movement of the characters is so smooth and even that there is no blurring. [...] The most critical audiences will be pleased with it” (“Comments on the week’s films”, 1909: 753-4).





Fig. 3. *The boy and the Convict*



Fig. 4. *Oliver Twist*



Fig. 5. *Cricket on the Hearth*

*Oliver Twist*, on the contrary, resembles *The Boy and the Convict*, as it uses explanatory titles to introduce each scene, the camera remains fixed and placed at large distance from the actors, and it employs painted theatrical-style backdrops for interior scenes, with some real furniture mixed in. Notwithstanding, it was praised, for example, by *Moving Picture World* (“Comments on the week’s films”, 1909: 753-4) by saying that “the acting is unusually good, and, with the exception of a few points, the photographic quality is quite satisfactory”. Considering that *Oliver Twist* and *The Boy and the Convict* were quite similar in terms of film style, there have to be further reasons that explain the differences of judgement. One possible explanation has to do with the fact that *Oliver Twist* was produced by Vitagraph, one of the companies included under the MPPC agreement. The Patents Company’s efforts to monopolize the domestic market made the distribution of unlicensed films as *The Boy and the Convict* very difficult, and it is highly probable that American film magazines and journals helped to this purpose. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, *The Boy and the Convict* was forgotten for years until Graham Petrie rediscovered the film in 2001.

## ***Chapter 6. Great Expectations (1917), some comments on a lost film. Store Forventninger (1922), an attempt to restore the Danish golden years***

### ***Great Expectations through the silent era: The star system and the rise of Hollywood***

According to Graham Petrie (2001a: 7), a reliable estimate indicates that between 1897 and 1927 around one hundred films based on Charles Dickens' novels were made. This outstanding figure contrasts with Dickens' underestimated critical reputation. As noted in Chapter 1, the English writer received harsh criticism for incorporating popular or subliterate genres as melodramas, fairy stories or Gothic tales. His preference for the *grotesque* was rather misunderstood by the *cultivated* critics of his time, who aimed to position the novel as a high-art form. Paradoxically, the result was that, even though Dickens' works were read in vast numbers, scholars and critics neglected any serious attention to them. With the advent of the twentieth century, literary trends changed. As realism and naturalism vied for the spirit of Modernism and the avant-garde, Dickens remained overlooked. It was not until the 1940s when a series of articles claimed his reputation as worthy of study<sup>9</sup>.

Despite this, production companies regarded his novels as suitable to be adapted. What Malik (2012: 484) has denominated Dickens' "*capsular* narrative" (meaning a story which comprises several plots at different levels, flawlessly connected, but with their own rhythm, *beats*, climax and endings) was leveraged by many filmmakers, who found easy to *couple* and *decouple* autonomous stories from the novels to stick to the length limitations

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<sup>9</sup> Those articles were George Orwell's "Charles Dickens" (*Inside the Whale*, 1940), Humphry House's *The Dickens World* (1941) and Edmund Wilson's "Dickens: the Two Scrooges" (*The Wound and the Bow*, 1941). Frank Raymond Leavis (1948: 19) wrote that "Dickens was a great genius and [was] among the classics", albeit his genius "was that of a great entertainer, and he had for the most part no profounder responsibility as a creative artist".

of the filmstrip. By the end of the 1910s, however, much had changed in the film industry. The feature length film allowed filmmakers to tell larger and more complex stories. Closer framing, centred composition, natural acting, directional lighting, or continuity narrative and editing became primary standards of a quality product. And, almost as a natural consequence, moviegoers showed an increasing interest in getting more information about the actors who appeared on the screen.

It is in this context that two new adaptations of *Great Expectations* were filmed. The first one was a 50-minute silent film released on 8 January 1917. It was directed by the Italian filmmaker Robert G. Vignola, produced by Famous Players-Lasky and distributed by Paramount. The latter was a 90-minute silent film released on 28 August 1922. It was directed by the Danish director Anders W. Sandberg, and produced and distributed by the Nordisk Film Kompagni. Despite their releases occurred close together in time, the reasons behind the decision to produce them were rather away from each other.

According to the sources consulted, no copy from the 1917 version of *Great Expectations* is known to have survived<sup>10</sup>. Hence, the analysis of this film will be based on the information collected from magazines and journals of the time. In the case of the Danish *Store Forventninger*, they will be used the original script (see Annex 1 for a transcription and an English translation) as well as a copy of the film, both of them kindly provided by the Danish Film Institute.

## **Narrative discourse in *Store Forventninger* (A. W. Sandberg, 1922)**

*Store Forventninger* was one of the four adaptations from Dickens' novels produced by Nordisk at the beginning of the 1920s, including *Vor fælles Ven* (*Our Mutual Friend*, 1921), *David Copperfield* (1922) and *Lille Dorrit* (*Little Dorrit*, 1924). This six-reel, black-and-white silent film contained within no less than 225 title cards, of ten seconds on average,

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<sup>10</sup> I contacted with the American Film Institute, the Film Archive at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Library of Congress and the UCLA. Their kind staff confirmed me that the film was lost.

meaning that more than one third of the running time of the film is devoted to text. Most of these titles quote real passages from *Great Expectations*, and the purpose of addressing as much events and characters as possible pervades the film. As will be shown, the film offers a rather accurate account of the main episodes taking place in *Great Expectations*, although part of the action has been summarized and some minor events have been eluded.

## Narrative functions

*Store Forventninger* shows a rigorous concern for incorporating all the major events present in the novel. Hence, when one compares the cardinal functions of both narratives, the events that have been removed or transformed on purpose are easily recognized.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS (NOVEL)</i>	<i>STORE FORVENTNINGER (FILM)</i>
<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>	<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>
<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>	<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>
<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch</b> and second convict, Compeyson	<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch</b>
	<i>Joe and Orlick fight after Orlick offends Mrs Gargery</i>
<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham, Estella and Mr Jaggers</b>
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file	
Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek	
Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham	
Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice	
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
<b>Mrs Joe is brutally attacked</b> (apparently with convict's leg-iron)	

Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House	
Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman	
<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>
	<b>Mrs Joe is brutally attacked</b>
Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham	
Pip goes to London	
<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>	<b>Pip sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>
Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting	
Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket.	
Pip gets money from Jagers to set himself up	
Pip dines with Jagers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle).	
He meets Molly, Jagers's housekeeper (actual Estellas's mother)	
Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn	
Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)	
<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>	<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>
<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella</b>	<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella (flashback)</b>
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
Pip meets and escorts Estella in London	
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	
Mrs Joe dies	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
<b>Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age</b>	<b>Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age</b>
	<b>Mrs Joe dies</b>
<b>Pip takes Estella to Satis House</b>	
<b>She and Miss Havisham argue</b>	
	<i>Pip tells Biddy he will spell Orlick from the neighbourhood. Orlick hears the conversation.</i>
<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>	<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>

<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>
Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers	
Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape	
Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)	
<b>Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella</b>
<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>	<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>
Wemmick warns Pip of being watched	
Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape	
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	
Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)	
<b>Pip goes to deserted sluice house</b>	<b>Pip goes to deserted sluice house</b>
<b>Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house</b>	<b>Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house</b>
The scape plan for Magwitch fails	<i>Magwitch is arrested (absence of any scape plan).</i>
Pip loses fortune	
Magwitch is tried	
<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>	<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>
	Pip reproaches Miss Havisham her behaviour. Miss Havisham dies.
<b>Pip becomes ill</b>	<b>Pip becomes ill</b>
<b>Joe looks after Pip</b>	<b>Joe looks after Pip</b>
	<b>Pip gets a job at Herbert's company</b>
<b>Biddy and Joe get married</b>	<b>Biddy and Joe get married</b>
<b>Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.</b>	
<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House</b>	<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House</b>

*Store Forventninger* includes all the main characters present in *Great Expectations*, except for Compeyson and Molly. Remarkably, it is the only screen version where Orlick appears, despite his importance in the novel as a comparative character: he is a young

provincial man who does not inherit property and is, subsequently, made the object of Pip's superior denunciations (McFarlane, 2008).

The opening scenes follow the novel quite closely and recreate the marshes with a genuine sense of beauty. The film adheres to the Swedish tradition of using ethnology and geography as values of authenticity and seriousness (Bachmann, 2013: 47). It prevails the idea that nature, landscape and outside locations are guarantors of quality and realism. Appealing to nature as a symbol of Danish identity and culture, however, runs counter to the aim of emulating the British landscape in which the action is supposed to take place. As will be argued, the effect might have not had any impact over the British and the American audiences, to which the film was primarily intended. A huge expanse of mown fields, rocks and vegetation recreates the marshes in the first scene, showing a melancholic boy (Pip) who lies on his parent's tombstone. It is remarkable that only the name of Pip's mother (Georgiana Pirrip) is legible. Considering the care in set designing, this detail cannot be put down to chance. Given the prevailing systems of sex stratification in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, women had almost complete responsibility for child care and domestic tasks. They developed deeper interpersonal relationship with their children and symbolized the emotional connection both among the members of the family unit and between the family unit and the outside (i.e. relatives, friends, etc.). Therefore, it is expected that the loss of the mother caused a stronger trauma in the child (Beekink, Poppel & Liefbroer, 1999: 641-3). This loss is especially dramatic in Pip's case. Since he was very young when his parents passed away, the death of his mother means also that either no one was able to breast-feed him, or that he had to be weaned prematurely. This idea is perfectly summarized in Mrs Gargery's self-praise for having brought Pip up by hand. Despite in the novel this expression seems to indicate some kind of mistreatment, actually, "to be brought up by hand" was used, at that time, with the meaning of 'bottle-fed'. Both Mrs Gargery and Mr Pumblechook ask Pip to show gratitude for having been brought up by hand. They assume that it is more difficult to bottle-feed an infant than to nurse him. Notwithstanding, the mortality rate of orphan children brought up by hand was higher than of infants brought up by wet nurses (Phillips, 1846: 159-163). Although it is unlikely that the audience was able to make all these assumptions, it can be argued that the prevalence of the name of Pip's mother in the tombstone emphasizes the lack of maternal love in contrast to Mrs Gargery's rough character. Interestingly enough, when Pip returns to home after the first meeting with

Magwitch, and after being hardly scolded by Mrs Gargery, a new consideration of the motherly absence is conveniently suggested. While Pip's sister is preparing dinner, she sticks accidentally a couple of needles into her breast. After pulling the needles out, she squeezes her breast while her expression shows some kind of melancholy. Here, the breast-squeezing highlights her incapability to breast-feeding.

The first 16 minutes of *Store Forventninger* covers chapters one to six of *Great Expectations* (from the first meeting between Pip and Magwitch until the latter is arrested). In this time lapse, the cardinal functions of the film match those of the novel, as shown in the comparative table. Notwithstanding, it seems of importance to highlight that Joe is presented as a strong and protective character, rather than as the innocent, good-hearted and henpecked husband depicted by Dickens. After Orlick disrespects Mrs Gargery (he calls her "hag"), she asks Joe to defend her honour. In a scene of the film invention, the man fights against Orlick until the latter is almost dead. As the feature continues, it focuses on the Pip-Estella relationship. Pip's several visits to Satis House in the novel are here condensed into one scene running for almost five minutes. During the visit, Miss Havisham tells Pip that she was betrayed by her husband, but no more information is provided. Afterwards, she orders him to play cards with Estella. The young girl shows an arrogant and contradictory attitude: before leaving, she allows Pip to kiss her in her lips, but, subsequently, she makes him to cry about her. During the visit, Pip also meets Mr Jaggers. In the following sequence, indeed, the English lawyer brings Pip the news of his great expectations. It is remarkable that he receives this information before spending eight years of apprenticeship to Joe. This seems an error in the logical sequence of events, for it is hard to understand why Pip works several years as a blacksmith if he owns a large sum of money. It is assumed that the film wants the spectator to believe that Miss Havisham is the mysterious benefactor. That would explain why Mr Jagger's announce of Pip's great expectations takes place immediately after Pip's visit to Satis House, although this inconsistency, from a narratological perspective, can be justified in no way. Following this event, Mrs Gargery is brutally attacked.

After the 8-year ellipsis, the spectator meets Pip again, who has become a young well-dressed gentleman living in London. He shares room with Herbert Pocket, although Herbert's role becomes marginal compared to the novel. The relationship is reduced to Pip's financial assistance to help Herbert with a commerce business. This scene takes place on his twenty-first birthday, when Mr Jaggers informs Pip that he will be paid five



hundred pounds a year until his benefactor appears. Pip's happiness after helping Herbert turns into sorrow because of his sister's death. According to Joe, before passing away, Mrs Gargery recovered her consciousness and whispered Pip's name with a smile in her lips. The following scene shows Biddy flirting with Pip and Pip's purpose to drive Orlick away from the neighbourhood. A jealous Orlick spies on them and swear to kill Pip.

Pip goes back to London, where he keeps on courting Estella, but she announces him she will marry Bentley Drummle. Magwitch reappears and reveals himself as Pip's benefactor. Nevertheless, since there have been no sense of Pip's having become a proud snob, the climatic return of the convict loses power. Compeyson's absence also weakens his role, since the connection between Miss Havisham's jilting and Magwitch's imprisonment is broken, as much as it is the daughter-father relationship between the convict and Estella. The film does not provide any information about why he is imprisoned, so it is reasonable that Pip does not show any shame when he finds out the nature of his property. Orlick discovers that Pip hides a convict, lays a trap for him and tries to kill him. However, Pip is rescued by his friends Herbert and Startop. When he returns to London, Magwitch has been arrested and is seriously ill at the prison's hospital (contrary to the novel, the film provides no information about any escape plan or any detention). He thanks him for never having failed him and dies afterwards. Then, Pip visits Miss Havisham to tell her that "none of your tears can restore me". Miss Havisham begs Pip's pardon and sets fire to her wedding dress by accident. Pip tries to rescue her, but she dies. It is this event (and not Magwitch's death) what causes Pip's breakdown. Joe, despite having being neglected by Pip, comes to look after him. Interestingly enough, Pip shows neither remorse nor guilt feelings for his behaviour, and after he is recovered, Joe just leaves. A prosperous Herbert returns then to offer Pip a position in his company in appreciation for his financial aid. Pip goes back to the forge and discovers that Joe and Biddy have just got married. Biddy's loving attitude towards Pip (she kisses him on his cheek, with sweetness, several times) conveying the impression that she is in love with him. However, the purpose of this scene lacks any kind of logic. No preceding or subsequent event connects with this plot, which emerges out of motivation. The film does not seem interested in exploring it, and the audience may reasonably wonder for its supposed effect on Pip.

Following Dickens' novel, Pip, who still thinks of Estella, decides to visit the ruins of Satis House. Flashbacks of their first meeting are inserted while he goes across the

mansion to run into Estella. She regrets her former behaviour and asks Pip to forgive her. Pip kisses her in her mouth and asks her to leave the past behind, which suggests a *happy ending* for the young couple.

## The narrating instance

As stated above, *Store Forventninger* is a silent, black-and-white film containing 225 titles. By the 1920s, filmmakers were concerned with the importance to provide the audience with suitable narrative information, either presenting the story action or focusing on characters psychology. These dialogue titles (Bordwell & Thompson, 1994: 44), when describing the action taking place in the *diegesis*, work as the *voice* of the narrator. Ultimately, they refer to a narrative instance who is placed outside the story world and who narrates the events as an observer. Despite characters' *voices* are *heard* when the titles reproduce their words, the point of view remains external, meaning that the film is characterized by a *non-focalized* narrative, or narrative with *zero focalization*. Similarly to *The Boy and the Convict*, the narrative instance is extra-heterodiegetic and can be identified with the *image maker*. Albeit new film elements (camera movements, camera angles, camera shots, editing techniques...) had been developed by the time the film was released, technical limitations, especially concerning the impossibility to reproduce the voice of the actors, prevented filmmakers to explore other types of focalization.

## Narrator

*Store Forventninger* uses an omniscient narrator who, as an instance of ubiquitous entity, is placed outside the *diegesis*, from where (s)he operates as the unique witness of the *factual narrative*. It is a narrator of the *heterodiegetic* type. (S)he knows the story, and so, decides how to arrange the incidents, that is, how to construct the *telling narrative* through the *narrating process*.

What makes the *image maker* an omniscient narrator and not a mere objective observer? The fact that (s)he not only has more information than characters have, but knows their inner thoughts. The film uses subjective inserts to make the audience *enter*

*into* Pip's mind. Subjective inserts are "interpolated shots representing, within the diegesis, an image representing a memory, a dream or hallucination clearly marked as subjective" (Stam, Burgoyne & Flitterman-Lewis, 2005: 43). The first instance occurs after the first encounter between Pip and Magwitch. The convict has threaten the boy to death if he does not bring him some food and a file. That night, Pip has a nightmare in which Magwitch is cooking his heart at the campfire while his corpse lies on the ground. First, a shot shows Pip as he is sleeping in his bed. Then, the film uses a fade-to-white to move to the marshes, where the convict roasts Pip's heart. Afterwards, there is a new fade-to-white to come back to Pip's bedroom. The little child wakes up very nervous and with heavy breathing. As he notices his heartbeats, he calms down and goes to sleep again. In this example, dissolves are used to link two ideas together by blending one image into another.

Almost at the end of the story, when Pip gets sick after Miss Havisham's decease, the film uses this resource again. A close-up shot shows Pip's face. Then, a fade-to-black is used to move to a sort of dark void where different characters, relevant to Pip, cross the scene. Pip recreates scenes of his own invention. The first image shows Magwitch behind the cell's bars. Then, Pip envisions himself together with Estella, first as adults, then as children, when he evokes the kiss he gave to her during his first visit to Satis House. Afterwards, Mrs Gargery, Biddy and Magwitch (who wears a striped suit) appear. Mrs Gargery and Biddy look like very good friends. When Magwitch comes, Mrs Gargery hugs him. He offers her a black, little package, the same he offered Pip when he revealed himself as his benefactor (and that Pip rejected). In Pip's dream, on the contrary, Mrs Gargery accepts the package. Magwitch leaves the scene while Pip's sister and Biddy launch banknotes into the air. Overlapping this scene, there is a shot of adult Estella together with Bentley Drummle and Pip himself.

Whereas there is no identification between the camera and Pip, it is noticeable that Pip is the focal character. He is constantly placed at the centre of each scene, meaning that the action revolves around him. Several close-ups of his face are used to show his feelings and emotions, particularly for sadness. Additionally, the subjective camera is used at some points, allowing the audience to see through Pip's eyes. Genette (1980: 191) has rightly drawn attention to the fact that "the commitment as to focalization is not necessarily steady over the whole length of a narrative". In those sections where the camera acts as Pip's eyes, although very short, it is still possible to talk about *internal*

*focalization*. Due to the impossibility to exteriorize the hero's interior life through the camera, this implies a restriction of field much greater than that of the novel. In other words, the identification narrator-hero would depend so much on an exclusive devotion to the material world, which lacks the dimension of psychological correspondence.

These changes in focalization are isolated within a coherent context where a *non-focalized* narrative prevails. They have to be analysed as momentary infractions of the code which governs that context, and the reader must conclude that the narrator in *Store Forventninger* is, overall, omniscient. It is, otherwise, a reliable narrator. As argued in the analysis of *The Boy and the Convict*, the identification between narrator and *image maker* makes of him/her an authoritarian figure. There are several examples where the narrator reveals information to the spectator that Pip does not know. (S)he shows that Orlick is secretly hidden to hear the conversation between Pip and Bidy, or that he is spying Magwitch when the latter returns to visit Pip. These confidences give the audience more information than the protagonist has and, therefore, create some expectations which can be fulfilled or violated. Ultimately, it is in the very nature of suspense the possibility that things could turn out differently (Abbott, 2008: 55), even in the case of an adaptation which is, supposedly, *faithful* to the source text.

In those sections characterized by *internal focalization*, where Pip orients the narration as a *homodiegetic* narrator, the field of vision is restricted. Pip's gaze, cleared of any mediation (words, feelings or thoughts), becomes a mere witness of the outside world. It is from this perspective that it might be defined as a discordant narrator. However, these sections are too short to be relevant in the general narrative.

To conclude, concerning the functions of the narrator, the omniscient narrator of *Store Forventninger* connects to a narrative function, typical of any narrator. When Pip works as a narrator, it prevails a directing function. Namely, he compels the audience to look towards a specific direction.

## Temporality and order

The chronological order of the events taking place in *Store Forventninger* follows quite closely the one in *Great Expectations*. There are some minor changes that it is worth pointing out, although they do not affect the broad thrust of the plot: they do not entail any turning point or deviation from the narrative discourse of the novel.

According to *Great Expectations*, when Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument at the forge, Pip is already working as a blacksmith's apprentice. That is, it occurs several years after the first Pip-Magwitch encounter. This confrontation drives Orlick to attack Mrs Gargery, just before Mr Jaggers brings news of Pip's great expectations. The film alters this arrangement. The first scene takes place between Magwitch's arrest and Pip's visit to Satis House (probably just a few days after Pip meets the convict at the churchyard), while Orlick's attack occurs once Pip has become a gentleman. These variations affects, consequently, the placement of Mrs Gargery's death, which in the film happens later than in the novel. Another change affects Pip's decision to join Herbert at Clarriker & Co. According to the novel, it takes place after Pip attends Joe and Biddy's wedding and before he revisits Satis House. The film arranges this event before the wedding.

Closely akin to variations in the arrangement of events is the use of the flashback technique. *Store Forventninger* properly uses it either to remind the spectator of an event that has occurred before, or to narrate something that took place in the past, but was not told for some reason. The first flashback appears after Pip moves to London. A letter from Estella announces that she is coming to the city and asks him to escort her. Following her instructions, the couple meet the following day at some coffee shop. Estella springs on him: "Childish man, what happened the first time you tried to kiss me? Can't you remember?" Pip denies, but the omniscient narrator confesses that he "remembers everything, even his last visit to Miss Havisham". A flashback introduces Pip's memory, which had been omitted until that moment.

A second flashback is inserted to explain how Herbert and Startop find out that Pip was at the limekiln. The *analepsis* shows both friends coming into Pip's room and finding the note where Pip informs that he is visiting Miss Havisham. The scene fades in a close-up of the hand written letter. Again, the spectator is provided with information that had not been shown before.

Backstory is powerfully used after Magwitch's decease with the intention to create a new metaphorical connection. Pip remembers the moment he gave the convict some food and a

file, which the film recreates by inserting that had been previously used: the convict trying to break his shackles. This image links with Pip's exclamation "He is free from chains!", meaning that death has, at last, set Magwitch free.

This film element appears again at the end of the film, when Pip visits the ruins of Satis House. A fade-in-black links to a close-up of Pip's child face, with tears in the eyes, which evokes his first visit to the mansion. A new fade-in-black brings the audience to the present. Pip re-meets Estella in the garden. While walking together, she asks if he remembers his first visit; subsequently, another flashback recalls that meeting, suggesting that Pip, in fact, remembers it. As the previous one, this flashback does not add new information to the spectator, for the scene evoked is a repetition.

One aspect might call the attention of the reader: as noted, some of these flashbacks are used to evoke Pip's remembrance. However, they are focalized from the narrator's perspective, meaning that they are artificially constructed from the extra-heterodiegetic point of view of the narrative agency, rather than being, in fact, Pip's real memories.

## Narrative rhythm

In the early days of the cinema, filmmakers were constrained (among other issues) by the technical limitations of the new medium, so any attempt to adapt a whole novel had a disappointing result. It was clear, when analysing the narrative discourse in *The Boy and the Convict*, the difficulty of comprising a long story in a few minutes, and how selectivity in plot and characters was regarded as inevitable. Any comparison with the source text is mostly shoehorned, and most of the conclusions need to be taken cautiously. On the contrary, by 1922, the spread and consolidation of the feature-length film allowed filmmakers to tell longer stories. As noted above, *Store Forventninger* presents a large number of cardinal functions, many of them coinciding with those included in *Great Expectations*. From this perspective, the comparison between both narrative discourses allows more prolific results. The table below is used to identify possible variations in the narrative rhythm of the film as against the novel.

<p><i>Pip and the convict (00:34 – 16:14)</i>. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict.</p>	<p><i>Pip and the convict (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42)</i>. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.</p>
<p><i>Orlick's offence (16:14 – 20:50)</i>. Temporal break (one year) Orlick offends Mrs Gargery. Joe fights with Orlick.</p>	
<p><i>At Satis House (20:50 – 34:27)</i>. Temporal break (a few days or some weeks). Pip visits Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>
<p></p>	<p><i>The blacksmith boy (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>
<p><i>Great expectations (34:27 – 37:18)</i>. Temporal break (some weeks or months). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>	<p><i>Great expectations (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160)</i>. Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>
<p><i>The blacksmith boy (37:18 – 37:32)</i>. Temporal break (eight years). Pip works as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>	
<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (37:32 – 46:30)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>	<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>
<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (46:30 – 52:39)</i>. Temporal (some months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>	<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285)</i>. Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>
<p><i>End of great expectations (52:39 – 1:03:16)</i>. Temporal (half a year) and spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. We will call it</p>	<p><i>End of great expectations (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421)</i>. Temporal (several years) and spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>

<p><i>Attempt of murder (1:03:16 – 1:16:37)</i>. Temporal (some weeks) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert and Startop save him.</p>	<p><i>Attempt of murder (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433)</i>. Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.</p>
<p><i>Magwitch's decease (1:16:37 – 1:18:53)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Magwitch dies at the hospital's prison.</p>	<p><i>Magwitch's decease (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.</p>
<p><i>Miss Havisham's decease (1:18:53 – 1:23:02)</i>. Pip visits Miss Havisham for the last time. She sets fire to her dress by accident and, eventually, dies.</p>	<p><i>Return to the marshes (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480)</i>. As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.</p>
<p><i>Pip's recovery (1:23:02 – 1:27:00)</i>. Temporal break (a very long time). Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. (Temporal break [a few days]) Herbert offers him a position in his company. Pip accepts it.</p>	<p><i>Clarriker and Co (Chapter LVIII, p. 480)</i>. Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).</p>
<p><i>Return to the marshes (1:27:00 – 1:37:00)</i>. Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Joe and Biddy inform Pip that they are going to get married. Pip meets Estella.</p>	<p><i>Second return to the marshes (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484)</i>. Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.</p>

What stands out from the table above is that the film devotes almost the same amount of time to narrate the three stages of Pip's expectations. The first part covers 37 minutes (around 38 per cent) of the running time, while the second part is 36 minutes long (around 37 per cent) and, the third one, 34 minutes long (around 35 per cent). This result is remarkable, for no other film adaptation keeps a balance among the three stages. On the contrary, most of them privilege the first stage and, to some extent, the third one, while the second part is usually outlined.



As noted in the previous section, the temporal succession of events is similar in the novel and in the film, what facilitates the arrangement of an indicative chronology to highlight variations in the narrative speed:

Pip and the convict: around 16 minutes for about one and a half day.	Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.
Orlick's offence: around 4 minutes for about 4 minutes.	
At Satis House: around 14 minutes for a few hours.	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.
Great Expectations: around 3 minutes for some hours.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
The blacksmith boy: around 20 seconds for eight years.	
The Londoner gentleman: around 9 minutes for some months.	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
Mrs Gargery's funeral: around 6 minutes for some hours.	Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
End of great expectations: around 11 minutes for some months.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
Attempt of murder: around 13 minutes for some weeks.	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
Magwitch's decease: around 2 minutes for about 2 minutes.	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
Miss Havisham's decease: around 5 minutes for about 5 minutes.	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.

Pip's recovery: around four minutes for several days.	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
Return to the marshes: around ten minutes for a few hours.	Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

Following this, specific deviations or narrative movements concerning the four canonical forms (ellipsis, pause, scene and summary) will be explored.

*Ellipsis*

There is an explicit ellipsis which comes thirty-seven minutes from the beginning. An intertitle introduces it, observing that Pip has spent eight years working as a blacksmith at Joe's forge. Subsequently, a new intertitle reveals that Pip has now turned into a well-dressed gentleman. A medium shot of little Pip fades out while another medium shot portraying adult Pip fades up. In a few seconds, the dissolve shows the passage of time. In *Great Expectations*, Dickens dedicates thirty-four pages to this episode, which, in contrast, covers just four years in Pip's life.

The episode concerning Magwitch's arrest is also omitted. The convict is already in prison by the time Pip goes back to London after Orlick's attempt to murder him. Similarly, there are other gaps, named implicit ellipsis, which are not clearly indicated. In most cases, they occur between two scenes. As an instance of this statement, it should be mentioned the numerous undetermined temporal break. For example, after the fight between Joe and Orlick, and before Mr Pumblechook asks Pip to visit Satis House; or after Magwitch reveals himself as Pip's benefactor and before Orlick's attempt to kill Pip.

*Pause*

As already stated, Scandinavian films capitalized on landscape and outside locations as guarantors of quality and realism. The opening of the film adheres to this tradition, taking pleasure in the use of long shots of the marshes, which adds a sense of descriptive pause.

## Summary

*Store Forventninger* harnesses the potential of this resource to comprise the events taking place in the episode *At Satis House*. As noted above, *Great Expectations* dedicates fifty-six pages to cover a period of several months, in which little Pip goes to Satis House every week, according to the story. The film summarizes the different visits described in the novel in a single one. This scene lasts around fourteen minutes of the narrative time, and amounts to a few hours of the story time.

## Scene

Scenes usually precede or follow summaries to create contrast. This resource favours the deepest moments, that is, episodes where narrative and story times are equivalent. To name a few, the episode concerning Joe and Orlick's fight (*Orlick's offence*), or Pip's last visit to Miss Havisham (*Miss Havisham's decease*), are two examples.

## **Political, economic and sociocultural background**

The First World War marked the evolution of the film industry during the 1910s and the 1920s. This event helped to consolidate the hegemonic power of the American cinema, which slowly began to be known as Hollywood. Hollywood cinema formulated and standardized classical conventions to operate within a set of assumptions about filmmaking. Its narrative system was consolidated as the *norm*, while it developed different modes of production, distribution and exhibition in a constant search for maximum efficiency, predictability and novelty. In contrast, most European corporations had to cease production or faced export restrictions. By the end of the decade, Hollywood achieved a leading position that overshadowed the European modes of representation. Notwithstanding, the film industry underwent changes in business and narrative model that cannot be explained only by the First World War context. Rather, economic fluctuations and new social tastes and concerns were key factors deserving further consideration.

## Production, distribution and exhibition systems

From its creation in March 1908 on, the Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC) attempted to monopolize the American market through a patent pooling system. This trust controlled the supply of raw film, motion picture cameras, projectors and other devices. Additionally, it came to licensing agreements with distributors and exhibitors, and collected royalties from all sectors of the industry, i.e., manufacturers of equipment, film producers and theatres.

The MPPC strategy was oriented toward vertical integration of production, distribution and exhibition branches in order to maximize profits. So far, practices as subrenting, projection of damaged pictures or importation of foreign films had allowed exhibitors to offer varied movie theatres programs at low cost. From then on, the MPPC promoted internal competition by establishing a uniform rental rate for all the licensed films (Anderson, 1985: 143; *see also* Glover Smith & Selzer, 2015: 83). Quality became the foremost element, so manufacturers concentrated on offering upgraded products.

In April 1910, the Patents Company formed the General Film Company (GFC) to distribute its licensed films. “Within twenty months, [GFC] acquired fifty-eight of the sixty-nine rental exchanges” (Anderson, 1985: 145). GFC refused to supply films to minor exchanges and employed other tactics as price-cutting, discrimination, threats or intimidations to become the sole distributor of motion pictures<sup>11</sup> (Vaughan, 1925: 55). All the former rentals were driven out of business except for the New York Rental Film Company. As a counterpart, GFC’s control over distribution standardized print quality and enforced the return of rented films. Exhibitors enjoyed fixed and definite programs that could be advertised in advance, were furnished with the films and special pictures they required at the time designated, and avoided problems with repeaters<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> More information on this can be found at: *US v. MPPC, transcript of record in six volumes* (New York: Appeal Printing Co., 1915), vol. 1, pp. 475 – 486 and vol. 2, pp. 756 – 757. Available at: <http://mediahistoryproject.org/earlycinema/>

<sup>12</sup> More information on this can be found at: District Court of the United States, for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, *The United States of America, Petitioner v. The Motion Picture Patents Company, et al.*, defendants (henceforce *US v. MPPC*), transcript of record in six volumes (New York: Appeal Printing Co., 1915), vol. 4. George Cohen, Record, pp. 1929 – 1940. William F. Kertscher, Record, pp. 1940 – 1944. Adolf Bauernfreund, Record, pp. 1944 – 1947. Harry Marsey, Record, pp. 1997 – 2004. Charles F. Haring,

Despite the MPPC's efforts to monopolize the domestic market, those companies that had been excluded from or had refused to be part of the Trust joined to compete against it and formed the International Projecting and Producing Company (IPPC) (Segrave, 2004: 11; *see also* Glover Smith & Selzer, 2015: 83). Manufacturers violated the patents on cameras and projectors, and imported European raw film. In May 1910, the leading independent producers Carl Laemmle (Independent Moving Picture Company) and Adam Kessel and Charles Bauman (New York Motion Picture Company) formed the Motion Picture Distributing and Sales Company (MPDSC), which supplied nearly all non-MPPC motion pictures to independent exhibitors and to those who mixed both licensed and unlicensed films. The year after, Eastman Kodak modified its exclusive contract with the MPPC to sell its raw film stock to unlicensed producers.

Deeply focused on investigating patent violations and issuing injunctions against the infringers, the MPPC became incapable of reacting against a constantly developing market. In 1912, lost a patent infringement suit against the independents for the first time (Gil, 2008: 94). On October 1, 1915, in *United States v. Motion Picture Patents Company*, a Pennsylvania District Court sentenced that the Trust's practices were illegal (Whitman, 1938: 190; *see also* Conant, 1960: 20). Three years later, the Patents Company was dissolved: some of its members went out of business; others remained, but they were wiped out by the strong competition.

What was the situation in Europe at that time? Whereas the American film industry was immersed in internal battles and court proceedings, during the early 1910s the European cinema enjoyed good health. Specifically in Denmark, the film industry reached its apogee from 1910 to 1914. The *golden years* of the Danish film industry were led by the Nordisk Films Kompagni, founded by Ole Olsen in January 1906. Olsen capitalized on the vertical integration practice to control the production, distribution and exhibition of his films (Freiburg, 1998: 45). The Nordisk dominated the domestic market for many years and established itself as one of the world's largest film companies by 1913 (Christensen, 1999: 12). Olsen hired the best actors and actresses of the Danish stage for

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Record, 2038 – 2051. Matthew Hansen, Record, pp. 2052 – 2057. Abraham Greenburg, Record, pp. 2100 – 2106. Edward H. Super, Record, pp. 2107 – 2111. William P. Herbst, Record, pp. 2300 – 2306. Joseph P. Morgan, Record, pp. 2307 – 2315. These records have been digitized and made available through the Media History Digital Library's Early Cinema Collection. Available at: <http://mediahistoryproject.org/earlycinema/>

his firm, contacted a group of professional writers with solid literary careers and had intuition to discover the talent of promising directors (Monty, 1973: 34). Another strategy was to produce only feature length films, whereas the rest of the European production companies still mixed both one-reel and multi-reel films. This decision allowed the Nordisk to gain a lead over other competitors, for it could sell abroad many prints of its films (Engberg, 1990: 7). Apart from cultivating innovative genres (as the erotic melodrama), Olsen's company stood out because of the form and the style of its films. Proper use of lights and shadows to create lighting effects; natural acting instead of exaggerated gestures; realist interior settings and actual urban locations; or beautiful and striking picture compositions were some of the characteristics which often made Nordisk's films superior to the foreign movies of the period (Monty, 1973: 38-9; *see also* Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 63). In contrast, most Danish companies disappeared before the First World War because their films lacked enough quality and distribution.

With the outbreak of the First World War, Denmark's key position allowed the country to provide films to markets like Germany and Russia, which were cut off from their usual suppliers (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 64). However, in 1916, Germany banned film imports and established the Universum Film AG Company (better known as UFA) one year later. At the same time, the allied forces, claiming that Germany had some hidden interest in Danish films, blacklisted them (Engberg, 1990: 8). The Russian Revolution also eliminated the possibility of exporting films to that country. Nordisk was almost totally unable to export films, while other companies had gained the leadership in the Scandinavian market, to which Olsen had relinquished before the war. Although it was still possible to distribute films abroad, it had to be done through the major firms' distribution branches, meaning that the main profits went to the already-existing production companies (Christensen, 1999: 16-17).

After the First World War, the number of films produced in Denmark had considerably reduced. Besides, a vast number of prints remained unsold because the audience showed preference for the American highbrow movies rather than the *old-fashioned* melodramas. The Nordisk was particularly affected by this decline, turning into a position of almost non-existence by the 1920s (Christensen, 1999: 17). In an attempt to regain the foreign market (especially, United Kingdom and United States), the company produced a series of four films based on Charles Dickens' novels: *Vor fælles Ven* (*Our Mutual Friend*, 1921), *David Copperfield* (1922), *Store Forventninger* (*Great Expectations*,

1922) and *Lille Dorrit* (*Little Dorrit*, 1924). The success of the film *Klovnene* (*The Clown*, 1917) in a moment in which Nordisk's international position was increasingly marginalized allowed A. W. Sandberg to be chosen for directing these adaptations. Moreover, he was, according to Monty (1973: 44), the favourite filmmaker with both Danish audience and critics.

The Nordisk spared no effort to make these films successful, but the investment largely exceeded the benefits. Despite they did well at the Danish box office, the Dickens' adaptations gained neither the British nor the American market (Engberg, 1990: 10). Dickens' high popularity and reputation was not enough to reach the Nordisk's purpose. Neither were the carefully designed sets and chosen locations, nor the quality acting, sufficient to attract the international attention.

While the European film industry collapsed over the First World War, United States took the leadership of the business. Both licensed and unlicensed producers started to make multi-reel films as early as 1909, probably influenced by European filmmakers. More and more, the term *feature* came to be associated with longer films (four to six reels in length) programmed in the more prestigious theatres. The mixture of short films (one to three reels in length), projected in nickelodeons like clockwork on a daily schedule, was in decline (Koszarski, 1994: 63). By 1915, the feature-length film had almost swallowed up the short film.

Over the 1910s, a new phenomenon emerged: the star system. Actors began to appear in enough films so as to be recognized by the audience, who showed an increasing interest in them. At least, two implications result from this fact. On the one hand, it promoted changes in shooting techniques. The camera came closer to show actors' facial expression, although extreme close-ups were still difficult to accept. Pantomime and exaggerated gesticulation were gradually replaced by restraint and natural acting. The direct look at the camera became a taboo for the sake of realism and the audience's absorption into the diegesis (Hansen, 1991: 37). Besides, the use of *point-of-view* shots and *shot/reverse* shots increased.

On the other hand, the star system phenomenon was regarded as a promotional device. It is true that most MPPC producers, fearing that fame would allow actors to demand higher salaries, continued advertising films by brand name. However, independents saw the opportunity to capitalize on their commercial value, so they started to brand actors in their motion pictures. This is the case of the 1917 version of *Great*

*Expectations*. It was produced by Famous Players-Lasky Corporation (which involved both Adolph Zukor's Famous Players Film and Jesse L. Lasky's Feature Play production companies), directed by Robert G. Vignola, and co-starred by Jack Pickford and Louise Huff.

Mr Pickford was the brother of one the Hollywood's most loved and admired actress, Mary Pickford. She was considered the *Queen of the movies* during the 1910s and the 1920s. Her popularity was so immense that the surname Pickford became a lure for both the audience and the producers. Hence, many doors were opened to young Jack Pickford, although his talent would blur with an arrogant character and problems with drugs and alcoholism (Foster, 2000: 243-264). Louise Huff became a popular actress during the silent era as well. Pickford and Huff had already worked together in the film *Seventeen* (1916) directed also by Vignola. Both actors received positive reviews. *Moving Picture World* defined as "inimitable" Jack Pickford's impersonation of the young hopeful of seventeen, while Louise Huff was said to be "pleasing, prettily dressed and dainty" (McDonald 1916: 997). Similarly, a report from *The New York Clipper* stated that Jack Pickford had been "ideally chosen" for the leading role whereas Miss Huff gave "a most creditable performance" ("Feature Film Reports. *Seventeen*", 1916: 33). One year later, Vignola counted on both actors again to perform the roles of Pip and Estella in *Great Expectations*. *Moving Picture World* ("Manufacturers' Advanced Notes", 1916: 1664) announced that Pickford was "very busy learning how to sweep floors" and Huff was "rapidly developing into a first-class heart-breaker" in preparation for their respective roles. According to some reviews, Pickford had done "one of the greatest work of his career" ("Notes of the Trade", 1916: 1986). He was "like Mary [Pickford] in gain and gestures", while Huff's performance was defined as "all that the great novelist pictured" (Howard, 1917: 1203). A review in *Motion Picture News* pointed out that Pickford made "a fine Cruikshank Pip" and Huff was "a very winsome Estella" (Camp, 1917: 433). George W. Graves called the attention on the strong work of the actors, meaning that Pickford and Huff both "delineate the emotional moments with fine realism and deserve much laud" (Graves, 1917: 153-4). *Variety* reported that Miss Huff was "a charming Estella" and Pickford as Pip "didn't seem to have the pip at all" ("Film Reviews", 1917: 26). Similarly, *Motion Picture Magazine* stated that Pickford was "likable self in the role of Pip" and Huff was "quite as charming as Estella as you would expect her to be" ("Photoplay Reviews", 1917: 13). In conclusion, all the reviewers coincided in praising Pickford and



Huff's performances. However, none of them were influential industry figures, while the rest of the cast members were bit part or contract players, which suggests that the film was a low-budget production made to fill the company's pipeline (Hammond, 2015: 92).

In contrast, it is likely that the film was widely distributed and exhibited. Paramount, the distribution company, was known for using block booking and blind bidding practices. This rental system consisted in offering films in groups sufficient to fill the screens of an exhibitor for an entire season. Most of these pictures were yet to be produced, so there was no prior knowledge of either the plot or the actors. When advance information about a film was made available, theatre owners were *encouraged* to take less attractive titles if they wanted to receive the ones that they preferred. Otherwise, the price per a single movie was approximately fifty per cent above the price in block (Conant, 1960: 23-7). Therefore, even if theatre owners were not much interested on *Great Expectations*, they were probably forced to rent it in order to get more attractive titles. Despite the film was re-released in 1919, this cannot be taken as a proof of popularity. After the First World War, Famous Players-Lasky moved towards the production of sexual comedy manners in response to a change in the audience's taste, and abandoned the Victorian morality of films such as *Great Expectations* (Hammond, 2015: 92-3).

## Cinema audience

Over the first decades of the film industry, the location where films were consumed was more determining than the film itself. Motion pictures were only one part of the show of varieties offered by vaudeville theatres, nickelodeons, amusement parks, penny arcade or small town opera houses. Hence, for most exhibitors, the quality of the film made no difference at the box office. The programme changed so often that any unsuccessful film was quickly replaced by another before viewers' negative comments could spread by word of mouth (Koszarski, 1994: 35). Additionally, movie going was considered a social activity in itself, so the kind of film became a minor aspect. "For many people in many places for a very long span of film history, the cumulative social experience of habitual or even occasional movie-going mattered more than any particular film they might have seen" (Allen, 2006: 59).

In the early days of cinema, exhibitors aimed to make of movie theatres a public sphere where people from different class, gender, or age were welcomed. Somehow, cinema became a democratic social instrument, not because there was an interest in breaking social barriers, but to obtain major profits. For example, owners were interested in presenting picture houses as heterosexual establishments where men and women could share their leisure time. By attracting a female audience, they also sought to attract the whole family (Jancovich, Faire & Stubbings, 2003: 42). Indeed, children were also an important target since, as Doherty (1999: 152) has rightly pointed out, they acted as the *hidden persuaders* in the family's movie-going decisions.

Soon, the interest of film exhibitors turned toward the middle and upper classes, which could afford highest admissions and gave respectability to the cinema. However, the wealthiest viewers refused to share their seats with labourers and immigrants, mainly because of health and moral reasons. Furthermore, the *élite* rhetoric of the period categorized children, women and immigrants as *the other*, which enclosed both feelings of vulnerability and danger. They were perceived as innocent and inferiors, but also as a potential threat to the hegemonic public sphere of the adult, native born males (Pearson & Uricchio, 1999: 66). The dichotomy was resolved due to spatial segregation, either because people went to different cinemas, or because they were separated by the ticket prices or by the design of the establishment (Jancovich, Faire & Stubbings, 2003: 47).

Early movie theatres had paid small attention to comfort, ventilation or decoration. The projection equipment was usually antiquated and run by people with little knowledge or experience. Distortion and vibration of the image was a permanent feature, and formal musical accompaniment was often compiled entirely from public domain stock melodies (Koszarski, 1994: 12, 43). Nevertheless, as the audience grew and the feature length film became the norm, there was a wave of theatre construction. Albeit some of them were modest film houses, the motion picture palace typified the age (Gomery, 1985: 123). Distinctive facades, vast and opulent lobbies, comfortable seats, better-quality screens, fireproof projection booths and air conditioners were some of the commodities that these luxury movie theatres offered to the audience. Additionally, motion palaces used to coincide with first-run theatres, meaning that they showed films that had been recently released. Older and smaller theatres, or movie houses placed in less desirable locations projected films during their second or third run. As noted above, the largest studio-distributors tried to concentrate in their hands the largest majority of first-run theatres.

Thus, they could charge higher admissions which, presumably, only the middle and upper classes could afford. In other words, they got more profitability while assuring the assistance of a *respectable* audience. Exhibitors advertised their first-run theatres by using tags as “high class audiences”, “catering to students and better classes”, “catering to middle class audiences”, “very high class patronage”, “downtown house”, “catering to a critical clientele” or “residence house catering to the better classes”<sup>13</sup>. Of course, none of them was catered to working class or immigrant audiences.

While the audience grew and new theatres came up, American reformers denounced films’ negative effects on children (from health problems of hygiene, eye damage or danger of fire, to ethical matters of sexual immorality or criminality), as well as the need to *domesticate* immigrants in traditional values, habits and rules. Numerous local censorship boards were created to determine what films were moral or instructive to be exhibited. The major of New York revoked all motion picture theatre licenses in December 1908. As a response, the New York State Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors asked the organization People’s Institute to create a regulatory agency to review and censor all films projected by the Association members. The result was the establishment of the National Board of Censorship of Motion Pictures in June 1909, which operated successfully for a few years. However, after 1914, it was faced with harsh criticism from different social agents, which accused it of taking decisions influenced by trade interests and advocated for a state censorship. In 1915, the regulatory agency changed its name to the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures and started acting as a mere classifier (Fisher, 1975: 145-150). State censorship began to spread while the Supreme Court of several states sentenced that motion pictures were a mere form of entertainment, generated for profit, and therefore could not be protected under the constitutional guarantee of free speech (Wertheimer, 1993: 158; *see also* Butters, 2007: 43).

Censorship was also debated in journals and magazines<sup>14</sup>. Reviews published on journals and magazines helped to promote moral and educational films and criticized

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<sup>13</sup> This kind of tags appeared on the magazine *Motography*, in a section named “What the picture did for me”. There, exhibitors commented the audience’s response to one film. After that, the journal added the name of the theatre that the exhibitor managed, as well as its target.

<sup>14</sup> On this matter, an anonymous exhibitor commented that “where there’s no scandal there’s no limelight and no advantage. But isn’t it strange how the censors do love to boost the lurid film”. Another one complaint about “the fallacy of censorship”, claiming that a commissioner in Alabama “was overruled

those of uncertain decency. Concerning Famous Players' *Great Expectations*, a film critic affirmed in *Motion Picture News* that "is a very good picture for Saturday and Sunday bookings, because Pip and Estella are children and because Dickens is read in all schools" (Camp, 1917: 433-4). If the film was suitable for young spectators, then, all family members could attend the movies. The author also softened the negative connotations attached to Magwitch's character by claiming that he is "not so very bad after all". Similarly, another reviewer commented in *Motography* (Graves, 1917: 153-4) that *Great Expectations* was a film that people were "sure to recommend it to their friends as something entirely worthwhile", adding that it was "a production of real 'class'". As in the previous example, Graves demystified the convict's role by describing him as a "poor criminal, who has at least shown one strain of noble ness". *Moving Picture World* argued that *Great Expectations* was "educational and send the young folks to the library to get the whole story" (Howard, 1917: 1203). The magazine *Variety* ("Film reviews", 1917: 26) affirmed that *Great Expectations* "should prove a money maker almost in any class of house", while for *Motion Picture Magazine* was "one of the five-reel plays of the year" ("Photoplay Reviews", 1917: 13).

Despite reviews were positive, it seems that the audience's response was rather modest, according to several exhibitors' reports. Edward Trinz, from West End Theater, highlighted the unpopularity of the film: "It was a picture that the audiences did not seem to care about. The story is too old perhaps" ("What the picture did for me", 1917: 554). M. J. Weil, from Castle Theater, stated that "the 'Expectations' proved to be disappointing from the box office standpoint", adding that Pickford and Huff were not very popular with his patrons ("What the picture did for me", 1917: 224). Samely, S. Trinz, from Covent Garden Theater, pointed out that the film was good but "did not seem to have entire satisfaction to the audience" ("What the picture did for me", 1917: 336). Curiously enough, one month before the Famous Players' version of *Oliver Twist* had proved to be successful among the same exhibitors (even though, or perhaps because

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four to one a decision after an appeal by a local exhibitor" ("Facts and Comments", 1917: 661). Film advertisements highlighted the positive values and covered possible unethical morals up with language tampering. The film *The girls who didn't think* was advertised as a "six-reel human interest photoplay made with the public taste constantly in mind" (*Moving Picture World*, 1917: 652). Another example was the German film *Germany and Its Armies Today*, which was "not a war picture, but a picture about war" (*Moving Picture World*, 1917: 646).

it was an actress who played the role of Oliver). Moreover, McParland (2011: 98) have proved that, over the 1910s, Dickens was among favourite authors whose works were more read in the United States. Apart from the publication by instalments in journals and the print books, his novels were broadly distributed in public libraries across the country, meaning that Dickens' novels were available for men and women of all classes and regions. In contrast, Hammond (2015: 22) has also reported that *Great Expectations* was not very lucrative in the long-term. Even in the first years of its volume life, the novel sold far less copies than other Dickens' previous works. It is, at least, arguable, that this fact influenced film spectators, as well as the possibility that Jack Pickford and Louise Huff were not so attractive for the audience as film reviews wanted to make us believe.

Censorship was also present in Denmark, where local boards had been established as early as 1907 (Engberg, 1990: 5; *see also* Söderbergh Widding, 2005: 9). Until 1913, the criterions to permit or ban a film might change from town to town; from then on, standards were unified, probably influenced by the prohibition of some Danish films in other Scandinavian countries. In fact, Danish melodramas (which dealt with social concerns, bold eroticism or explicit criminality) were as popular as criticized due to their explicit images, considered immoral or offensive to good taste (Söderbergh Widding, 2005: 9). Nordisk, mainly focused at that time on foreign markets, reacted to possible censors' cuts by elaborating rules for self-censorship and self-regulation of their motion pictures. The aim was to adapt the films to different legislations by shooting alternative endings and scenes for certain countries (Sundholm *et al.*, 2012: 96). In the case of *Store Forventninger*, there is no information regarding any change in the original shooting, and the script provided by the Danish Film Institute coincides with the intertitles of the film for the most part. Anyhow, while the film seems to have gained some success in Denmark, it failed in touching the English and American audience taste. The film's gross income reached 1.230.000 Danish Kroner, which was insufficient to recover the investment and drove Nordisk almost to the bankruptcy (Hammond, 2015: 166). Discussing the lack of popularity of *Store Forventninger*, Monty (1973: 44) has argued that the film emphasizes the sentimental aspects of the novel (indeed, it focuses on the Pip-Estella romance, as shown before) and overlooks the dramatic *beats*. This fact makes of Pip a more sympathetic character, for he does not experience the moral progression towards snobbery that characterizes him in the novel. But it also entails to sacrifice the

true essence of *Great Expectations* and to avoid the challenge to make the audience feel empathy with Pip even if his behaviour is troublesome at times.

On the distribution and exhibition of *Store Forventninger* in the United States and United Kingdom, Petrie (2001b: 203) has noted that the film was shown widely in those countries, where it received positive reviews. This account must be approached carefully because some reports prove to be contradictory. On December 9, 1922, *Moving Picture World* (“*David Copperfield* is next”, 1922: 553) informed about the production of *David Copperfield* after the “generous response of the audience to the serious efforts made [...] to make *Great Expectations*”. This news is based on interviews with Nordisk producers, so the information should be interpreted with cautious. The tone of enthusiasm contrasts with another review published on *Variety* (“Pictures”, 1923: 31): “It is the foreign direction and acting that is the drawback to this picture”, writes the reporter, adding that the audience laughed at the most serious moments of the story. “Each time that a murder or any other form of death was apparent on the screen it was the signal of another roar”. He also criticizes the titling and editing of the film, which he considers that “left the story very much in the air”. As noted previously, *Store Forventninger* has 225 titles cards, and that makes the film very much dependent on the text to explain and clarify the action. “For the greater part, it was simply motion picture titles inserted to fit the action”, concludes.

There are several possible explanations to explain why the film was a flop. As indicated above, despite Dickens was widely read, not all his stories enjoyed the same success. His earliest books were among the most popular, but *Great Expectations* was one of the darkest and latest novels written by the English author, and was not among readers’ favourite. By the time the film was released in the United States, a new American version of *Oliver Twist* was on the movie listing. The audience was far more familiarized with the Hollywood style and storytelling to choose a Danish film whose cast, additionally, was totally unknown. In contrast, *Oliver Twist* had the child star Jackie Coogan in the leading role, who had become broadly famous after co-starred *The Kid* (1921), together with Charles Chaplin. One of the most influential film producers in Hollywood, Sol Lesser (“To book it means success”, 1922: 65), as well as the President of the MPPDA, William Hays (“We need more such films”, 1922: 65), defined *Oliver Twist* as a film that turned cinema into an art, full of educational values. “The names of Jackie Coogan and Charles Dickens are invincible”, said Lesser. “That *Oliver Twist* will go down in history as one of the greatest box-office attractions the screen world has ever known is an assured fact”,

concluded. The film was so popular that it had to be hold over. Meanwhile, *Store Forventninger* was barely mentioned in journals. In November 1922, *Moving Picture World* published an article titled “Hopp Hadley has new boy prodigy” (1922: 339). Hadley, owner of the Producers Service Company, had signed a contract with Nordisk to distribute its films in the United States. The “new boy prodigy” was Martin Herzberg (presented as *Buddy Martin* in the US titles), the protagonist of *Store Forventninger*. In Hadley’s words, his “emotional acting of a slip of lad with raven black hair and two enormous black eyes out of which he can make the tears chase each other in rivulets” was the main attraction of the film. It seems clear that Hadley was attempted to compete against Jackie Coogan, who was said to be a prodigious little comedian. On the contrary, Hadley praised Herberg’s extraordinary ability for serious drama. It can be assumed, therefore, that *Store Forventninger* was catalogued as a drama, likely deprived of Dickens’ humour. It is time now to examine what were the audience’s preferences in terms of genres and film forms.

## Film forms and genres

It is difficult to classify film genres according to spectators’ preferences due to the lack of reliable estimates of the number of paid admissions before the 1920s. As Koszarski (1994: 25) has noted, prior to 1922, “most figures given are extrapolations from federal admissions-tax receipts, which lump together all forms of entertainment”. According to this author (1994: 31-34), D. W. Griffith’s epic drama *The Birth of a Nation* is generally accepted to be the biggest box-office hit of the silent era in the United States, whereas some surveys from that time report students’ preference for comedies and mysteries. The Western genre emerged powerfully to portray “the conquest of the wilderness and the subordination of nature, in the name of civilization” where “many of the frontier values became national values” (Martynuska, 2009: 59). Over the 1910s, female audience was clearly engaged by serial-queen melodramas, which depicted intrepid young heroine with traditionally *masculine* qualities: physical strength, endurance, self-reliance, courage, social authority... (Singer, 1996: 163; *see also* Dall’Asta, 2011: 258-9). After the First World War, there was a great surge of war films, not only for propaganda purposes, but also to strengthen the sense of national identity. The increasing Wall Street investment during

the mid-1920s allowed Hollywood studios to produce big-budget films. Ambitious projects dealing with epic and war films, with colossal sets, lavish costume design and special effects (sometimes, without the help of trick photography) were carried out. Notwithstanding, modest and unconventional films were also produced (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 152-3). Concerning film adaptation, producers became interested in usable playscripts from Broadway hits, for the story rights cost of a stage version was much lower than that of the original novel (Koszarski, 1994: 106).

Meanwhile, European cinema tried to recover from the First World War. Since most of the film industries were in ruins, they could not compete with Hollywood in economic terms. Instead, they “distinguish[ed] themselves and garner[ed] international prestige through formal experimentation” (Ezra, 2004: 5). Specific national cinemas sprang up in Europe during the 1920s (i.e., French Impressionism, German Expressionism, or Soviet Montage), whose techniques influenced other countries. *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (R. Wiene, 1922), *Bronenosets Patyomkin* (1925) or *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc* (C.T. Dreyer, 1928) are masterpieces from this period. The Danish cinema, with Nordisk in the lead, did not show equal ability to experiment with the aesthetic possibilities that the medium offered. Most directors embraced the Hollywood pattern and used similar narrative and editing techniques. However, according to Bordwell (“Nordisk and the tableau aesthetic”, 2010), Nordisk’s directors remained attached to the outdated recommendations included in the Urban Gad’s 1919 book on film direction: to record a scene entirely in long-shot and, then, to replay part of it for a closer view (instead of cutting a scene into several short shots). The reader might note that in *Store Forventninger*, shots are ten to fifteen seconds on average, whereas some of them last one minute (i.e., the scene in which Bidy is teaching Pip how to read). Monty (1973: 44) has also drawn attention to the fact that the Dickens films produced by Nordisk continued the earlier silent-films’ tradition of adapting from a novel or a play, while many filmmakers were going through original material and styles. Whereas this fact might be true in Denmark, film adaptation was still usual in other countries. Indeed, Dickens’ novels offered a splendid material to filmmakers, and both Vignola’s *Great Expectations* and Sandberg’s *Store Forventninger* were preceded and followed by other Dickens’ film versions both in Europe and Hollywood. This evidence suggests, therefore, that whether these films failed at the box office, it was not due to a lack of interest in Dickens’ stories.



## ***Chapter 7. Great Expectations (1934): Censorship in the heyday of Hollywood***

### ***Great Expectations in the early sound era***

In 1934, Universal studios decided to film *Great Expectations* in an attempt to regain the *first-run* market. The company had embarked upon a horror cycle in 1931, which yielded a profitable return, but mostly appealed to the uneducated and the working classes (Brunas, Brunas & Weaver, 1990: 1). The movement towards the production of *prestige* films aimed to complement the horror factory after the worst years of the Great Depression, as was also a response to the enforcement of the Hays Code, a set of moral guidelines and restrictions on all films produced, distributed, or exhibited by the members of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA).

The world premiere of the film was held in the study of Dickens house at 48 Doughty Street, in London, an indication that Universal aimed to please the British Dickensians. According to *Motion Picture Herald*, at its conclusion, the editor of *The Dickensian* praised the film for its faithfulness to the novel (“Dickens premiere in his own study”, 1934: 48). Subsequently, the first showing of the film was arranged at the Londoner theatre Capitol, which was followed by a season at the Marble Arch Pavilion and other British houses (Allan, 1934: 4). Information provided in film magazines contrasts with Hammond’s statement that *Great Expectations* was not widely distributed in Britain (2015: 100), although she might be right in pointing out that the film did not perform in the most crowded and central theatres and, as an instance of this evidence, it is not mentioned in the list of pictures from the 1930s that more impressed British filmgoers. This question will be discussed in depth onwards.

In his analysis of the film, McFarlane (2008) has argued that “the most interesting thing about [it] is that [...] it never begins to *feel* like the original”. He states that even though Universal’s *Great Expectations* moves through the novel’s major cardinal functions, it fails in finding a significant structure, which results in a lack of contrast between Pip’s snobbery and his moral concerns. What emerges, eventually, is a studio romance where

the mood and tone of the original is lost in the page-to-screen movement. McFarlane delves into the intertextual relationship between the film and the novel; more specifically, he tries to figure out to what extent the film is faithful to the novel. Notwithstanding the important value of McFarlane's contribution, a more comprehensive approach to this film adaptation should go beyond the notion of fidelity, which cannot explain by itself the differences between both works. It is almost certain that variations with regard to the source text result from the context in which the picture was produced. In the following pages, the purpose will be to explore how political, economic and social factors affected the remediation of *Great Expectations*.

### **Narrative discourse in *Great Expectations* (S. Walker, 1934)**

Although Dickens enjoyed a status of goodness and moral virtues, Universal was forced to make some changes in the source text to fit the Hays Code. According to Hammond (2015: 94-5), one scene in which Joe and his wife are seen in bed and another depicting a kiss between Pip and Estella were ordered to be cut, and the use of the word 'Lord' was eliminated. In the opening scene, when Magwitch asks Pip to bring him some food and a file, the boy makes clear that he will not steal them, but borrow. Noteworthy is also Magwitch's first shot, where he appears in a cruciform posture. This gesture seems to disclose his tragic ending: the convict's death, likely as a punishment for his crime. Moreover, the cross, one of the most important symbol for Catholics, represents the atonement and the victory over sin and death that can save Magwitch's soul.

The 1934 version of *Great Expectations* portrays Pip as a constant victim of the world surrounded him: he is threatened by the convict, mistreated by Mrs Gargery, reprimanded by Uncle Pumblechook, used by Miss Havisham for her revenge on the male sex and heartbroken by Estella. In doing so, this adaptation omits Pip's moral progress towards growing snobbery and selfishness, one of the main themes that Dickens explores in the novel. After he leaves the forge and moves to London, the film avoids any trace of Pip's cruelty towards his best friend Joe by wiping the latter away. The absence of Trabb's boy and Orlick, two characters that portray "provincial young men who don't inherit property

and who are, subsequently, in the novel, made the objects of Pip's superior denunciations" (McFarlane, 2008), emphasizes Pip's innocence and goodness. Additionally, by eliminating Orlick's character, it is also eluded his attempt to murder Pip, one thorny question for a film that aimed to cater to all members of the family.

Pip's new life as a young man of great expectations never drives his past as a labouring boy away. Albeit the film reveals little interest on Pip's education as a gentleman, his condition of illiterate blacksmith apprentice is emphasized in two scenes that deserves special consideration. In the first one, Estella meets Pip at the forge, in a moment of the film's invention, because her carriage needs to be repaired. The young lady, in a pure white dress, refuses Pip's huge because he is "too black". Pip tries to ignore her comment and states that the forge is a "good place for a man", to whom she replicates: "And are you a man? Oh, I was thinking you were a boy!" In another passage, while having dinner at Mr Jaggers' home, Pip receives some polite tips from his friend Herbert Pocket about proper mealtime manners.

It seems, in conclusion, that Universal's *Great Expectations* took very seriously the potential of cinema to build a morally cleaner society. The following sections will discuss some other differences between the novel and the film. For this analysis, it will be used a region-free DVD-R in NTSC format.

## Narrative functions

A critical comparison between the cardinal functions present in the film and in the novel drives us to conclude that the screen version is unbalanced in its approach to the three stages of Pip's expectations. The events and much of the dialogues included in the first half of the film (namely, the first forty minutes) follow closely the novel; on the contrary, the material contained in the second and the third half is very much compressed. As noted above, the potential for serious conflict is limited by setting Pip up as an inherent good-hearted character who is manipulated by the people surrounded him.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS (NOVEL)</i>	<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS (FILM)</i>
<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>	<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>
<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>	<b>Pip <i>borrow</i>s food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>
<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>	<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>
<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella.</b>
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file	
<b>Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek</b>	<b>Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek</b>
<b>Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham</b>	<b>Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham</b>
<b>Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice</b>	<b>Miss Havisham gives Joe 20 guineas for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice</b>
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	<i>Estella meets Pip at the forge while waiting for her coach to get fixed.</i>
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
Mrs Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)	
Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House	
Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman	
<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>
<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>	<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>
<b>Pip goes to London</b>	<b>Pip goes to London</b>
<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>	<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>
<b>Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting</b>	<b>Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting</b>
Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket.	
Pip gets money from Jagers to set himself up	
<b>Pip dines with Jagers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle)</b>	<b>Pip dines with Jagers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle)</b>

<b>He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estellas's mother)</b>	<b>He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estellas's mother)</b>
Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn	
Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)	
Pip re-meets Estella	
<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella</b>	
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>	<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>
	<i>He kisses Estella on her lips</i>
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	
Mrs Joe dies	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age	
Pip takes Estella to Satis House	
She and Miss Havisham argue	
<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>	<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>
	<i>Pip kisses Estella and tells her he will ask Miss Havisham's consent to marry her.</i>
<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>
Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers	
<b>Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape</b>	<b>Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape</b>
<b>Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)</b>	<b>Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)</b>
	<i>Estella reproaches Miss Havisham her teachings.</i>
<b>Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella</b>
<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>	<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>
Wemmick warns Pip of being watched	
Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape	
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	

<b>Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)</b>	<b>Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)</b>
	<i>Compeyson reveals Molly that Magwitch is back in London</i>
	<i>Molly asks Jagger and Pip to save Magwitch</i>
Pip goes to deserted sluice house	
Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house	
<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>	<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>
<b>Pip loses fortune</b>	<b>Pip loses fortune</b>
Magwitch is tried	
<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>	<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>
Pip becomes ill	
Joe looks after Pip	
Biddy and Joe get married	
Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.	
<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House</b>	<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House.</b> <i>They happily kiss each other</i>

A quick look at the table above reveals that major changes between both narratives relate to the Pip-Estella relationship. The novel stresses very much on the idea that Estella has not heart, and portrays her as a mere object of male desire incapable of feeling love for anyone (not even for herself). In the original ending, Estella's redemption takes place through a process of suffering, cruelty and brutality by which she eventually understands Pip's feelings, but the couple never meets again. Dickens rewrote the ending, slightly acquiescent with Estella, where both characters re-meet in the ruins of Satis House. However, Universal goes beyond and proposes a happy ending where the young couple seal their love with a kiss. Moreover, they kiss several times along the film and Pip even suggests he will ask for Miss Havisham's consent to marry Estella. These facts have driven McFarlane (2008) to define the film as a "bland romance".

The film opens with a close-up of the tombstone of Pip's parents. The boy reads the epitaph aloud and slowly: "Sacred to the memory of Philip Pirrip, Late of this Parish / Also Georgiana, Wife of the above / Also infant children of above". The camera zooms out to show both the gravestone (at the left margin) and Pip (at the right margin). Following this, Pip speaks to his death siblings; the film uses a *shot/reverse* shot technique

to show him and the five graves respectively. That way, it is masterfully resolved the problem with the first-person narrator. Moreover, through this *soliloquy* (Pip does not obtain any response, for obvious reasons), the film also poses the question of orphanage while it portrays Pip as a naïve and kind character. Otherwise, the scene presents a tragicomic mood which is only broken when the convict assaults the boy. The dialogue between Pip and Magwitch mostly reproduces that of the original novel, but there are two deviations that are worth to notice. When Pip tells Magwitch that he lives with Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, he adds, with great enthusiasm and proud, that “Someday, *if I am good*, I am to be a practitioner, sir” (my emphasis). The second departure has already been addressed above when referring to Pip’s inability to *steal*. This statement is echoed later on when the convict is captured and he confesses having *borrowed* some food and a file. One sergeant responds “You mean... *stole*”, to which the convict insists: “I mean *borrowed*” (my emphasis). In the novel, Magwitch says he “took some wittles” (Dickens, 2003: 39-40) and, eventually, he accepts he has stolen them.

At home, Mrs Gargery shows her fierce in her angry housekeeping that night. She complains to Joe about Pip's behaviour while serving the dinner; Joe's attitude is rather passive, trying to pacify his wife while using a cloth to clean his hands. Contrary to *Store Forvengninger*, Mrs Joe does not beat Pip for being late, which, in fact, is in line with the novel, apart from meeting the moral standards of the Hays Code. Pip returns to the churchyard with the food and the file he has *borrowed*, runs into Compeyson and finds Magwitch in a cruciform posture against a headstone shaping a cross. As noted above, this shot is made on purpose, likely to anticipate Magwitch's final punishment and redemption. The convict is finally arrested and taken to a prison-ship. In this scene, the film uses an optical printing technique in which a close-up of Pip's face in a flood of tears is superimposed to the image of the convict. This montage takes the audience inside the head of the convict. It serves to indicate that Magwitch will always remember the boy who has helped him. It also guides the emotional response of the viewer in order to make him/her feel empathy with the character.

The subsequent scenes covers Pip's several visits to Satis House. Perhaps the most interesting deviation from the novel concerns Miss Havisham, who only wears her bride dress once a year, on the anniversary of her failed wedding day. In the rest of scenes, she is dressed as a prudish lady, very much in control of her affairs (in fact, there is one scene where she even is arranging her last wills with Mr Jaggers). Despite Miss Havisham's

teachings on male revenge, Estella admits she feels “a little” sorry for having made Pip crying and makes clear she doesn’t “want to see suffering”. In the last visit, Pip and Estella have become adults, and the young man is dismissed and encouraged to work as Joe’s blacksmith apprentice. Contrary to the first scene, Pip no longer shows enthusiasm about this idea. After a few years, he receives the news of his great expectations, putting an end to the first half of the film and starting a new stage in which events are very much compressed in comparison to the original novel.



Fig. 6. Scenes from 1934's *Great Expectations*

Before moving to London, Pip, now well-dressed as a gentleman, visits Miss Havisham to inform her about his fortunes, for which he is “very grateful”. Her devious tone of voice in saying “So... you are adopted by some... rich person” reinforces Pip’s belief that she is his mysterious benefactor. After that, a title superimposed on the screen announces us that Pip is in London, where he meets Jaggers and Herbert Pocket. Herbert tells Pip the story about both Miss Havisham’s jilting and Estella’s adoption. As noted above, he also teaches Pip some polite tips, but it is noticeable how little interest shows the film in Pip’s social education. This, together with the ellipsis of the Pip-Joe subplot, sweeps away the possibility to explore Pip’s moral progress from kindness to snobbery and ingratitude, and gives prominence the Pip-Estella romance. Estella goes back from Paris and the young couple meets at a coffee shop. This scene does not belong to the novel, but it is very similar to one included in *Store Forventninger*, so it is reasonable to believe that the filmmaker might have been inspired by the Danish film. Notwithstanding, the film adds some sentimental flavour with Pip’s claiming “Oh Estella, give me your lips! Give me your heart!” while kissing her; even though Estella warns him that she has no heart, she does not reject him either. At the assembly ball, there is an awkward sense, from a contemporary gaze, in hearing Pip saying that he has “some right



to be alone” with Estella because “Miss Havisham intends us for each other”. Despite her initial refusal, Estella eventually seems to admit that she loves Pip, and he gladly states that will ask Miss Havisham “her consent to our marriage”.

However, Magwitch’s return spoils Pip’s plans. The film chooses again the cruciform posture to introduce the character. The montage suggests passage of time and character progression. By using the same construction twice, it allows the audience to recognize Magwitch, to make comparisons with his former appearance and, from that, new inferences. In the novel, this episode marks the beginning of Pip’s moral redemption. In the film, since this plot is not explored, Pip’s concerns deals with the source of the money he has received (“He may have stolen, murdered for it”, says to Herbert) and how he will repay everything the convict has done for it. The film dedicates around five minutes to Magwitch’s story, which acts as a confession to redeem his sins. It has to be noticed that, although one of the working principles of the Production Code was that evil and good must never be confused, it also indicated that crime did not need to be punished as long as it was made clear for the audience that it was wrong (“The Motion Picture Production Code of 1930”, 2012). Pip saves Magwitch’s life when Compeyson attempts to kill him, arguing that he has “tried to be as loyal as you’ve been to me”. He even makes a petition for mercy after the convict is arrested. Jaggers informs Pip that all Magwitch’s money and possessions have been confiscated, but Pip’s unique concern is that his benefactor never knows that information.

In what can be taken as a collapsing of Miss Havisham’s project on vengeance, the film doubly exposes Pip and Estella reproaches for having been used for her purposes. Estella cannot give love to her because she can’t give her “what you’ve never given to me”. It is noteworthy that Estella uses the term “mother-by-adoption” to name Miss Havisham, thus emphasizing that there is no blood relationship between them. Similarly, Pip accuses her of making him unhappy. Miss Havisham’s punishment lies in the realization that she has destroyed the lives of both youths. Pip’s inability to write “I forgive you” in Miss Havisham’s Bible, even when contradictory compared to the behaviour he shows in the rest of the film, has to be seen just as a mechanism to penalise her sins: “I see in you what I once felt myself”, she says to Pip. Miss Havisham dies off-screen of unspecified causes, the film preventing her from seeing Pip and Estella happily together. Estella’s engagement with Bentley Drummle is conveniently broken, so she is finally free (and virgin) to love Pip.

In conclusion, Universal's *Great Expectations* emerges as a reworking of the source text, which, by means of eliminating any appeal to immorality or corruption, blurs all the Dickensian hallmarks. In fact, that the film received positive reviews from the MPPDA, the critics, or the educational and religious organizations, must result in general suspicion of major narrative changes for the sake of the moral obligations imposed to cinema from the mid-thirties on.

### The narrating instance

Stuart Walker's *Great Expectations* is the first sound film adaptation of the Dickens' novel. Contrary to previous versions, where title cards were necessary to follow the action, characters make the plot to advance through their actions and their dialogues. During the silent era, films were partially or totally focalized from an outer perspective, while the narrator remained always *extra-heterodiegetic*. The use of sound might open new possibilities with regard to the narrating instance, although this is not the case. In this film adaptation, the narrative agency is placed outside the *diegesis*. It has an *extra-heterodiegetic* character and is identified with the *image-maker*. However, the narrative mood of the film is very often *internal focalization* through the hero. In general, it is Pip's perspective that governs the narrative. This is made clear in the first scene, through Pip's soliloquy on the authority of his parents' tombstone and his deceased siblings. A serious weakness with this argument is that there is no use of *point-of-view* shots to represent Pip's subjective view. In contrast, he is generally placed at the centre of the frame and is given a number of dramatic *close-ups* to encourage sympathy for him. Notwithstanding, this *internal focalization* does not bear on the entire work, but is variable. It is noteworthy that this version gives especial relevance to Magwitch's character. In those scenes where he appears together with Pip, the *two-shot* is used to have both characters in one frame. It suggests harmony, for it reinforces the symbiotic relationship between them. *Over-the-shoulder* shots, where the camera is placed behind the shoulder of one of the characters, also serve to underscore the physical connection between the boy and the convict. Those shots not only suggest close proximity, but also mirror an equal importance of both characters:



Fig. 7. Use of *two-shots* and *over-the-shoulder* shots to portray the Pip-Magwitch relationship

This appears to support the assumption that, in these scenes, *internal focalization* is applied to Pip and Magwitch. This observation becomes clearer when Magwitch reveals Pip and Herbert his past story. His voice is heard while the different scenes represent what he is narrating. The reader shall not ignore that the use of Magwitch's voice-over might entail a change in the narrator status; this question will be addressed in the following section. For the time being, suffice it to insist on the variations at the level of internal focalization. Despite it mostly apply to Pip, the observed relevance given to Magwitch's character suggests that the narrative is, at some points, focalized through him.

A likely explanation has to do with the status and reputation of Henry Hull (in the role of Magwitch) at that time. He was mentioned in many journals and magazines of that period as a promising star in cinema. For instance, in *Movie Classic*, a reporter said that Hull was called "Broadway's best actor" and considered him "the greatest movie acquisition of the year" (Rand, 1934: 36, 72). In a brief entry titled "Discovered — At last", *Motion Picture* (1934: 20) wondered "how Hollywood has overlooked [Hull] all these years", adding that "critics have shouted that he was 'Broadway's best'". Similarly, in an interview published on *Hollywood*, the journalist presented him as the "America's foremost stage star" (Curtis, 1935: 40, 67). He was, besides, the highest-paid headlining star of the film, and his name was given a prominent place in the credits. These facts suggest that Hull's involvement in this production was regarded as the most crucial for the film's success. This being the case, it seems reasonable that part of the narrative is internal focalization through him.

It has to be also noted that *internal focalization* is rarely applied in a totally rigorous way, especially in cinema, where the camera always entails the constant presence of an *outsider voyeur*. The spectator is not limited here to either Pip or Magwitch focal position alone, but this *internal focalization* is mixed with a *non-focalized* narrative applied to the

camera. Ultimately, as Genette (1980: 198) has argued, “The impersonal narrative therefore tends toward internal focalization by the simple trend toward discretion and respect for [the freedom or the ignorance] of its characters”.

## Narrator

An analysis of the film points to an *extra-heterodiegetic* narrator, an *author* absent of the story, despite the fact that Pip and Magwitch are the focal characters. This observation could fit in Friedman’s notion of *selective omniscience*, in which a character provides the perspective of the narrated events through an inconspicuous omniscient narrator; or match with the category he terms *the camera*, where the narrator does not have internal knowledge of the characters but simply *records* their lives without imposing any order upon it (White, 1991: 48; Herman & Vervaeck, 2005: 32). It would be easy to conclude that the latter category is the most suitable one. However, this assumption is symptomatic in that it proves to what extent a traditional point-of-view theory brings mood and voice together. In 1934 *Great Expectations*, the narrator may be limited to show internal feelings of the characters; however, as *image-maker*, (s)he uses film elements and storytelling resources to add dramatic value or to guide the audience’s emotional response. In this sense, it is especially relevant, as noted above, the use of close-ups, two-shots or *over-the-shoulder* shots. In fact, since the discourse is focalized through Pip and Magwitch, the omniscient narrator, in order to limit her/himself to the information held by the hero at the moment of the action, has to suppress part of the information (s)he knows to disclose it gradually. On occasion, (s)he provides the spectator with some information that the hero does not know. For example, Pip is not present when Mr Jaggers advises Miss Havisham how to make her will. Later on, the film shows the reencounter between Molly and Compeyson while Jaggers and Pip talk in the adjacent room, unaware of this event. This proves, additionally, the reliability of the narrator.

As shown before, a comparison with the novel reveals that there is no full correspondence between events, incidents and actions. Relevant shifts take place in the book-to-film movement, especially at the ideological level. One of the issues that emerges from this observation is related to how the audience builds the notion of the implied author. As noted by Neira Piñeiro (2003), both the empirical author of a film adaptation

and the historical context in which it is produced are different from those of the original source. Thus, it is expected that spectators and readers have different perceptions of the implied author. Furthermore, there is a risk that viewers with no knowledge of the *hypotext* can identify the implied author of the film with that of the novel. This hazard seems to gain more relevance nowadays. There is a current trend to replicate Victorian literature in contemporary culture through a process of remediation that makes the new product still recognizable, although it establishes an alternative history (Falchi, Perletti & Romero Ruiz, 2015: 7). Hence, the source text and its numerous *refashioning* and *reimagining* become confused in the mind of the youngest generations, whose knowledge about the novel might be limited. For that reason, this question will be addressed in greater depth in following chapters. What seems of importance is to go over the question of *mood* and *voice* in 1934 *Great Expectations*. Overall, the film privileges focalization through Pip and Magwitch, but the story is narrated through a third-person omniscient narrator. However, it is at least arguable that these roles are exchanged in two occasions. The film opens with an extreme *close-up* of a tombstone while the *voice* of a child reads what it is written on the epitaph. It is not until the camera zooms out that Pip appears on the screen. He is reading for the audience and, as long as his *voice* leads the narrator, he takes the role of an *intra-homodiegetic* narrator, even if only momentarily. Later on, when Magwitch tells Pip and Herbert his past story, it is also his *voice* what drives the narration. However, the scenes that compose his *memoir* are placed on top of the fireplace located in the room where the three characters stand. This suggests that the reconstruction of the events is made from an outer perspective, that of the camera, while the convict works here as the narrator. Here, the narrative with *zero focalization* gives reliability to Magwitch's speech, since, as an *intra-homodiegetic* narrator, he is characterized by a restricted field of vision.

Finally, with regard to the functions of the narrator, the omniscient narrator of Universal's *Great Expectations* assumes a typical narrative function. When Pip and Magwitch work as narrators, directing and communication functions prevail.

## Temporality and order

The *telling narrative* in this film adaptation is characterized by a sense of continuity which is only broken by the presence of an *analepsis* or flashback. This anachrony concerns

Magwitch's past story. His account refers to an episode that is earlier to the temporal point of departure of the *first narrative* (Pip's story) of the film. On the contrary, a comparison between novel and film reveals no differences with regard to temporality and order. Moments of the film invention excepted, the chronological order of the events in the film matches up with the arrangement in the novel.

## Narrative rhythm

The following table compares the temporal dimension of the story (the novel) against the spatial dimension of the narrative (the film). It will be of help to set the specific variations or narrative movements concerning the four canonical forms: ellipsis, pause, scene and summary. In line with what has been discussed so far, the narrative rhythm clearly privileges those scenes and episodes concerning the Pip-Magwitch subplot, as well as the Pip-Estella romance. The film privileges the first stage of Pip's expectations, to which it devotes 45 minutes (45 per cent) of the running time. Although this version shows little interest in Pip's new life as a gentleman, the significant weight given to Magwitch makes that the second part of the film is 35 minutes long (35 per cent). The third part is the shortest one. It covers 20 minutes (20 per cent) of the running time and, again, most of the time is dedicated to the episode concerning the convict's decease.

<p><i>Pip and the convict</i> (00:00 – 18:19). First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested and sent into exile.</p>	<p><i>Pip and the convict</i> (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42). First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.</p>
<p><i>At Satis House</i> (18:20 – 38:32). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House</i> (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>
<p><i>The blacksmith boy</i> (38:33 – 41:11). Temporal break (a few years). While working as a blacksmith apprentice, Pip meets Stella.</p>	<p><i>The blacksmith boy</i> (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>

<i>Great expectations</i> (41:12 – 44:59). Undetermined temporal break (undetermined). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.	<i>Great expectations</i> (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160). Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.
<i>The Londoner gentleman</i> (45:00 – 51:16). Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman:	<i>The Londoner gentleman</i> (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277). Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.
<i>Pip and Estella's romance</i> (51:17 – 1:00:18). Temporal break (three years). Pip meets Estella and courts her.	<i>Mrs Gargery's funeral</i> (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285). Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.
<i>End of great expectations</i> (1:00:19 – 1:20:15). Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip and Herbert conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape	<i>End of great expectations</i> (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421). Temporal (several years) and spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.
<i>Miss Havisham's punishment</i> (1:20:19 – 1:26:50). Estella and Pip reproach Miss Havisham for her behaviour and her teachings.	<i>Attempt of murder</i> (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433). Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.
<i>Magwitch's decease</i> (1:26:51 – 1:38:35). Pip talks to Mr Jaggers about Estella, while Compeyson meets Molly. Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.	<i>Magwitch's decease</i> (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460). Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.
	<i>Return to the marshes</i> (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480). As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.
	<i>Clarriker and Co</i> (Chapter LVIII, p. 480). Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).
<i>Return to Satis House</i> (1:38:36 – 1:39:40). Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to	<i>Second return to the marshes</i> (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484). Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes

the marshes) breaks. Pip meets Estella at the ruins of Satis House.

back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.

According to this chronology, the main variations of speed in the narrative of Universal's *Great Expectations* with regard to the novel work out approximately like this:

Pip and the convict: around 18 minutes for about one and a half day.	Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.
At Satis House: around 20 minutes for a few years.	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
The blacksmith boy: around 3 minutes for 3 minutes.	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.
Great Expectations: around 4 minutes for 4 minutes.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
The Londoner gentleman: around 6 minutes for some months.	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
Pip and Estella's romance: around 10 minutes for some months.	Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
End of great expectations: around 20 minutes for a few days.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
Miss Havisham's punishment: around 6 minutes for 6 minutes.	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
Magwitch's decease: around 10 minutes for a few days.	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.



Return to the Satis House: around 1 minute for 1 minute.

Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

### *Ellipsis*

The only explicit mention in the film to a temporal break takes place in the minute 52:00. Estella returns to London, where Pip is intended to escort her. “It’s been three years”, she says, thus implying that their last meeting at the forge took place three years ago. The film also uses other film elements for abridgment purposes. Tilt-down and tilt-up movements are used to reveal Pip’s new condition as a gentleman. From top to bottom, the shot shows Pip dressed as a blacksmith. In contrast, from bottom to top, the shot asks the audience to notice the new clothing. Both tilt-down and tilt-up give them the time to assimilate each wardrobe element and see the differences. By putting them together, these shots underscore the large distinction between Pip’s past and his new life. The dramatic use of the camera move, however, goes against Jagger’s statement that “it takes time, perhaps years; it takes troubles and the help of a lot of people to make a gentleman from head to foot, and foot to head”. This reminder suggests that a new wardrobe is not enough for social self-improvement.

With regard to the novel, it is noticeable that some events have been omitted or eluded, especially those referring to the Pip-Joe subplot. Once Pip sets in London, there are no further references to his family or to anything concerning his life at the marshes. In fact, Pip does not return to his hometown until the last scene, when he meets Estella at Satis House. There are no references to Mrs Gargery’s death while Orlick and Biddy do not appear at all. Curiously enough, Biddy’s name appears in the credits (played by Valerie Hobson, who would perform adult Estella in Lean’s 1946 version), but all her scenes were cut entirely from the final print. Similarly, Miss Havisham dies off-screen for unknown reasons, and this information is not revealed until the last scene.

There are other implicit ellipses that can be presumed from one scene to another. Most of them are too short to affect the main plot. For instance, between the first and the second episodes, there is an undetermined temporal break (probably, around a few days or a few weeks). The same can be said about the undetermined temporal break taking place between Pip’s last visit to Satis House and his meeting with Estella at the

forge; or between that appointment and the news of his great expectations. A longer ellipsis is noted in the episode *At Satis House*, when the young actors playing Pip and Estella are substituted by the adult performers (besides, Miss Havisham is distinctly portrayed as an old lady).

### *Pause*

A certain sense of pause is perceived both in *End of great expectations* and *Magwitch's decease* episodes. This is because the preceding sequences work either as *summaries* (where the narrative time is less than the story time) or *scenes* (where the narrative time is equal to the story time). In these episodes, Magwitch becomes the focal character. His long speeches slow down the pace of the narrative in three occasions: (1) when revealing himself as Pip's benefactor; (2) when telling Pip and Herbert his past story involving Compeyson and Molly; (3) when saying Pip goodbye before dying. By adding ahead or behind either a *summary* or a *scene*, the sense of pause is reinforced.

### *Summary*

The episode *At Satis House*, which covers Pip's several visits to Satis House, is conspicuously compressed in comparison to the previous and the subsequent scenes. This episode, which covers Pip's numerous visits to Satis House during an undetermined period of several years, last around twenty minutes of the running time. The same amount of time is dedicated to the episode *Pip and the convict*, which only covers one and a half day of Pip's live. Similarly, Pip's new life as a gentleman is barely explored. The episode *The Londoner gentleman* condenses in six minutes several months of the story time. In contrast, the film opts to give relevance to the Pip-Estella romance.

### *Scene*

Certain scenes, where the narrative time and the story time match up, are inserted between *summaries* and *pauses*. Namely, four episodes of the film (*The blacksmith boy*, *Great Expectations*, *Miss Havisham's punishment* and *Return to Satis House*) are representative of this form of narrative rhythm.

## **Political, economic and sociocultural background**

For the United States, the 1930s began with the Wall Street crash on 29 October 1929. The Great Depression spread the fear that American society was under threat. President Herbert Hoover's refuse to intervene in the economy became a menace for the dominant values and beliefs of the country. Franklin Roosevelt's promise of a *New Deal* in social and economic policies produced an uneven recovery, but had not a general positive impact until the end of the decade. Additionally, the economic crisis arose in a climate of political disturbance. The institution of fascist and totalitarian regimes in Germany, Italy and Japan unsettled the feigned balance reached after the First World War. Those countries promoted policies of imperialist expansionism, which eventually led to Germany's invasion of Poland on September 3, 1939 and precipitated the Second World War. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941 marked the end of the thirties and opened a period of economic expansion.

In the film industry, there was a turning point on October 6, 1927, when Warner Bros released *The Jazz Singer*. It became the first part-talkie feature, in which spoken dialogue was used as part of the dramatic action. The production company sought to reduce cost by "eliminating live orchestra accompaniment of features and stage acts in the theatre" (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 194; *see also* O'Brien, 2005: 66-8). The success of *The Jazz Singer* encouraged the rest of studios to follow the trend. Unfortunately, the spread of the talkies coincided with the early years of the Great Depression. The threatening economic and political scenario affected the evolution of the business. Whereas technology was improved and new genres emerged, most of the companies faced financial difficulties or went bankrupt. Cinema became an instrument of propaganda intended to defend or to attack politically extreme governments. Policies supervising subject matter and film style were instituted in many countries, thus moving gradually towards the adoption of a strict censorship, as will be shown.

### **Production, distribution and exhibition systems**

The development and spread of sound technology was not homogenous. Rather, it evolved at diverse pace in each country and involved many competing systems and

patents. In the United States, the largest production companies agreed to adopt whatever sound system proved most advantageous and installed the proper equipment in the theatres they owned. Independent and smaller theatres often opted for the cheapest sound systems. Sometimes, they could not afford to install any equipment at all, bringing about the need for releasing both sound and silent versions of the same film. Be it as it may, by the early 1930s, Hollywood had successfully completed the conversion to sound (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 195). The audience showed great enthusiasm for the talkies, which proved to be a profitable investment for film studios and exhibitors. However, beginning in 1931, the American film industry felt the effects of the Great Depression: motion picture attendance dropped, ticket prices fell and film rentals dwindled (Balio, 1995: 13). Following this, it will be explored how the Wall Street crash of 1929 affected Universal Pictures, the production company of 1934's *Great Expectations*.

Universal was founded by Carl Laemmle, a German immigrant who had entered the business as owner of the White Front Theatre six years earlier. In a few months, he moved from exhibition to distribution and created the Laemmle Film Service (Dick, 1997: 18), which became the largest distributor in the country. After being part of the MPPC for a few months, Laemmle founded the Independent Moving Pictures Company (IMP) in June, 1909; one year later, he helped to organize the Motion Picture Distributing and Sales Company (MPDSC). Finally, Universal Film Manufacturing Company came into being in June, 1912, as an alternative consortium to Mutual Film Corporation. Laemmle, who had been the first producer to give his actors personal advertisement, became also the first one to open picture-making to public visits (Drinkwater, 1931: 185), until the advent of sound made this practice impossible. In fact, conversion to sound entailed a complete revaluation of the company's assets and policies. Some of its theatres were divested while the rest were put into receivership.

By 1929, Universal, together with United Artist and Columbia, made up the group known as the *Little Three*, only overtaken by the leading *Big Five* (Paramount, Warner, MGM, Fox and RKO). The film market was no longer willing to admit unlimited quantities of those formerly popular two to five-reel pictures; hence, Universal decided to produce fewer, but better quality features. Super-productions required more time and higher investment, so one or two box-office failures might compromise seriously the financial stability of the company, especially during the economic crisis. Overall,

Universal films' profits were lower than budgets. By 1931, the financial strategy had resulted in deficits, although the situation was not critical yet.

During the Depression, companies' earnings dropped abruptly. Bankruptcies and receiverships became common, although Balio (1995: 16) has noted that they affected the exhibition subsidiaries of the majors rather than their production and distribution branches. Although, as noted above, Universal had divested or put into receivership most of its theatres, by 1934, "nothing short of a miracle at Universal would forestall bankruptcy or a takeover" (Dick, 1997: 99). Not even the instantaneous success of a series of low-budget horror movies including *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* or *The Raven* (some of them are considered cult movies nowadays) improved the economic conditions of the company sufficiently enough. In many cases, Universal made a budgetary outlay that clearly exceeded the returns of the films. This was not the case of *Great Expectations*, which, according to Hammond (2015: 99), "was a cheap production compared both with other Dickens vehicles and with the budgets for Universal's other films in this period". As a comparison, *Great Expectations* cost \$178.320,47, while *Imitation of Life* (1934) cost \$665.000 and *Magnificent Obsession* (1935), \$948.697 (Hammond, 2015: 99; see also Dick, 1997: 100). To save the situation, in 1935, J. Cheever Cowdin's Standard Capital Company came to a loan agreement with Universal. Nevertheless, the terms stated that Capital would have the option to purchase the studio if the loan was not repaid within three months. Universal was forced to sell its stock and, by March 1936, Standard Capital Company took over operating control of the studio corporation. In fact, great corporations operating in Wall Street and La Salle Street, as well as banking groups, had financed studio corporations from the twenties on, and many of them took charge of those companies after the Depression. Their involvement in the financial control of Hollywood's major studios drove also towards a homogenisation of film style. Such homogenisation was based on a few basic patterns, as well as on the deployment of the main ideologies and myths of American culture (Ray, 1985) in order to offer a certain safety against box office failures. This, together with the enforcement of the Production Code in 1934, involved that each cinematic element was subordinated to an imposed narrative discourse, which, ultimately, affected the content of the films and the movie-going experience.

## Cinema audience

The introduction of sound into what had fundamentally been a visual medium drew strong responses from critics, both for and against (O'Brien, 2005: 3; *see also* Jacobs, 2015: 1). Filmmakers were worried about how to merge speech, music and sound effects within the flow of images (Thompson & Bordwell, 2015). And audiences experienced mixed feelings. Thompson and Bordwell (2015) have claimed that they “missed the dynamism of silent films” because “[t]alkies were too talky”. Conversely, Balio (1995: 13) and O'Brien (2005: 3) hold that moviegoers welcomed the new technology enthusiastically, on the grounds that the attendance increased regardless of the higher admission prices and the uncertain quality of the synchronization.

The 1930s were also determined by the enforcement of the Production Code, promoted by Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association (MPPDA) president William Hays. This trade organization had been created by the major studios to protect and support the film industry, and Hays was intended to “prevent a Hollywood movie from being released until it met with the approval of the MPPDA” (Gomery, 1986: v). To meet this purpose, the Hays Office organized a formal self-regulation in which members' films should be suitable for viewers of all ages, taking especial care about the impression made upon the sacred and virgin mind of the youths (Ernst & Lorentz, 1930: 129-30). Hays aimed to convince religious and civic groups, educational organizations and other parties claiming films' negative influence, that motion pictures could have a positive impact in society. Ultimately, Hollywood needed to find a balance among pressure groups' demands, commercial interest (oriented toward the international market) and the business standards promoted by Wall Street (responsible for financing its expansion).

Although the Production Code dates from 1930, during the twenties the MPPDA instituted a series of informal rules to ward off federal censorship boards (Koszarski, 1994: 206). By 1926, studios were encouraged to submit their scripts in order to examine them on an advisory basis. One year later, a list of “Don'ts” and “Be Carefuls” was provided (Gomery, 1986: ix). Between 1929 and 1930, William Hays, together with Martin Quigley (*Exhibitor Herald's* editor), Father Daniel E. Lord (a Catholic priest) and certain Protestant organizations, drew up the Production Code (better known as *Hays Code*). The text was promulgated on March 31, 1930, and included specific indications on

how to represent controversial issues as violence, crime or sex. Delicate subjects were reoriented, substituted or condensed during the pre-production stage. Despite the companies' obligation to subject their scripts for revision, from 1930 to 1934 the implementation of the Production Code was weak. During this period, many filmmakers violated the code commandments in a series of provocative films that explored adultery, pre-marital sex, miscegenation, orgies, organized crime, speakeasies, mobsters or illegal alcohol (Pollard, 2009: 32). Their strategy was based on the compensation of moral values, that is, on "[advocating] the final punishment and suffering of 'bad' characters or their regeneration" (Jacobs, 1991: 93). In 1933-34, the Catholic Church's Legion of Decency and the Payne Fund Studies campaign warned that motion pictures were a great menace to faith and moral values, and even called for a boycott of all Hollywood films. Moreover, they enlisted the support of the Bank of America president A. P. Giannini, who threatened to cut off production funds if the Production Code was not enforced (Doherty, 1999a: 326; *see also* Pollard, 2009: 53). Box office boycotts and threats to film financing, together with the decline in movie attendance during the Great Depression, forced studios to acquiesce to a code. In June 1932, the Production Code Administration required all films to obtain a certificate of approval before being released. According to Maltby (1995: 61), "All member companies agreed not to distribute or release a film without a certificate".

On October 22, 1934, Universal Pictures premiered *Great Expectations*, directed by Stuart Walker. This adaptation of the Dickens novel was part of the company's involvement in the production of *prestige* films, which, according to Balio (1995: 179), "was far and away the most popular production trend of the decade [...], [playing] a crucial role defining the public image of the company". Prestige pictures encompassed different styles and production trends. However, generally speaking, it appealed to a big-budget film adapted from a literary source and tailored for top stars. The novels of Charles Dickens were among the material regarded as suitable for that kind of film ("Producers aim classics...", 1936: 13-15). In fact, Dickens seemed a good option to be adapted, for he was considered one of the few authors able to bridge the gap between *elite* and *popular*, that is, between the first-class audience who appreciated the high literature, and the uncultured masses (Hammond, 2015: 94). Such is the case that the National Council of Teachers of English chose Universal's *Great Expectations* to initiate a nationwide campaign "to raise the standard of motion picture appreciation by the

younger generation” (“Educators to see ‘Expectations’”, 1934: 2). According to the committee, the picture was “one of more than usual excellence and worthy of discussion in the classroom” (“Great Expectations”, 1934: 251). Pupils of the Weequahic High School in Newark were to give a radio dramatization of scenes from Universal’s film, whereas the council handed out study guides of Dickens’ *Great Expectations* to all the pupils across the nation (Sargent, 1934: 21; *see also* “Student on radio in story-film tie-up”, 1934: 25). Study guides were considered the most valuable instrument “for stimulating enthusiasm for the *right* kind of films for juvenile audiences” (“Interest youngsters with study guides”, 1934: 4, my emphasis). What sort of pictures were the *right* films? According to the Production Code, those films designed to be suitable for viewers of all ages, even if they were intended primarily for adults. This meant that pictures had moral obligations as entertainment produced for the masses, and so, they should tend to improve the race (“The Motion Picture Production Code of 1930”, 2006). Masterpieces of the classic literature proved to be ideal sources to fulfil these requirements, and the National Council of Teachers of English, journals as *The Motion Picture and the Family* or *The Educational Screen*, local preview committees or religious organizations encouraged to use them in film adaptations. The book-to-film movement promoted by the National Council was based on considering the motion picture as a powerful educational device, arguing that the ratio of pupils who read a book as a direct result of watching a film could be enlarged as much as reading a book could increase the percentage of student’s attendance to movie theatres (“Filming classics aids tickets and book sales”, 1934: 48). Photoplay versions increased the number of prints of the classics that were ordinarily sold during a season, probably because students were supposed to read the novels for classroom discussions. As an example, after the release of *Great Expectations*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and *David Copperfield*, pupils were asked to read “at least one complete Dickens novel” (“Film Council buys text books”, 1935: 2). It seems, otherwise, that the demand for Dickens books increased during this era, even in the case of costly editions (Daly, 1934: 6).

How was the reception of *Great Expectations* among the critics? The film was suggested not only for families, but also for schools and libraries (“Selected Pictures Guide”, 1934: 17-9). It was part of the promising productions arranged for the 1934-35 season, which presented at once an opportunity and responsibility to teachers and parents “to shop intelligently from our film diet” in order that children could receive “proper



guidance” (Lewin, 1934: 5-7). The combined judgements of a National Committee on current Theatrical Films estimated that *Great Expectations* was excellent for both “intelligent adults” and “youth (15 – 20 years)”, while too mature for “child (under 15 years)”. The council considered that the Universal’s version “[retained] characters, plot and narrative manner with fidelity, dignity and charm” (“The film estimates”, 1934: 268). A local film censor from Detroit expressed high praise for *Great Expectations* and urged children to watch it (“Praise for *Great Expectations*”, 1934: 7), while a review argued that “Dickens’ classic [had] been well handled for general appeal” and that it should receive the movie fan’s support (“Reviews”, 1934: 6). The film got “A” in the report card published on *Modern Screen*, where a film critic wrote that “Universal [had] done an almost flawless job in bringing Charles Dickens’ immortal story to the screen” (Ramsey, 1935: 101-3). *Motion Picture Daily* pointed out that this “intelligent, entertaining screen version of Charles Dickens’ story [...] should prove a first rate show to those appreciative of Dickens, though the mass reception may be uncertain” (“Great Expectations”, 1934: 10). Another review graded *Great Expectations* as one of the best pictures and dared to say that “Dickens himself would have been pleased with Universal’s job of transferring one of his greatest mystery stories safely to the screen” (“The Picture Parade. *Great Expectations*”, 1935: 64).

It is noticeable that *Great Expectations* pleased the critics, but it did not satisfy the audience. Several reports from *Motion Picture Daily* show inconsistent results of the film at the box office, but, in general, the film did not accomplish the expected results. During the first week of November 1934, *Great Expectations* reached \$6,000 gross at the Norman in Kansas City, \$1,000 worse than the average for the period (“*Happiness* show gross \$11,000, K.C.”, 1934: 8). Accounts of the same week at the World in St. Paul inform that *Great Expectations*’ gross was \$2,500, while the average was \$2,000 (“*Cristo* top grosses for twin cities”, 1934: 8). In Seattle, the film “showed weakness at the Music Hall and was withdrawn at the end of five days” (“*Prentice* in top Seattle spot, \$9,000”, 1934: 8).

*Variety* (“Yank *Expectations*...”, 1934: 11) reported that *Great Expectations* “did a floppo” and “got meagre” at the Music Hall in Seattle, where it was “yanked after five days” (“W.&W. personal up Seattle...”, 1934: 9; “*Happiness* at \$33,000 Boston high”, 1934: 4). In Washington, the film was pulled off for another film after four days (“*Lost Lady* show...”, 1934: 10), even though the manager of the RKO Keith’s promoted *Great Expectations* by inviting the local board of education to a preview of the picture

(“Educators to see *Expectations*”, 1934: 2). In Denver, the film gross was lower than the average (“*Rhythm and Walk* crack Denver marks”, 1934: 12). In New York, *Harrison’s Reports’* digest of the Box office performances of the 1934-35 pictures released (“An analysis of the 1934-5 season’s forecasts”, 1935) pointed out that *Great Expectations* worked “fair”<sup>15</sup>, adding the following tag: “from good to poor”. This journal also reproduced the “Complete official list of classified pictures” (1935) prepared by the Chicago Legion of Decency, in which *Great Expectations* received “Class A”, meaning that it was considered suitable for family patronage. Similarly, *Motion Picture Herald* (“The Release Chart”, 1934: 79) pointed out that the film addressed to a general audience. Notwithstanding, according to the theatre receipts reported in this journal along November and December, *Great Expectations* did not attract moviegoers. In most cases, its grosses were much lower than the revenues obtained by films that had been projected the week before.

It must be noted that all the theatres mentioned above were first-run movie palaces. This means that, presumably, the audience was composed by members of the middle and upper classes, who could afford higher ticket prices. No indication has been found about the film’s level of exposure in local cinemas; hence, it cannot be stated whether it was more attractive to provincial audiences or not. What remains a matter of some certainty is an increase on Dickens’ interest among the audience during the thirties. Daly (1934: 6) wrote for *The Film Daily* that “Universal knew what they were doing when they produced *Great Expectations*”; he even stated that another production company had been to make the film before Universal, but had turned it down as “impossible”. On the first statement, it has been shown that the film did not do well at the box office, which demonstrates that the production of a prestigious film was not a guarantee for success. Other features achieved similar results. Three productions classified as “more than exceptional” (*Our Daily Bread*, *Man of Aran* and *What Every Woman Knows*), even when they supposedly responded to the public demand for “worthwhile entertainment”, were box office failures. These results presented a serious threat for moral values defenders, “for it should not be hard to see that if the really fine and thoughtful pictures fail to draw an audience, producers will be obliged to ceased to make them for us” (Sporborg, 1934: 6).

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<sup>15</sup> Films were classified as follows: “Excellent”, “Very Good”, “Good”, “Good-Fair”, “Fair”, “Fair-Poor” and “Poor”.

It has to be taken into account, besides, the different consideration and perception of these films, or of Dickens himself, outside America. An interesting example is a report published in the Scottish film magazine *Cinema Quarterly*, where the author reduced the Dickensian literature to a mere moral battle in which the Good always overcame the Evil. These kind of novels worked as opium for the audience, who was “persuaded to accept a false standard of values”. Furthermore, albeit Dickens was said to be a master storyteller whose works were easily adapted to the screen, the reporter argued that his novels were too long and rambling to survive both the script’s cutting and summary processes successfully. In his view, the problem with Universal’s *Great Expectations* was that it made story its strong point rather than characterization, which hindered the audience’s identification with the hero. Ultimately, he wondered about the motives which induced American filmmakers to produce screen versions of Dickens novels. “Perhaps”, he concluded, “it is that they share with him the delusion that he could write strong stories” (Hardy, 1935: 168,182). Leaving aside his opinion on the quality of Dickens’ writing, the reporter is right when he observes that Universal’s *Great Expectations* capitalizes story over characterization. Precisely, the novel’s potential lies in the psychological depth and complexity of the characters. This is particularly relevant in relation to Pip, who experiences an inner (r)evolution throughout the course of the story, which is completely ignored in the film. It seems that the script was subjected to a Procrustean bed process, in which Pip’s moral struggle was reduced to the ups-and-downs of a fairy-tale. Most of the thematic density and the Dickensian spirit was lost in an attempt to please financial forces and moral standards; but these variations proved to be unsuccessful among the spectators. Universal’s *Great Expectations* was not among *The Film Daily*’s Ten Best list of 1934, a poll combining the votes of 424 national film critics and editors. The list of pictures used to coincide with the most popular and big money maker titles, and it is remarkable that no Universal title was among the top ten. *Great Expectations* was neither among the films nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture (Universal’s *Imitation of Life*, whose budget was four times bigger, obtained a nomination for the company).

In pursuing greater critical perspective, it may seem appropriate to accept the two rules, concerning classical Hollywood and spectators, stated by Staiger (2000: 37): (a) spectators do not do what is expected; and (b) spectators rehierarchize from expectations. Furthermore, one might extend both principles over the critics, who: (a) promoted the fallacy of fidelity in the book-to-film transference of *Great Expectations* to encourage

moviegoers to watch the picture; and (b) praised the quality of both the film style and the acting, and forecasted an excellent box office performance, which never occurred. What reasons can be adduced to explain the audience's poor response? In the 1930s, American movie audience consisted of "77.000.000 million weekly, more than one-third of that number being children and adolescents and about 11.000.000 under fourteen years of age" (Forman, 1934: 10). Altogether, children and adolescents (up to twenty years old) constituted 37 per cent of the total (Forman, 1934: 17). Despite the difficulty to demonstrate the accuracy of this number, it is still arguable that youngsters constituted a large percentage of the film viewers. As part of the educational programme in which school authorities were initiating students in worthwhile photoplays, teachers were allowed to take groups of certain pupils, free of charge, to movie houses so as to watch films with sufficient interest for warrant classroom discussion. Being *Great Expectations* one of these pictures, it can be assumed that attendance may have been higher than the amount of tickets sold reveals. But many other *classic* films were used for similar purposes, so the question remaining is why the film did not attract the adult audience. That *Great Expectations* flopped or had to be yanked in certain first-run theatres supports the idea that box office revenues depended more on the films projected than on the splendour of the movie palaces. And it also suggests the necessity to find more intricate and profound reasons to explain the flop. Dick (1997: 81) has noticed that, during the thirties, Universal's films experienced difficulties to connect with both the audience and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (which ignored the company until 1937). The reason was that those pictures "needed a longer time to find acceptance". However, it seems that he was likely referring to Universal's horror and B movies, and to the fact that these films were popular among the uneducated and workers, but not among the middle and upper classes. It should be reminded that Universal's principle target was the rural, small-town movie houses, where the horror factory found a ready-made niche. In contrast, middle and upper classes were not interested either in series Westerns and inexpensive versions of popular class-A genres (productions in which the studio had specialized), or in horror movies. This fact explains the focus that Universal placed on producing prestige films for the first-run market in order to reach a wider audience. The way they addressed those prestigious films is a different matter. *Great Expectations* failed not because of an audience's general disinterest on Dickensian stories. MGM's version of *David Copperfield* succeeded both among the audience and critics just one year later.

The picture leded *The Film Daily's* Ten Best list of 1935 (“*Copperfield* heads 1935 ‘Ten Best’”, 1936: 1) and was nominated for Best Picture of that year. But it is fair to remind that *Great Expectations* was not among readers’ favourite Dickens novel. Especially among children, who considered it a dark story (Hammond, 2015: 83). Moreover, the film also failed in its attempt to please the British audience while reviving Dickens’ popularity in the United States. This *double nature* comprising the *British* and the *American* resulted in a film “too British (stuffy and old-fashioned) for the Americans; too Hollywood (historically inaccurate and emotionally overblown) for the British” (Hammond, 2015: 98).

## Film forms and genres

The advent of sound involved to convene a standard projection speed (so far, films were usually overspeeding to squeeze in more pictures in each show) and allowed exhibitors to know the running time of each feature. Thus, they could synchronize their programmes for quick turnover by adding or subtracting short subjects depending on whether a venue was urban or rural, as well as on the day-to-day reaction of the audience (Doherty, 1999b: 150). Common movie theatres programmes were adapted to the new demands and tastes. Live acts were gradually eliminated; instead, managers listed two of three features (the second and third being often a cheap B picture), besides the above-mentioned short films. It was a strategy to attract moviegoers when the Great Depression made unaffordable to spend on entertainment. In order to bring in extra income, they also offered sticky food and liquid refreshment, and placed gum and candy machines in the lobbies. Moreover, many exhibitors abandoned the all-white attendance policy (Doherty, 1999b: 147; *see also* Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 218). The purpose was to raise as much revenues as possible.

The major studios sought to increase efficiency and quality by developing vertical integration strategies. Balio (1995: 73) argues that the production process of these companies had to accomplish three purposes: (1) they had to maintain a regular and high quantity production to get rapid audience turnover, (2) their motion pictures must appeal to a wide audience, and (3) they had to attract filmgoers consistently over long periods of time. To reach these goals, studio corporations “made significant changes in the kind

of film they made” (Cormack, 1994: 6). They introduced several innovations, as new methods of sound recording (i.e. lighter unidirectional microphones; separate registration of music, voices and sound effects and subsequent mixture...), mobile support systems for camera movements, colour filmmaking or special effects (multi-camera filming, rear-projection and optical printing techniques...). Those innovations, nevertheless, did not change the classical Hollywood approach to filmmaking, centred on the narrative action and the character psychology (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 219-24). Rather, it was the emergence of specific genres and production trends what made the period 1930-1945 a golden age for the American film industry. Musicals, comedies (with several variants as screwball, sentimental, populist, romantic, low-life, anarchistic...), gangster pictures, horror films, war films, Westerns, social problem drama and animations were explored (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 228-37; *see also* Balio, 1995: 179-312; Cousins, 2003). Hollywood’s narrative style and commercial efficiency “rested on the strategy of avoiding sudden saltations for gradual, often imperceptible modulations” (Ray, 1985: 29). According to Cousins (2003), this principle “encompassed the matrix of Western entertainment until the 1950s”.

On October 15, 1934, the front page of *The Motion Picture and the Family* (“1934-35 season unparalleled...”, 1934: 1-3) informed about those pictures in exhibition, production or planned for the 1934-5 season. There were a total of 279 titles (Westerns and untitled productions were not included). 105 of them were adaptations from novels, books and short stories, while 49 were screen versions of stage plays. The remainder of films were based on original scripts. With regard to the genres, the classification was as follows: 34 films were musical productions; 22 were devoted to historical and biographical subjects, and the same number were comedies (additionally, 12 domestic comedies and 8 farces were in production); 21 films recounted love stories; adventure was the main topic for 16 pictures, apart from 6 aviation films and 3 movies dealing with animal life; 13 pictures faced social problems including war, divorce and its effect on children, or the impact of the machine age; 9 films depicted society dramas and 8 more were social satires. Besides, 2 productions were devoted to radio broadcasting and 3 more to vaudeville and theatrical life. This demonstrates the variety of genres that were explored by production companies. For the purpose of this research, what seems of interest is the large increase in the number of adaptations from the great classics of literature. Several classic works were set, including *Last Days of Pompeii*, *The Three*

*Musketeers*, *Treasure Island*, *Count of Monte Cristo*, *Petersburg Night*, *A Bachelor's Establishment* and three Dickens' novels: *David Copperfield*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and *Great Expectations* ("25 classic works...", 1934: 1). Apart from classic authors as Charles Dickens himself, Alexandre Dumas, William Shakespeare, Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Edgar Allan Poe, Honoré de Balzac or Edward Bulwer-Lytton, the works of many other leading novelists, playwrights and popular writers were to be screened. In the realm of specific entertainment themes, historical and biographical films experienced a great increase with respect to the previous year. The number of musical films grew as well, while the output of comedy and detective/mystery films remained constant.

In line with these tendencies, between the end of the 1920s and the early 1930s, Universal moved from Westerns towards horror movies, and then towards the prestige film (which included different genres). It seems just right that the company opted to adapt Dickens, a well-known author, with entertaining plots, memorable characters and enough social consciousness without being too much moralizing. The coming of sound, besides, made Great Britain a more lucrative market, for linguistic reasons. However, the choice of *Great Expectations* supports the belief that Universal did never deem the film a sure-fire seller. From all the Dickens novels, the company adapted the one that had been "historically unreliable in its audience appeal" (Hammond, 2015: 99), since previous attempts had not been successful in terms of reception. The small budget of the film also reinforces this assumption. In conclusion, it is likely that *Great Expectations* was intended to please the moral standards of the Production Code rather than to appeal to a mass audience.

## **Chapter 8. Great Expectations (1946): An adaptation with classic status**

### ***Great Expectations* exceeds expectations**

Despite not being as popular as other Dickens' novels, *Great Expectations* experienced a fresh revival over the 1940s. One of the reasons was the success of Alec Guinness' stage adaptation premiered in 1939. In addition, Mass Observation<sup>16</sup> researches reported an increasing public interest in books and, more specifically, in classics. In fact, Dickens was considered among British readers' favourite writers. Curiously enough, this re-evaluation of classic authors and their works was more significant among the less educated classes and the young population (Rose, 2002: 230-36; *see also* Hammond, 2015: 117). This is an important finding in the understanding of the good fortunes of the 1946 film adaptation of *Great Expectations*. After the Second World War, moviegoers were largely adolescents and young adults, as well as workers.

The new attempt to bring *Great Expectations* to the screen was carried out by the British production company Cineguild and directed by renowned filmmaker David Lean. The original screenplay was written by English novelist and playwright Clemence Dane, but the result did not please Lean. He found that Dane had followed the novel to the letter, thus comprising every event to such an extent that it became difficult to follow the plot. Lean confessed to film historian Kevin Brownlow (1996) that

What she wrote was so awful that I cannot even begin to describe it. [...] If I had done it, she would have turned on me and written letters to *The Times* about the desecration of Dickens. It was hideously embarrassing.

Lean had a rather different idea for the film. He had seen Guinness' professional stage adaptation and had become astonished. At that time, Lean was not any authority

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<sup>16</sup> Mass Observation is a social research organization that collects material about everyday life in Britain.



on Dickens: *A Christmas Carol* was the only novel he had read so far (Brownlow, 1996). After watching the play, he read the novel and thought: “What a movie!” (Organ, 2009: 118). Guinness’ adaptation, besides, was a great success. It run for six weeks and gathered some good reviews, despite Guinness’ decision to drive out whole plot points rather than just individual characters. According to Hammond (2015: 101), those changes suggest the kind of audience that Guinness expected to attract: theatre-goers who have read the novel and, therefore, were capable of following the stage version even if the adapter took some liberties. This version was, in any sense, very different from previous and subsequent remediations intended for either the stage or the screen<sup>17</sup>. What seems of importance is that the play had a tremendous influence on Lean, so much so that he would never have done the film if he had not seen it. This being so, Lean’s approach to the film imitated Guinness, for he drove out whole themes and focused in certain key plot lines. After reading the novel for the umpteenth time, Lean was able to separate the scenes which he believed that would make a good film from those ones he considered dull. Afterwards, he linked up the episodes and filled the gaps among them (Brownlow, 1996).

These observations prove that the British filmmaker rejected to tie too faithfully to the letter of the source text. For Lean, it made no sense to follow a novel page by page, even phrase by phrase. Literature and cinema are different languages, and language is never fixed: it concerns the transformative and, often, is restricted to a subjective point of view. In Lean’s version, *Great Expectations* becomes a *rhizome*, as defined by Deleuze and Guattari, which gets new forms and meanings through several process of *remediations*, from book to stage and, then, to screen. In fact, Lean was more inspired by Guinness’ adaptation than by the novel itself. Not without reason, Guinness noted down in his diary that when he found out that the initial script used the figure of a reader to link the scenes, he considered it a sort of plagiarism. His biographer, Piers Paul Read (2003: 203-5), even suggests that it is unlikely that Guinness would have taken part in the film if he had “not felt that to dramatize *Great Expectations* was somehow *his* idea and Herbert Pocket *his* role”. Be that as it may, for both the critics and the audience, Lean’s *Great Expectations*

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<sup>17</sup> For more details on this issue, see chapter 3 of Hammond’s *Charles Dickens’s Great Expectations: A Cultural Life, 1860–2012*.

became the first adaptation of this classic (and, perhaps, the only one) which captured the essence of the Dickensian spirit.

## **Narrative discourse in *Great Expectations* (D. Lean, 1946)**

As pointed out by McFarlane (2008), Lean's *Great Expectations* has gained the status of *classic film* and *classic adaptation*. The author adds that it is not "a flawless film". This statement goes in line with the methodological approach of his analysis. As noted in the Literature Review section, McFarlane relies on the question of *fidelity* to examine different adaptations of *Great Expectations*. He looks at the book-to-film univocal correspondence, and focuses on the transposition of events from page to screen. Despite the enormous value of his contribution, it remains limited and has problems in representing the influence of external factors in the process of adaptation. Those factors will be identified and discussed below.

### **Narrative functions**

The comparison between the cardinal functions present in the novel and those present in the film supports the assumption that Lean focused on a few key plotlines and leaved aside the material that he did not considered powerful enough to make the plot advance. Notwithstanding, it is almost certainly that some ellipsis does not allow the film to explore the whole potential of the story. Orlick's absence, Pip's heartfelt departure from Joe and Bidley to move to London or the financial support that he secretly provides for Herbert, even if they are not necessary to follow the plot, deviate from Dickens' purpose of presenting Pip as a complex character who experiments an inner journey of moral progress, from innocence, passing through snobbery, to his final redemption (Hanbery MacKay, 1985: 189). To compensate for these lacks, the film puts emphasis on portraying Magwitch, Miss Havisham and, especially, Compeyson, as villains. At this point, it is worth it to make some comments on the second convict. Pip finds out, via Wemmick, that Compeyson is an enemy of Magwitch, but the film offers no information about the

relationship between both characters. This variation adds suspense to the plot, but it prevents the audience to establish the link between Compeyson and Miss Havisham's jilting. Similarly, the film does not explain how Pip concludes that Magwitch is Estella's father. Changes at script level also affects Drummle, whose role is reduced to a merely dance-partner, whereas Herbert's aspiration to start his own business is driven out.

These observations appear to support the assumption that Lean aims to explore the opposition between childhood/adulthood, country/city, humility/snobbery and labouring class/gentry. For this purpose, he uses different settings: the marshes, Satis House and London. Contrary to previous versions, this film shows more interest in exploring *Great Expectations*' potential for psychological realism; at least, in the case of Pip. Some scenes prove to be successful in portraying his internal struggle between duty and desire, self-improvement and snobbery, or ambition and regret.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (NOVEL)	<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (FILM)
<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>	<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>
<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>	<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>
<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>	<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>
<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella.</b>
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file	
<b>Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek</b>	<b>Pip returns to Satis House and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek</b>
Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham	
Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice	
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
Mrs Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)	

	<b>Mrs Joe dies</b>
<b>Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House</b>	<b>Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House</b>
<b>Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman</b>	<b>Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman</b>
	Pip revisits Satis House several times and meets Mr Jaggers
<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>
<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>	<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>
<b>Pip goes to London</b>	<b>Pip goes to London</b>
<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>	<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn</b>
<b>Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting</b>	<b>Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting</b>
Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket	<b>Pip is educated</b> by Herbert Pocket
<b>Pip gets money from Jaggers to set himself up</b>	<b>Pip gets money from Jaggers to set himself up</b>
Pip dines with Jaggers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle).	Pip and Herbert fall into debt
He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)	<b>Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age</b>
<b>Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn</b>	<b>Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn</b>
<b>Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)</b>	<b>Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)</b>
<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>	<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>
<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella</b>	<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella</b>
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>	<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	
Mrs Joe dies	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
<b>Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age</b>	
Pip takes Estella to Satis House	
She and Miss Havisham argue	
<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>	<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>

<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>
<b>Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers</b>	<b>Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers</b>
<b>Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape</b>	<b>Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape</b>
Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)	
<b>Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella</b>
<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>	<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>
<b>Wemmick warns Pip of being watched</b>	<b>Wemmick warns Pip of being watched</b>
<b>Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape</b>	<b>Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape</b>
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	
<b>Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)</b>	Magwitch reveals Pip he has a child
Pip goes to deserted sluice house	
Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house	
<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>	<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>
<b>Pip loses fortune</b>	<b>Magwitch is tried</b>
<b>Magwitch is tried</b>	<b>Pip loses fortune</b>
	<b>Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)</b>
<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>	<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>
<b>Pip becomes ill</b>	<b>Pip becomes ill</b>
<b>Joe looks after Pip</b>	<b>Joe looks after Pip</b>
<b>Biddy and Joe get married</b>	<b>Biddy and Joe get married</b>
Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.	
<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House</b>	<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House</b>

What stands out in this table is the high number of cardinal functions that have been retained in the film. As will be shown, differences between both works remain at the level of *catalyses* or complementary functions. That is, the film departs from the novel in the way in which *fills in* and connects the narrative space separating the *hinge-type functions*. Similarly to previous adaptations, it pays more attention to the first part or stage of the

novel, to which it dedicates around 43 minutes (38 per cent) of the running time. The film opens with a close-up shot of chapter one of Dickens' *Great Expectations*, as the voice-over, presumably belonging to adult Pip, reads the first paragraph: "My father's family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip". A sudden gust of wind whips up and shakes the pages of the book. This shot fades out while an extreme long shot of the marshes fades up. The sound of the wind can be still heard. The continuity of this sound effect and the use of dissolve convey the idea of identification. They link the voice-over with the boy who appears in the second shot. It is remarkable how climate conditions (gloomy cloudy sky, high wind, or birdsongs) emphasize the gothic style of the scene. As the boy arrives to the churchyard, the film alternates close-ups of his face with point-of-view shots to indicate fear and to add tension. This tension reaches its peak when the boy bumps into the convict.

Pip faces then the dilemma of whether or not he should help Magwitch. The film pays much attention to the conflicts for Pip versus himself (he risks his life if he does not steal some food and a file for the convict) and society (he can be convicted if he helps Magwitch). To emphasize Pip's guilty feeling, it uses several cinematic elements. That night, Magwitch's voice-over reminds Pip that "A boy may be warm in bed. He may pull the clothes over his head. But that young man will softly creep his way to him and tear him open". As he goes downstairs, Pip believes to hear Joe's voice urging Mrs Joe to wake up. At the pantry, the film shows Pip in medium shot, placed at the centre of screen, and a death rabbit hanging on the right side. Sentences to death by hanging were common in the early 1800s. The death rabbit becomes a prop used to graphically illustrate Pip's fear and guiltiness. At the same time, a voice-over claims "You are a thief!" As the prop is organic to the scene, it is able to convey emotions without calling attention to itself. It is remarkable how this scene resembles another one from 1934's *Great Expectations*:



Fig. 8. Similarities in two scenes from 1934's and 1946's *Great Expectations*

The metaphor of the death rabbit is not used in other earlier or subsequent adaptations, which suggests that Lean was inspired by his predecessor for this scene. The assumption that the British filmmaker knew or had seen the previous version from 1934 is supported by further arguments. On the one hand, Francis L. Sullivan, who had played the role of Mr Jaggers in Universal's film, was chosen again for the same character. On the other hand, Valerie Hobson, who had played Bidley (although the scenes where she appeared were finally cut off), was picked, in this case, to play the role of Estella. As the film follows, Pip meets a herd of cows on his way to the churchyard. There is a sense of irony in the way these peaceable animals, shot in close-ups, say "You're a thief, Pip" or "You'll be sent to the hulks", among other threats (whether intentionally or not, the voices seem to belong to Mrs Joe, Miss Havisham and Mr Jaggers). The ensuing events (Pip's second meeting with Magwitch; the Christmas dinner with Joe, Mrs Gargery, Uncle Pumblechook, and Mr and Mrs Hubble; the hunt for the convicts along the marshes; and Magwitch's self-incrimination for having stolen the food and the file) are narrated with faultless economy and a strong touch of realism.

Afterwards, the film focuses on the Satis House episode. This storyline is presented through a tragicomic set-piece scene. There is much humour in the manner in which Mrs Joe arrives to the forge and barks their names at Pip and Joe; her voice is muted while a happy and light-hearted score is added to create contrast. The Satis House plot includes several visits, which follow quite closely the novel except for the last one. There, it is Pip the one who informs Miss Havisham that he can't continue visiting her because he has to start his apprenticeship as a blacksmith. This variation does not affect the course of the story, but it ignores the potential for drama that this scene has in the novel. There is a sense of cruelty in the way in which Miss Havisham has fun at Joe and Pip's expense;

this fact makes Pip move from innocence towards ingratitude and shame of home. In the film, this powerful effect is lost.

In the sixth year of his apprenticeship, Pip's receives from Mr Jaggers the news of his great expectations. The film combines *low-angle* and *high-angle* shots in this scene. It uses a *low-angle* shot, which appears to be Pip's point of view, to portray Jaggers. This causes the lawyer to appear larger-than-life. It transfer power and authority to him, making him appear to dominate Pip. The *low-angle* cuts to a *high-angle*, which, in this case, appears to be Jagger's point of view. Shot from above, Pip appears small and vulnerable. By intercutting these two shots, the film emphasizes empathy as the audience gets to see Jaggers as Pip sees him (as some who inspires fear). The *hi-lo* combination is also used, with the same purpose, to establish the relationship between Pip and Magwitch, Mrs Joe and Miss Havisham.



**Fig. 9. Low-angle shots express the dominance of Jaggers, Magwitch, Mrs Gargery and Miss Havisham over Pip**

The second part of the film covers around 40 minutes (35 per cent) of the running time and does not dwell that much on details. It deals with Pip's education as a gentleman (Herbert Pocket acts as his master in dancing, fencing, boxing, as well as in the good



manners at the table), his falling into debt, Estella's playing with Pip's feelings and the final return of Magwitch to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor. It seems of interest to compare the scene at the Assembly Ball with 1934's *Great Expectations*. In both cases, Pip asks Estella if she deceives and entraps Drummle, to which she replies: "Yes, and many others. All of them, but you". What is remarkable is the different intonation used by Jane Wyatt in 1934 and Valerie Hobson in 1946, which marks the character of the scene. While Wyatt expresses hesitation and repressed desire, Hobson shows indifference and coldness. It is also noticeable the film's attempt to delve into Pip's growing snobbery. In London, Mr Gargery becomes simply *Joe, the blacksmith*. His tender inability to hang his hat, his undecided character and his clumsiness at the table irritate *sir Pip*. From his apparently social superiority, Pip is ashamed of his old friend. When Joe leaves Barnard's Inn, Pip does not attempt to follow or look for him (as he does in the novel); rather, the voice-over reveals his inner conflict between shame and regret:

All that day, Joe's simple dignity filled me with reproach. And next morning I began the journey to our town, knowing that I should sleep that night at the forge. But as the miles went by, I became less convinced of this, and I invented reasons and excuses for not doing so. [...] All other swindlers upon earth are nothing to the self-swindler. And with such pretenses did I cheat myself.

With this confession, Pip initiates a shift towards moral redemption. This feeling dominates the third section of the film, which covers around 23 minutes (around 20 per cent) of the running time and. After Magwitch's return, the ensuing events follow quite closely the novel, with the exception of the Pip-Orlick plotline, plus some other minor variations. Pip reproaches Miss Havisham her behaviour, Estella announces that she will marry Drummle and Miss Havisham dies due to the fire. Back in London, Pip, along with Herbert and Wemmick, conceives a plan for Magwitch's escape, but it fails. The convict is tried and sentenced to death, which, consequentially, leaves Pip without fortune, although he shows no interest in money. Before Magwitch dies, Pip confesses the convict that his daughter is alive and that he loves her. This series of events drives Pip to fall ill. The film uses a trembling subjective camera in soft focus, which simulates Pip's point of view, in order to suggest that he is losing consciousness. Pip's growth in moral stature culminates when he recovers and discovers that Joe has been taken care of him. Back to

the marshes, he returns to Satis House (not destroyed as in the novel). While he crosses the garden and enters into the house, Pip recalls the voices of young Estella, Mr Jaggers and Miss Havisham, which reminds him of his first visits during the childhood. Upstairs, Pip finds Estella installed in Miss Havisham's old chair. Moving away from the original ending of the novel, the last scene gets a new significance. Pip tears off the curtains and lets the sunlight enter into the room. He offers Estella the beginning of a new era, which, metaphorically, seems to refer to the end the Second World War.

### The narrating instance

With the introduction of Pip's voice-over, Lean did a better job than Walker in approaching the first-person narrator. In fact, as will be shown, most of the subsequent adaptations of *Great Expectations* have included this film element.

As described in the previous section, the film begins with the voice of adult Pip reading the opening lines of *Great Expectations* while the screen is filled by a *close-up* of the first page of the novel, held by the hands of an anonymous reader. This scene quickly dissolves into an *extreme wide* shot of the marsh country with young Pip running to the churchyard, left to right across the screen. The contrast between the voice of an adult and the image of a boy, as well as between the place from where the reader reads and the marshes, clearly indicates the existence of two separate narrative levels. Adult Pip's recount of his *mémoires* is at a first or *extradiegetic* level, while the events told in those *mémoires* are inside this first narrative, so they are placed at an *intradiegetic* level. The narrative agency, therefore, has an *extra-homodiegetic* character because of Pip's double nature as narrator and hero of the story. The voice-over is introduced at certain points over the film, which implies the existence of *metalepses* or transitions from the intra to the *extradiegetic* level. Another possible implication that can be inferred from these observations is that the unspecified location where the reader is placed might be defined as an *extra-hyperdiegetic* level. This entails a narrative layer higher than the *extradiegetic* narrative and suggests an extensive expanse of the narrative space. This outer environment invites the viewer to actively create or imagine a larger universe while it is useful to engage the audience in the story.

The voice-over, together with the use of multiple *point-of-view* shots to represent what Pip sees support the assumption that the film presents *internal focalization* through this character. Overall, it is Pip's perspective that drives the narrative. His centrality is achieved not only through the use of the voice-over, but also due to his near omnipresence in every scene of the film. McFarlane (1996: 125) has also emphasized the key role that the use of the subjective camera plays in sharing Pip's point of view with the audience. However, a more comprehensive approach suggests that some of these *point-of-view* shots are not really that. Rather, the angle of the camera and the position of Pip are different, so what the camera shows does not correspond with which Pip sees, as the images prove:



Fig. 10. False *point-of-view* shots to represent Pip's perspective

This observation support the notion that there is a significant distance between the *I-narrator* and the *I-character*, although they are both the same person. This question will be further discussed in the following section. At this moment, suffice it to say that, even if they are not *point-of-view* shots strictly speaking, they are *eye-level* shots, which help to express Pip's feelings and lend sympathy to him.

However, as noted with regard to 1934's *Great Expectations*, this *internal focalization* is not fixed; rather, it is mixed with a *non-focalized* narrative applied to the camera. This statement hinges on the existence of two scenes where Pip is not present. The first one occurs when Mrs Joe, in a carriage, comes home with the news of Miss Havisham's

request to take Pip to Satis House. The second one takes place when Herbert goes alone to carry out some procedures as part of the plan for Magwitch's escape. In both cases, the voice of adult Pip describes the scenes. However, albeit he maintains his status as narrator of the story (for it is his voice the one who drives the narration), the narrative mood is, necessarily, *non-focalized*. Pip, as one of the characters of the story, can only recount what he has lived; obviously, no one can remember what (s)he has not experienced. *Internal focalization* implies restriction of the field of vision of the events, which does not apply to the scenes that have been described. As an instance to confirm this assertion, the latter scene, where Herbert, according to Pip's narration, buys the boat tickets, the film shows the audience that Compeyson is watching him. However, Herbert himself does not notice his presence; consequently, it is not possible that he can inform Pip about it. In fact, the voice-over does not mention his presence. This can only be explained if the presence of an omniscient narrative agency, the *image-maker*, is accepted.

## Narrator

It has been noted that the voice of adult Pip orients the narrative of 1946's *Great Expectations*. Hence, the film uses a first-person narrator, whose knowledge of the events is limited or restricted, as previously discussed. This assumption involves questions about Pip's reliability as narrator.

The film, like the novel, has a first-person main character and an *I-narrator*, who, in a broad sense, are the same person. However, they do not share the same time and space and, consequentially, they do not share the same knowledge. The distance between the two *I's* is of particular significance. The adult narrator distances himself from his *infant tongue* in the way he reports events with evaluative commentaries. After his sister's death, the narrator reports: "The occasion was marked for me not so much by the passing of Mrs Joe, but by the arrival of Biddy. Very soon she became a trusted friend [...]". Similarly, the first time he returns to the marshes after becoming a gentleman, adult Pip confesses: "And next morning I began the journey to our town, knowing that I should sleep that night at the forge. But as the miles went by, I became less convinced of this, and I invented reasons and excuses for not doing so". The narrative of adult Pip encompasses a narrator-child relationship based on a dramatic rather than a psychological

position, and his commentaries seem to be more a help to the viewer in picturing the scene. The words used to represent perception are not attributable to the character, even though their purpose is to recreate Pip's own experiences. The utilization of framing verbs of perception and consciousness is neutral and objective, while the vocabulary employed is more elaborated than the language that one would expect from a child (based on conventional nouns, basic-level syntax, repetition of words...). The honest verbalization of child Pip's feelings suggest no discordant intrusion by the narrator. Adult Pip admits his shameful thoughts and snobbish attitude, as noted above, and seems to be right when reporting, interpreting and evaluating events. The film shows no contradiction between images and the narrator's recount; ultimately, the fact that the film is focalized, at some points, through the camera only proves that Pip has a limited field of vision due to his double nature hero/narrator. He verbalizes what he has lived through the evaluation of events; in doing so, he transforms experience and establishes the lines of past and present. In conclusion, the adult narrator in 1946's *Great Expectations* seems to behave more as a witness narrator than as a memoirist. The *I-narrator* identifies with his childhood experiences, but clearly distances himself from the *I-character*. This assumption provides veracity to his account and implies reliability. The tone of his speech emphasizes maturity, acceptance and reconciliation. Hence, none of his commentaries induces the audience to look for a different meaning from the one that the images supply. Rather, his account responds to the narrative and directing functions that prevail in the ordinary omniscient narrator.

## Temporality and order

At the *intradiegetic* level, 1946's *Great Expectations* shows no rupture of the temporal succession of events as there is no use of *analepses* (flash-backs) or *prolepses* (flash-forwards). Notwithstanding, the film manages to recall the past through the spoken word. For example, the first night they have dinner together, Herbert tells Pip Miss Havisham's past story concerning her failed wedding. In a subsequent scene, Pip knocks Herbert out with a right hook that evokes the fight they had during their childhood. Towards the end of the film, Magwitch confesses Pip that he had a child of his own once (Estella), but he lost her. Similarly, as mentioned above, when Pip returns to Satis House after the collapse

of his expectations, he recalls the voices and words of child Estella, Mr Jiggers and Miss Havisham, which he could hear during his first visits. These memories and events are shown on the screen, what forces the audience to make independent, private mental recreations of them.

In contrast, there are variations between novel and film with regard to the arrangement of events, as the table that compares the cardinal functions notes. For instance, Mrs Joe's decease takes place much earlier in the film (after Pip's second visit to Satis House) than in the novel (where Pip is already a Londoner gentleman). The other major difference concerns Magwitch. Contrary to 1934's *Great Expectations*, where the convict takes a prominent role after revealing himself as Pip's benefactor, in the 1946 version his appearance is rather limited. The recount of his past story is very much comprised: it barely mentions Compeyson (who is referred as Magwitch's *enemy*) or Estella (a little child he had and lost), while it does not involve Molly. It is Pip himself who concludes that Estella is Magwitch's daughter, and forces Jiggers to admit it after the convict is sentenced to death. By contrast, in the novel, Magwitch reveals Pip and Herbert his past story (involving Miss Havisham, Compeyson and Molly) just after he returns. Pip confirms with Jiggers this information before he falls into Orlick's tramp and much earlier than he accomplishes the plan for Magwitch's escape.

As regards the remainder cardinal functions, there are no significant variations in the arrangement of the events. What seems to have greater relevance is the running time that Lean dedicates to each temporal segment, as well as the omission of some events present in the source text. All these matters will be conveniently analysed in the following section.

## Narrative rhythm

Using the same procedure than in previous chapters, the narrative rhythm of Lean's and Dickens' *Great Expectations* will be compared. The analysis of the measuring variations in the speed of the film's narrative shows that much of the running time is assigned, foremost, to the first stage and, to a lesser extent, to the third stage of Pip's great expectations. It pays much attention to Pip's several visits to Satis House, both as a labouring boy and as a gentleman, as well as to the preparations of the plan for

Magwitch's scape. As will be described, the narrative movements concerning ellipsis, pause, scene and summary support these observations.

<p><i>Pip and the convict (00:00 – 18:12)</i>. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested and sent into exile.</p>	<p><i>Pip and the convict (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42)</i>. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.</p>
<p><i>At Satis House (18:13 – 32:15)</i>. Temporal break (one year). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>
<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (32:15 – 33:42)</i>. Temporal break (three months).</p>	
<p><i>At Satis House (bis) (33:43 – 37:11)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House before becoming a blacksmith apprentice.</p>	
	<p><i>The blacksmith boy (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>
<p><i>Great expectations (37:12 – 40:27)</i>. Temporal break (six years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>	<p><i>Great expectations (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160)</i>. Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>
<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (40:28 – 1:08:47)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>	<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>
	<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285)</i>. Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>
<p><i>End of great expectations (1:08:48 – 1:30:40)</i>. Temporal break (several years). Pip discovers</p>	<p><i>End of great expectations (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421)</i>. Temporal (several years) and</p>

<p>that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>	<p>spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>
	<p><i>Attempt of murder (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433).</i> Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.</p>
<p><i>Magwitch's decease (1:30:41 – 1:44:21).</i> Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.</p>	<p><i>Magwitch's decease (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460).</i> Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.</p>
<p><i>Return to the marshes (1:44:22 – 1:47:39).</i> Spatial break (move to the marshes). As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. Joe and Biddy get married.</p>	<p><i>Return to the marshes (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480).</i> As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.</p>
	<p><i>Clarriker and Co (Chapter LVIII, p. 480).</i> Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).</p>
<p><i>Return to Satis House (1:47:39 – 1:53:16).</i> Pip meets Estella at the ruins of Satis House.</p>	<p><i>Second return to the marshes (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484).</i> Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.</p>

According to this chronology, the main variations of speed in the narrative of the film with regard to the novel work out approximately like this:

<p>Pip and the convict: around 18 minutes for about one and a half day.</p>	<p>Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.</p>
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At Satis House: around 24 minutes for a few weeks.	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
Mrs. Gargery's funeral: less than 2 minutes for a few days.	
At Satis House (bis): around 4 minutes for several years.	
	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.
Great Expectations: around 3 minutes for 3 minutes.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
The Londoner gentleman: around 28 minutes for several years	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
	Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
End of great expectations: around 22 minutes for some months.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
Magwitch's decease: around 14 minutes for several weeks.	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
Return to the marshes: around 3 minutes for several months.	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
Return to Satis House: around 6 minutes for 6 minutes.	Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

### *Ellipsis*

Over the film, the adult narrator introduces temporal breaks in the narrative. At minute 18:13 of the film, the voice-over states: "it was a year later", indicating a one-year ellipsis

between the convict's arrest and the news of his visit to Satis House. Similarly, at minute 26:23, adult Pip notes that his second visit to Satis House takes place "the following week", that is, one week after the first one. Subsequently, there is a temporal break of three months. The spectator moves back to the marshes to find out that Mrs Gargery has died because of an illness. Pip continues visiting Miss Havisham until he begins his apprenticeship as a blacksmith. Then, there is a temporal break of six years (introduced by Pip's voice-over in the minute 37:18) before Mr Jaggers brings Pip the news of his great expectations.

Another example is found in the minute 1:00:20, when the adult narrator recounts that "all that day, Joe's simple dignity filled me with reproach, and next morning I began the journey to our town knowing that I should sleep that night at the forge". The time-related adverb "all that day" is heard while the screen shows a static image of Pip looking at himself in the mirror, which fades into another scene where Pip is travelling by horse-drawn to the marshes. Other indications expressing temporal breaks are "The following day" and "One day...", while there is a new ellipsis (of undetermined length) between the moment in which Pip falls ill and the day he wakes up and recovers.

### *Pause*

There is a sense of descriptive pause in the scene that takes place at the beginning of the film in the country marsh. Several long and full shots, as well as point-of-view shots that simulate Pip's subjective view are used to represent the churchyard at the marshes: the road towards the cemetery surrounded by the river, the tombstone of Pip's parents, the woods... Afterwards, the narrative rhythm speeds up: terribly frightened, Pip gets running and bumps into the convict, who uses a rapid, explosive speech. Magwitch demands quick responses, which reinforces the sense of urgency of the scene. This temporal segment ends with a new contrast between the long shots that focus the attention on the landscape and Pip's running to return home. Once there, the speed of the narrative slows down again: Pip walks crouching, with sluggish movements, while Joe speaks using a leisurely intonation.

During his second journey to the churchyard, there is a new sense of descriptive pause, where the time of the *factual narrative* corresponds to a non-existent diegetic duration. The purpose of the scene is to externalise Pip's fears and worries (he even

imagines that some cows accuse him of theft), rather than reporting an event that makes the plot advance.

### *Summary*

The film accelerates the speed of the narration in three episodes. Towards the end of *At Satis House (bis)*, the adult narrator encompasses in a brief account his numerous visits to Satis House over an undetermined lapse of time (probably some months or even certain years): his regular occupation of pushing Miss Havisham's chair, his growing love for Estella and the disdain she shows to him, his night tribulations at bed...

At the beginning of *The Londoner gentleman*, Pip's journey to London is summarized by mixing shots of the carriage and close-ups of Pip. These shots are superimposed over a stylized map which follows the way to London. Afterwards, Pip's education as a gentleman is reduced to a conventional montage of social activities as dancing, fencing and boxing. The same technique is used later on to sum up the different entertainments that Pip and Estella attend.

Finally, in the episode *The end of great expectations*, the preparations of the plan for Magwitch's escape are summarized in a few shots, which are accompanied by Pip's voice-over. The narrator describes the process of training and practice, the search of a lone public house to stay on the night of their escape, how carefully they plan the passing of the packet boat or how Magwitch ought to pretend to be a river pilot in order to go unnoticed.

### *Scene*

The film provides many scenes where the narrative time and the story time are equivalent. The use of this device gives certain scenes a preeminent position over those ones that have been summarized. Certainly, two key episodes as *Great Expectations* and *Return to Satis House* are representative examples. Notwithstanding, there are other scenes that fit into this category, as those placed in between the shots where the narrative speed slows down (pauses) and the shots where such speed is accelerated (summaries). This adaptation masterfully manages the narrative rhythm in order to direct our attention to the events that are considered of higher importance. For example, after using summary

to encompass Pip's several visits to Satis House, the film speed slows down when Pip informs Miss Havisham that he will not come back again. Similarly, the preparations of the plan for Magwitch's escape are summarized, while the performance of such plan is showed entirely.

## **Political, economic and sociocultural background**

The end of the Second World War led to a period of economic recovery. Post-war prosperity promoted the emergence of national cinemas in Europe, which engaged with the Modernist trends and gave rise to influential film movements. Country-specific characteristics prevent film historians from providing a standard definition of European cinema, which "depends on where one places oneself, both in time and in space" (Elsaesser, 2005: 13). Films were regarded as excellent vehicles to convey and enhance values of national and cultural identity. Additionally, the importation of Hollywood films was too costly. Most European countries were in debt by 1945 and they rather opted for consuming the stocks retained during the war. Apart from that, two protection systems were established: (a) mandatory screen share of national cinema; and (b) control of Hollywood pictures' profits by means of taxes or the obligation to reinvest those incomes in the domestic film industry (Rimbau, 1995: 50).

A particular focus on the United Kingdom illustrates how British cinema attempted to emulate the popularity of Hollywood films while it aimed to gain a cultural status of art cinema. The difficulty to fit in both categories "informs a widespread and persistent critical tradition that depicts British cinema as occupying a kind of no-man's land between the two major modes of international film production" (Leach, 2004: 2). Nevertheless, over the 1940s, the British film industry experienced a period that is commonly referred to as the *Golden Age*. This decade saw the release of landmark films, the box-office success of home-grown products addressing national concerns, as well as structural changes in the domestic industry (Cook, 1996: 11). In this context, 1946's *Great Expectations* represents a *rara avis*. The film is both typical and atypical in its appeal to patriotism: it swings between the old-fashioned Victorian period and the embodiment of the new Britishness.

## Production, distribution and exhibition systems

The early years of the Second World War were characterized by studio space restrictions: over half was required either for war purposes or for propaganda films (Street, 2009: 13). Additionally, the blitz bombing caused serious damages in film studio production facilities over the country. Film stock and other essential materials for film production were rationed, which forced British corporations to budget cuts while attempting not to sacrifice the quality (Dixon, 1994: 41).

According to Macnab (1993: 43), “in wartime Britain, there was an unprecedented level of general interest in the way the country was being run, and in how it was going to be run once the war was over”. The film industry was considered a public affair that required to be scrutinized. British audience showed preferences for Hollywood over domestic films, a fact that was regarded as a double menace: on the one hand, authorities believed that American values could corrupt society, especially the youngest members; on the other hand, they were worried about an American undercover colonisation. Nevertheless, the British government was also in need of strengthening Anglo-American relations to secure a policy of alliance against Hitler. For that reason, they reduced quota obligations and allowed American companies to reinvest blocked earnings to make films outside the United Kingdom (Street, 2009: 14). Besides that, the British film industry had to face its own internal struggles. Two main companies, the Rank Organization and the Associated British Picture Corporation, threatened to monopolize the domestic market. As a response, in 1943, the Board of Trade’s Cinematograph Films Council appointed a Committee of Enquiry to examine the state of the industry. One year later, a report entitled “Tendencies to Monopoly in the Cinematograph Film Industry” (better-known as “Palace report”) concluded that motion pictures had political and cultural influence over society as they enhanced national life, ideas and traditions, and were suitable instruments for propaganda. For that reason, the British film industry could not be dominated by the ideology of one or two corporations (Collins, 1986: 296; *see also* Macnab, 1993: 43; Bennet, 2012: 166). However, by that time, the Rank Organization owned over half of Britain’s production space, whereas companies included in its conglomerate financed about half the homemade films from 1941 to 1947 (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 270). In July 1943, director David Lean, producer Anthony Havelock-Allan and cinematographer Ronald Neame founded Cineguild with the initial purpose of

adapting Noël Coward's plays to the screen. They associated with Two Cities Films, which had produced some popular and profitable films as *In Which We Serve* (1942). Both independent companies released two successful film versions of *This Happy Breed* (1944) and *Blithe Spirit* (1945). In late 1944, Rank gained the control of Two Cities Films in exchange for an agreement to finance its following pictures (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 272). Similarly, Cineguild accepted Rank's invitation to join Independent Producers, a relatively autonomous division within the conglomerate in which company would enjoy certain creative freedom (Burton & Chibnall, 2013: 102).

Rank's strategy was to support several independent companies in order to produce enough films for its theatre chains. As noted by Murphy (2000:3), "from 1943 onwards, most of the major films [...] came from Rank-controlled companies". At the same time, the profits generated by its cinema circuits made possible "to offer filmmakers unprecedentedly generous financial and creative terms on which to make their films". British films became of higher quality and could compete in the foreign market. Indeed, the Rank Organization came to an agreement with different Hollywood Majors to distribute its films in the United States, often with great results. As a result, the mid-1940s came to be known as the golden age of British cinema. According to Leach (2004: 32), "critics felt that the films that *were* being produced were the ones that the national cinema *ought* to produce". Notwithstanding, "even then, the critics who praised the 'quality' films that earned the period its reputation were aware that most British films did not conform to their criteria for cinematic excellence". One of the major concerns over the wartime was the question of British national identity. However, in the attempt to differentiate itself from the *others*, Britishness was defined more for what it was not than for what it was. In the case of cinema, the biggest effort was made on getting distance from Hollywood, "eschewing artificiality, glamour and naïve propaganda in favour of realism, expressed in terms of 'truth', 'simplicity' and 'sincerity'" (Cook, 1996: 30). National cinema tended to focus on specifically British subject-matter with ordinary people playing the leading roles in the films. Additionally, many films were literary adaptations featuring well-known actors (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 452).

It was in the peak year of 1946 when Cineguild produced an adaptation of *Great Expectations*, directed by David Lean. Lean had started as a filmmaker in 1942, when he co-directed *In Which We Serve* with Noël Coward. Afterwards, he directed three films more produced by and based on Coward's playwrights, being the last one *Brief Encounter*

(1945). That film was a huge success at the British and the American box offices, even though there were no big star names, the three leading characters were approaching middle-age, the film was played in unglamorous surroundings and there was an unhappy ending (Brownlow, 1996). Subsequently, Lean became the first director of a British film, since Alexander Korda, to be nominated for an Academy Award, what gave him certain popularity as a public figure. Despite the successful collaboration with Coward, Lean broke away with him and went on to a completely different sort of projects. He reached back to the nineteenth century for the Victorian novel *Great Expectations*, written by the popular Charles Dickens. It seemed a good option to adapt an English author in a moment in which the national cinema was looking for its own identity. The Rank Organization welcomed Lean's proposal. The company thought that a Dickens' adaptation would appeal to a mass audience and, most important, it would persuade Hollywood distributors to promote the film. Rank was right, and Universal International (curiously enough, the company that has produced 1934's *Great Expectations*) agreed to distribute the film in the United States (Phillips, 2006: 104).

## Cinema audience

In the United Kingdom, as much as in many countries, cinema became the most popular form of entertainment, especially for the young, working class, urban and more often female audience (Geraghty, 2000: 2). To attract middle-class spectators, an Act of the Parliament from 1909 forced managers to spend more money on their film venues. As a result, there were luxury movie palaces for wealthy viewers and cheap unlicensed places for the lower class. Spatial segregation occurred also within cinemas, which might offer varied ticket prices or have different entrances and seating arrangements.

In 1913, a central government censorship was established by the creation of the British Board of Film Censorship (BBFC). First censorship policies revolved around nudity, homosexuality, conventional sex, bloody violence, rape or drug-taking. Over the 1930s, the list of prohibited categories expanded: unfavourable portrayals of the British army, lawlessness in the Empire, miscegenation; satire on the institution of monarchy, whether or not British; any kind of incitement to revolution, or conflicts between the armed forces and the civil population; unfavourable portrayals of the British police,

judges or public personalities; or any other subject which might offend friendly countries. In short, the BBFC aimed “to eradicate from the screen any material the censors believed might undermine the internal moral, political and social status quo” (Robertson, 1982: 49). After the war, however, most of the BBFC policies were gradually abandoned while criticism focused on individual films rather than on the value of the self-censorship body itself.

On the other hand, the quota requirements of the 1927 Cinematograph Act forced distributors and exhibitors to provide a certain proportion of home-grown films. Since the British audience preferred Hollywood movies, they usually fulfilled the quota with low-budget pictures produced by minor British firms (Sedgwick & Pafort-Overduin, 2012: 98). In doing so, they strengthened moviegoers’ disinterest on domestic films. However, this trend changed after the outbreak of the Second World War. Murphy (2000: 3) explains that “The war aroused patriotic feelings, which meant that British films dealing with aspects of British life and culture were more warmly received” (Murphy, 2000: 3). They helped to build the imaginary of a national identity; furthermore, they soothed the fear of Americanisation of a largely passive audience over which American values and products had been imposed for years. Notwithstanding, exhibitors had to face other economic challenges. In 1942, “the introduction of sweets rationing and coupon exchange had the effect of severely curtailing cinema sales”, while the prohibition of ice-cream manufacture introduced the following year “completely denied exhibitors access to what had been a lucrative source of income” (Farmer, 2001: 489). For theatre owners, ancillary sales were not simply a supplementary income, but a necessary source of revenue that contributed decisively to the survival of their business (Farmer, 2001: 492). To relieve the critical decrease of incomes, exhibitors contrived to find some alternatives as soft drinks, cold sweets and peanut butter, or they tried to attract spectators with misleading advertising that made people believe in the availability of the banned foodstuff. Once the war came to an end, sweets and ice cream manufacture resumed and cinema attendance increased dramatically. Domestic films won positive reviews and started to compete against Hollywood pictures as box-office attractions. British cinema was at the peak of its golden era, in which director David Lean played a key role. With 1946’s *Great Expectations*, he brought the pre-modern past to life. Such appropriation of the Dickens novel for contemporary purposes attempted to capitalise both on literary adaptation and on the reputation of its leading actor John Mills, considered “as the epitome of a



particular mode of ‘English’ Britishness” (Plain, 2006: 3). Over the thirties, Mills had built a successful career that reached a balance between the “dutiful doomed youth” and the “redeemable teenage rebel” (Plain, 2006: 50). Present in leading films from a broad spectrum of genres, he was liked by all groups of filmgoers precisely because he embodied the English ideal of the ordinary man. The *Everyman* (and, by extension, the *Everywoman*) became the hero of the Second World War: (s)he had no exceptional qualities, but (s)he was not a coward either. Whatever role Mills played, regardless of the class he was performing, he fitted into the discourse of national masculinity based on the underdog. Not surprisingly, by the end of the war, he “was comfortably the most popular British male star” (Spicer, 2001: 81). Mills had already worked with David Lean in the 1942 patriotic war film *In Which We Serve*, as well as in the 1944 drama *This Happy Breed*. When planning the production of *Great Expectations*, Lean considered Mills again for the leading role: “I’ve got a part I would love you to play. I don’t know how you’ll feel about it because it’s not easy. It’s a sort of ‘coat hanger’ role, where a lot of marvellous characters hang all over you”. The British actor then asked: “It wouldn’t be Mr Pip would it?”, and Lean answered affirmatively (Neame & Roisman Cooper, 2003: 97). According to Plain (2006: 104), Mills was “unsinkable” and “ineffably linked to the ‘quality film’ product”, and *Great Expectations* gave him the opportunity to move from war films to the peacetime stories that the audience demanded. As an instance of his popularity, Mills’ short film looking into the camera and asking people if they knew someone who might play him as little boy (a strategy conceived by producer Ronald Neame in view of the difficulty to find the right actor) brought an avalanche of letters and photographs impossible to handle. Eventually, thirteen-year-old Anthony Wagner was chosen (Neame & Roisman Cooper, 2003: 98).

Several reviews of that time provide some indication that *Great Expectations* was estimated to have a warm reception. *The Film Daily* (“Reviews of new films...”, 1947: 8) stated that the picture “spells top grosses”, while *Harrison’s Reports* (“*Great Expectations* with John Mills...”, 1947: 51) argued that

While it will appeal chiefly to class audiences and to the lovers of Dickens’ works, it should please also the masses, for its mixture of pathos, romance, human appeal and comedy, to which is added

exciting touches of suspense and thrills, is presented in an interesting manner.

*Independent Exhibitors Film Bulletin* recommended the film to all types of theatres, “although grosses will vary from outstanding in class and arty houses to satisfactory in action houses” (“*Great Expectations*’ Dickens masterpiece becomes...”, 1947: 10). *Motion Picture Daily* noted that “*Great Expectations* obviously had to emerge as a period piece, and period pieces frequently encounter a highly variable reception”. Despite praising the film’s “meticulous attention to detail”, it wondered “whether or not American audiences at large in 1947, seeking their entertainment in straight pictures houses, [would] want Dickens” (Kann, 1947: 4). Key city grosses indicates that the picture did from fair to splendid business in many theatres at Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Montreal, Boston or Chicago. Moreover, *Great Expectations* became the first English film to play at the New Yorker Radio City Music Hall since 1939 (“Music Hall books *Great Expectations*...”, 1947: 1), and despite the fact that the most of the cast was unknown to American audiences, it “broke all previous Memorial Day records” (“Production unit reporting tottering”, 1947: 6). In fact, according to *Variety*, the picture “showed an amazing amount of staying power at the Music Hall, chalking up hefty \$120,000, or a hefty \$640,000 for the five-week run, topping anything done by a U.S. film since the Christmas holidays” (“Few newcomers, spotty weather hit...”, 1947: 11).

Interestingly enough, *Independent Exhibitors Film Bulletin* (“*Great Expectations*’ Dickens masterpiece becomes...”, 1947: 10) provided some tips about how exhibitors might sell the film. The keynote of the campaign should be based on the motto “One of the greatest novels becomes one the greatest films”. The journal advised to “circularize students and teachers of literature and English history, film appreciation groups, literary societies, etc.” In fact, 1946’s *Great Expectations* was placed in Class A-I by the National Legion of Decency (“Ten additional films rated...”, 1947: 7), meaning that it was suitable for viewers of all ages. For those showmen who aimed to appeal the juvenile and the action-spot spectators, *Independent Exhibitors* recommended highlighting the film’s many thrills, as “a relentless man-hunt for two escaped felons” or “a jilted bride wreaks mad vengeance on mankind through a beautiful girl”. Similarly, the Motion Picture Association launched a campaign with brochures and elaborate sets of stills from the film, as well as promotional letters that were sent to the numerous library, community and women’s

organizations, and other groups on the MPA Community Service list (“MPA lends weight to...”, 1947: 4).

Overall, most reviews agreed on praising the picture’s direction, production, writing, sound, photography, mood and acting. “For delight in sheer perfection of movie making, the movie *Great Expectations* is breath-taking”, wrote Archer Winsten for the *New York Post*. “Soundly built, beautifully lucid, infinitely tender, it is a masterpiece of the story telling art, a great movie that does a great novel full justice, and more”, said Cecelia Ager in *PM*. For Howard Barnes, from the *New York Herald Tribune*, the motion picture was “rare and memorable”, while Frank Quinn in the *Daily Mirror* affirmed that *Great Expectations* fulfilled, “with no trace of disappointment, the promise of its title” (“Quotes: What the Newspaper Critics Say...”, 1947: 23; *see also* “Do you know of any picture...”, 1947: 2-3). Positive criticism was also applicable to the general audience, who was “enchanted by *Great Expectations*” whether one was “a Dickens devotee or consider him an outmoded relic” (“*Great Expectations*”, 1947: 21-2). From these observations, it is clear that 1946’s *Great Expectations* achieved far better results than previous adaptations, despite it was not among Dickens’ most popular novels, and the film was not a Hollywood-made production. According to Hammond (2015: 121), one of the film’s greatest successes was “its commitment to as broad an international, social and generic appeal as possible, coupled with its marketing romanticized brand of Englishness”. Dickens combined simultaneously the *classic* and the *popular* status, while the British culture was regarded by Hollywood as more cultivated and polished (Sconce, 2003: 174). As an instance of this attempt to appeal to a wide audience, the promotional poster promised “Great Romance. Great Thrills. Great Suspense. Great Adventure”. The official trailer asked the audience “What forbidding mystery lay behind the shutters of Satis House?”, claiming that Dickens had been chosen not because he was a classic writer, but because he was “the greatest storyteller of all times”. A voice-over states that “no one can portray more faithfully than Dickens the hopes and doubts that dwell in the heart of a boy, or hold you poised so perilously between a smile and a lump in the throat”; and then it wonders: “Who could paint more vigorously than Dickens in the broad colours of melodrama?” The editing of the trailer emphasizes the frightening and gloomy atmosphere of this film. It introduces a dark Dickens, very far from the bland romantic Dickens presented by the adaptation made by Universal in 1934.

In short, for the first time, film critics, cinemagoers and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science reached a compromise in recognizing the worth of 1946's *Great Expectations*. The positive reviews were followed by a considerable box-office success both in the United Kingdom and in the United States. Lean received an Academy Award nomination for Best Director (losing to Elia Kazan for *Gentleman's Agreement*). Together with Ronald Neame and Anthony Havelock-Allan, he was also nominated for Best Screenplay (losing again to George Seaton for *Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street*). *Great Expectations* was nominated for Best Picture, although *Gentleman's Agreement* won the prize. However, Guy Green won the Oscar for Best Black-and-White Cinematography, while John Bryan and Wilfred Singleton won the Black-and-White Art Direction award. Lean's picture was also one of the "Top Ten Films of 1947", according to the National Board of Review (2018) and was nominated for Best Film award by the New York Film Critics Circle.

## Film forms and genres

The good fortunes of 1946's *Great Expectations* provides an example that British cinema experienced a period of prosperity after the Second World War. It also challenges Durgnat's claim on the grounds that "the British could hardly respond to the idea of success without an aura of failure surrounding it" (quoted in Leach, 2004: 30). The existing accounts prove that, over the 1940s, British films had already won critical approval and rivalled American films at the box-office. On January 2, 1947, *The Film Daily* ("French Pix Setting Pace, British View", 1947: 14) informed that "the best works of the American film industry [had] been given a decisive cold shoulder by the latest British critics' annual list of the year's best movies", adding that "the average film-goer [had] shown an increasing preference for good British films". According to the journal, the supreme quality shown by British productions as *Great Expectations* was responsible for that change in audience taste.

British cinema's strategy hinged on the mix of national and international genres, cultural trends and styles. On the one hand, films capitalized on popular stars, high budgets, Hollywood storytelling and a mixture of American and German visual style. On the other hand, national issues like colonialism, racial inequalities as well as British traditions and stereotypes became the most popular themes. In Malcolm's opinion (1996:

153), what made British films attractive for international spectators was, ultimately, its extreme British character. After 1945, the British costume drama was in decline (Monk and Sargeant, 2002: 6) and realism became the most common style. These films were defined by a visual and an acting style that privileged restraint, ordinary people in believable situations, contemporary settings and a consensus in the notions of social reality. In these productions, British values might be challenged, “even modified by contact with other cultures, but [that] tolerance and flexibility [was] seen as an essentially British quality anyway” (Cook, 1996: 90). The 1940s, nevertheless, was a period where many trends coexisted. As pointed out by Cousins (2003), film style after Second World War “was the result of the cross-fertilization of aesthetic ideas from many continents”. In this context, it seems proper to examine the specific styles and genres that certain production companies and filmmakers exploited, rather than speaking of general trends. For example, whether the Rank Organization and director Alexander Korda focused on high budget productions that look at the American market, the Ealing Studios committed itself to a policy based on the production of low budget films concerning domestic issues. The company mainly specialized in comedies, although it also continued with the documentary tradition and produced some thrillers. Apart from Korda and Lean, key filmmakers of the British cinema golden era were Carol Reed, Michael Powell, Robert Hammer, Alexander Mackendrick or the Boulting brothers, to name a few. On another level, Brian McFarlane has called the attention to the importance of literary adaptations to British cinema. This trend, in fact, began with the success of Lean’s 1946 version of *Great Expectations*. In the four last years of the decade, around one third of the British feature films produced were cinematic *reworks* of British novels. The term *rework* is used here on purpose: filmmakers did not merely aim to transfer the book to the screen scene by scene, but they contributed their own point of view while trading on the popularity of the source novel (McFarlane, 1986: 120).

Such amalgam of cross-cultural fusion that characterized the films of this period proved to be a suitable context to produce *Great Expectations*. As a period drama, set in the past, the film “[looks] back to a time of class, sexual and ethnic inequality” (Cook, 1996: 89) that can be analysed at a safe distance. It also questions the determining power of history and social structure over the individual. The one-day-magnificent Satis House represents a nation in crisis, where Miss Havisham’s abuse of power must be fought to put both her and Estella “firmly back in her place in a restored male-centred hierarchy”

(Monk & Sargeant, 2002: 6). This restoration takes place in the last scene, when Pip encourages Estella to leave Satis House because it is “a dead place”. The young lady claims that Miss Havisham “is not gone”, which is immediately replied by Pip’s defiance: “I have come back, Miss Havisham. I have come back... To let in the sunlight”. He knocks the curtains down and opens the windows before exclaiming: “Look Estella, look! Nothing but dust and decay!” Pip promises her a new future “out in the sunlight”, together, where she can overcome her fears. Hence, the Pip-Estella romance becomes a metaphor of the new Great Britain that shall arise after the war. Ultimately, Leans appropriates of a Dickensian fiction with the purpose of rehabilitating British identity.

## ***Chapter 9. Gu Xing Xue Lei (An Orphan's Tragedy, 1955): The importance of hard work***

### **Between the West and the Mainland: Great Expectations goes to Hong-Kong**

*Gu Xing Xue Lei (An Orphan's Tragedy)* is a 1955 Hong Kong drama film co-written and directed by Chu Kei, and loosely based on Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. The uniqueness of the Hong Kong film industry makes necessary to consider this movie separately to discuss the historical context in which it was produced. Up to date, no detailed investigation of this film has been found, and data about it are limited. It is hoped that this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how politics, economy and cultural movements may influence the book-to-film transference. Nevertheless, the reader must be alerted that the scope of this chapter is narrowed in comparison to previous ones. Ultimately, what remains of interest is to figure out why a European literary classic was adapted to the screen in the complex political scenario of Hong Kong over the 1950s.

### **Narrative discourse in Gu Xing Xue Lei (An Orphan's Tragedy; Chu Kei, 1955)**

As noted above, *Gu Xing Xue Lei* is a non-Anglophone *remediation* of *Great Expectations*. The film retains the core of the novel: a kind-hearted and hardworking orphan child receives an anonymous sum of money; however, he mistakenly believes that his mysterious benefactor is a wealthy but undeserving townsman rather than an escaped convict he met and befriended in his childhood. A comparison between the narrative functions in the novel and in the film shows that the rest of the script has been completely

modified. As will be discussed, those variations contribute to accommodate the principles and conventionalisms of the Hong Kong politics, economy and culture of that time.

## Narrative functions

*Gu Xing Xue Lei* is a social drama, but it is also a representation of a polarised world, where the poor, rural people are set up against the wealthy and prosperous inhabitants of the provincial capital. The countryside is endowed with positive attributes as kindness, solidarity, generosity and the ability to truly forgive. On the contrary, people from the outside town are portrayed as selfish, malevolent and envious. Such a good-and-evil opposition might be seen today as a division between two political and economic forces: Communism and Capitalism. However, a note of caution is due here since there is little published data on Hong Kong cinema of the 1950s. Most of scholarship and criticism on this topic is about the contemporary: it has to do with the construction of a specific Hong Kong identity and mental life in the global context. In contrast, a retrospective review of earlier periods becomes arduous, for most of the films have not survived. A historical research, therefore, entails the examination of external sources and materials other than movies, along with their creative interpretation (Fonoroff, 1988: 293; *see also* Chi, 2012: 75).

It is of importance to consider the unstable political arena of that time. The Korean War (1950 – 1951) and subsequent Cold War placed Hong Kong in a delicate position between the West and the Communist China. On the one hand, the Taiwanese government, supported by the United States, authorized the importation of only right-leaning films. On the other hand, the Chinese regime demanded that all the films aiming to be distributed in the country had to be submitted for approval to a central government committee (Kar & Bren, 2004: 153). This confrontation made the Hong Kong film industry a cutthroat market. Filmmakers had to align either with the left or with the right, or just stay away from any political indoctrination. Despite Kar and Bren (2004: 158) argue that Cantonese cinema of the 1950s did not respond to any political allegiance, this assumption does not appear to be applicable to *Gu Xing Xue Lei*. The analysis of this film highlights that it contains a great deal of political doctrine, even if just in an allegorical



manner. In fact, in writing about Zhonglian Film (*Gu Xing Xue Lei*'s production company), Jing Jing Chang states that

As the torchbearers of left-leaning progressive ideology, [filmmakers at Zhonglian] sought to educate the masses in Hong Kong, including those in the Chinese diaspora through films about post-war family and a renewed Confucian and left-leaning patriotic fervour in Cantonese style (2016: 146).

Yingchi Chu (2003: 17) notes that Zhonglian films elevated the reputation and the level of quality of Cantonese cinema, allowing their access to the Mainland market. This fact reinforced the perception of the company as left-wing, as much as its association with Communist China. Indeed, its name was blacklisted by Taiwan and its access to overseas markets was limited (Zhang, 2004: 162).

In order to raise the artistic standards of Cantonese cinema, one of the strategies implemented by filmmakers at Zhonglian was the adaptation of well-respected literary works. *Gu Xing Xue Lei* is one of the examples that illustrates this policy. Furthermore, this case is of particular interest since it entails a double process: it is not only the rendering of a book in a film, but it also involves a non-Anglophone cultural displacement of the story. The implications of these findings hint, at least, an adjustment to the conventionalisms and values of Hong Kong. In *Gu Xing Xue Lei*, Pip (he is here called Frank) aims to become a good doctor rather than a gentleman. This means, according to the film, to serve the public and to help the poor. Frank's wish, therefore, has to do with fulfilling the expectations of other people instead of his own. He feels bound to study medicine because: (a) the convict encourages him to do it; (b) the mother of his friend Polly dies since she lacks money to be treated; (c) it is his grandfather's desire. He does not only comply with this task, but graduates with honours, at the top of his class. Overall, the film underlines traditional notions of family, loyalty, hard-working and moral values.

The city, embodied in the character of Mr Toh, emerges as a place of materialistic comfort and pleasure, ready to ensnare the innocent and idealistic. There, people is alienated, lacking both self-identity and self-dignity. Frank, deluded by the misbelief that Mr Toh is his benefactor, and wishing to be grateful with him, accepts to manage a

pharmacy in the city and refuses to keep his promise to open a village hospital. He also becomes the manufacturer of a new medicine, whose successful commercialization can make him a prosperous man. However, the drug turns out to be hazardous for people's health. With this evidence, the film appears to support the assumption that the wealth of one person entails the suffering of many others. As the convict (who, in this version, is also Frank's father) reproaches him in a subsequent scene, Frank takes this decision on his own, without consulting anyone. This individualistic behaviour, which drives him to make a choice of dreadful consequences, contrasts with the spirit of the village, where people are united and help one another. They remain patriotic and stand firm against the materialistic temptations of the city. Their loyalty to the group, to the concept of unity, allow them to forgive Frank for breaking his promise, and to come to his aid.

By means of splitting society into the rural village and the urban city, *Gu Xing Xue Lei* likely aimed to facilitate the moviegoers association with the villagers, for "the Cantonese film audience was comprised mostly of the working classes from a rural background" (Chu, 2003: 17). Another possible explanation deals with the question of identity. From this perspective, the village represents a desire to remain as a British colony, whereas the city embodies the yearning for returning to the mainland. Interestingly enough, in the last sequence, the British anthem is heard while villagers fight against citizens. This interpretation, however, seems contradictory with Zhonglian's classification as a left-wing production company, so it should be abandoned.

Overall, *Gu Xing Xue Lei* explores the effects of the city's new capitalist lifestyle in alienating society and culture. It promotes people's love of their village and their traditional values in opposition to the *oppressive government* of the metropolis. Having slightly discussed some of the key points of the film, we must continue with the comparison between the cardinal functions in Dickens' *Great Expectations* and in *Gu Xing Xue Lei*.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (NOVEL)	<i>GU XING XUE LEI</i> (FILM)
	A dying woman asks Sam Wong to adopt her baby, named Frank
<b>Pip meets Magwitch</b> in village churchyard	<b>Frank meets Dickson Fan</b> in the forest
<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>	<b>Frank steals food and Wong's tools for Fan</b>
	Fan realizes Frank is his son

<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch</b> and second convict, Compeyson	<b>Soldiers capture Fan</b>
	The Sheriff informs Mr. Toh that Fan has escaped again
Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella	With the aid of Mr. Chan, Fan resolves to finance anonymously Frank's education
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file	
Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr. Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek	
Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham	
Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice	
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	
Ms. Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
Ms. Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)	<b>Polly's mother dies</b> as Mr. Toh refuses to treat her
<b>Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House</b>	<b>Polly comes to live at Sam Wong's house</b>
<b>Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman</b>	<b>Sam Wong tells Frank he wants him to become a doctor</b>
<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>An anonymous donor sends Frank money for his education</b>
Pip tells the news to Miss Havisham	Mr Toh suspects Dickson Fan is Frank's benefactor
Pip goes to London	Frank graduates at high school
He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn	The anonymous donor sends Frank more money to study medicine (via Mr Chan)
Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting	A misunderstanding makes Frank believes that Mr Toh is his donor
Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket.	Frank visits Mr Toh to show his gratitude
Pip gets money from Jagers to set himself up	Mr Toh pretends he is Frank's donor
Pip dines with Jagers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle).	Mr Toh plans to use Frank to find Fan

He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estellas's mother)	
Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn	
Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)	
Pip re-meets Estella	
Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella	Sam Wong tells Polly he wishes she and Frank get married
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
Pip meets and escorts Estella in London	While at University, Frank dates Rainbow, Mr Toh's daughter
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	
Mrs Joe dies	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age	Mr Chan promises Frank additional funds if he opens a hospital in the village
Pip takes Estella to Satis House	After graduation, Frank informs his family he plans to open a village hospital
She and Miss Havisham argue	Mr Toh plans to use Frank to sell fake medicine so Fan will come out to help him
At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle	Mr Toh convinces Frank to open a pharmacy in the city and to manufacture the new drug
	Mr. Chan informs Fan that Mr. Toh is framing Frank
	Frank discovers he has been deceived
	Frank aims to commit suicide
<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>Fan visits Frank to reveal himself as both his father and real benefactor</b>
<b>Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers</b>	<b>Frank verifies Fan's story with Mr Chan (involving Mr Toh's swindle)</b>
Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape	Frank resolves to face Mr Toh and to reveal citizens his wicked nature
Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)	
Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella	
Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle	
Wemmick warns Pip of being watched	Fan visits Sam Wong to ask for help

Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape	Sam Wong convinces villagers to help Frank
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	
Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)	
Pip goes to deserted sluice house	Villagers fight against citizens
Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house	Mr Toh seriously injures Fan in the head with a crystal bottle
The scape plan for Magwitch fails	Mr Toh dies while fighting against Frank
Pip loses fortune	
Magwitch is tried	Fan asks Frank to become a good doctor
<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>	<b>Fan dies</b>
Pip becomes ill	
Joe looks after Pip	
Biddy and Joe get married	
Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.	
Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House	Polly tries to comfort Frank

The table above brings to light considerable differences at the level of cardinal functions. The film opens with the image of a dying woman wandering through the forest. She holds up a baby in her left arm and a suitcase in her right. Under a pouring rain, the exhausted woman arrives to a village, where she faints before asking for help. However, Sam Wong, the blacksmith, hears the baby crying and notices her presence at the outside. Before dying, the woman tells Sam that her husband “was framed for a crime” and begs him to adopt her son, whose name is Frank, and to protect his identity. Subsequently, the story moves forward to 1929 to find 10-year-old Frank, now as a labouring boy. From the very beginning, he is presented as a very generous child: he helps his adoptive grandfather at the forge, gives him the scarce food they have and brings some firewood from the forest for his friend Polly. It is precisely while gathering the firewood when he meets a convict who has just escaped from prison. The sound of some gunfire warns villagers about the escaped convict, who seems to be well-known among the neighbours, including Sam Wong. According to them, the convict is Dickson Fan, the former doctor of the town who used to treat the poorest people without asking anything in return.

Fan asks Frank for help. The boy leads him to an abandoned temple up the hill, and is forced to bring the convict some rice and tea (typical oriental meal and drink), as well as a hammer and a chisel, under threat of death. It is in the course of a subsequent conversation when Fan realizes that Frank is his son. However, he does not reveal the boy his real identity. The convict pretends he is a friend of Frank's father, who, according to him, "was framed by bad people and sent to jail for ten years". Before turning himself into the police, the convict asks Frank not to think about his father any longer, for he is dead; instead, he must study medicine and helps always the poor. This scene, as many other through the film, is clearly conceived for moral and indoctrination purposes. Eventually, the convict is arrested and Frank goes back home with his grandfather. Before moving on, the reader must be warned about the inconsistency of the script in this sequence. According to Frank's grandfather, he knew Dickson Fan, since he was the doctor of the village. If so, the question remains of how could Wong not to recognise Fan's wife when he run into her ten years ago. A likely explanation is that he did not knew the woman personally or ignored the fact that she was pregnant.

The first turning point of the film takes place when Polly's mother falls ill. Sam Wong and other neighbours wants her to go to the hospital, but Mr Toh, the chairman, refuses to admit her since she has no money to afford the treatment. The death of the woman drives Frank to resolve to become a doctor in order to help the poor. An anonymous donor, who gives him the necessary economic resources for his education, supports his determination. All the villagers believe the money comes from Mr Toh since he is the only rich man in the city. Actually, the benefactor is Dickson Fan, who has escaped again from prison and works secretly in a pharmacy. However, Mr Toh goes along with Frank with two secret purposes: on the one hand, he aims to catch Fan and, on the other hand, he wants to prevent Frank from becoming a doctor (and, therefore, from competing with him). Hence, despite Frank's initial plan is to build a hospital in the village, Mr Toh convinces him to open a pharmacy in the city. Driven by a desire to become a prosperous and wealthy man, as well as to win the heart of Rainbow (Mr Toh's daughter), Frank accepts the proposal. Disappointed, his grandfather reproaches him for his decision and throws Frank out of his home.

Mr Toh frames Frank by asking him to manufacture a drug, which is hazardous for people's health. In doing so, he hopes that Fan will come out of hiding to help his son. Eventually, Fan reveals Frank as his real benefactor and gives him the courage to face Mr

Toh. In the final scene, Frank, Fan, Sam Wong, Polly and the rest of the villagers fight against Mr Toh and his people. As a result, Mr Toh dies and Fan is seriously injured. But, before dying, the convict has time enough to remind Frank that a good doctor “does not serve himself”, neither one person nor two. “He serves the public”, says Fan. After that, he rests in peace. As shown, the last scenes of the film emphasizes that constant division between two opposite worlds: the village and the city. In an essay titled “Rural Women and Social Change in New China Cinema: From *Li Shuangshang* to *Ermo*”, Xiaobing Tang (2005: 46-7) discusses how Chinese films from the 1950s settled in the contemporary countryside presents generic features and conventions to prepare the audience for a rustic experience. Although *Gu Xing Xue Lei* is a Hong Kong movie, some of Tang’s conclusions may be applied to this case study. According to him, those rural feature films not only enhanced the local culture, but also delivered a didactic lesson through a happy resolution of the dramatic events. In doing so, an unambiguous contrast between positive and negative characters must be established. Rural people in *Gu Xing Xue Lei* are identified with positive values as generosity, mercifulness, braveness or fraternity. They share not only the same ethical and moral principles, but also material aspects like groceries or money. Because of their own nature, villagers are always willing to assist each other in any respect; by joining their forces, they manage to succeed. On the contrary, citizens are associated with negative connotations. In the city, only one person (Mr Toh) holds the whole power while the rest of the people are malleable servants at his service. There is no sense of community. Characters act out of self-interest, induced by selfishness and malevolent motives. Their purpose is to please Mr Toh in order to gain his esteem and to improve their position. This power pyramidal structure alludes to a political system based on the capitalist economy, which contrasts with the communist, socialist countryside.

Although the clear distinction between positive and negative characters shall facilitate audience identification with the first ones, the role played by the protagonist serves to reinforce that bond. Frank aims to be faithful to his word and to open a hospital in the village. However, he is tempted by the prosperous future that the city offers to him. Much of the film’s plot revolves around this conflict between good and evil, a personal conflict that is given social significance and content. In the age of Capitalism, the film illustrates the impact of the economic market and urban culture on the mentality of a young scholar coming from a peasant world. Wealth and success become, eventually,

synonyms of corruption and damage. After falling from favour, Frank realizes his error and tries to combat Mr Toh. But he is not alone. The kind-hearted and forgiving villagers come to aid him, and all together overthrow Mr Toh's power. Hence, *Gu Xing Xue Lei* delves into the damaging consequences of the neoliberal policies, which only the communist system can overcome.

Women also play a key role in supporting this cultural and social orientation. Polly, Frank's friend, is a hardworking and obedient woman. She looks after Frank's grandfather in his absence, and even works as a singer to sustain the family. Always dressed in a traditional costume and wearing two thick braids, Polly sings songs whose lyrics remind the spectator the value of effort and faithfulness. "Hard work leads to success / Idleness wastes time", she says, for "time passed will not return". In a subsequent scene, Polly wishes Frank will "learn his craft / and come back to me someday", thus hoping "he remembers our destined union". Overall, she portrays the image of an exemplary peasant woman with positive qualities suitable for the socialist era. On the contrary, Rainbow is a cosmopolitan and fashionable woman. She wears luxurious clothes and jewels, and a stylish long bob. Rainbow complains that Frank is "always working", and finally convinces him to go out to dinner and dance. The expensiveness and glamour of the restaurant makes Frank feel out of place. However, the discovery of the urban life entails the awakening of desire for change and prosperity. Along the conversation, Miss Toh tries to convince Frank about the advantages of working in the city. Whereas he shows firstly his determination to practice medicine in the village (thus fulfilling his grandfather's desire), Miss Toh's reasoning makes him hesitate. The dance sequence marks Frank's breakdown with the rural community and the refusal of his grandfather as an authoritative voice. Idealization of labour is denied to the detriment of wealth. Ultimately, Frank's embracement of both the urban life and its capitalist system means a threat to the stability of his universe and his respectability.

### The narrating instance

*Gu Xing Xue Lei* foregrounds some of the creakiest themes and motifs of *Great Expectations* (orphanage, social class, morality, self-improvement, guilt and innocence...), thus providing the basic plot information and summary. Notwithstanding, over this



process of remediation, most of the cardinal functions have been altered or omitted as far as stripping the novel to the bare bones of its linear narrative. New *beats* and hinge points have been added to construct a new product, different enough from the main source in order to warrant a distinct name. Those deviations do not only concern plotlines or linear narratives. One of the main variations of the film with regard to *Great Expectations* (and perhaps the most important one) has to do with the narrative agency and the way in which events are narrated to the audience. Except from 1909's *The Boy and the Convict* and 1922's *Store Forventninger* (due to the technical constraints of the silent era), all the films examined so far have attempted to approach the first-person narration, with varying degrees of wisdom. In contrast to 1934's and 1946's *Great Expectations*, *Gu Xing Xue Lei* does not pay attention to this question. The film assumes the perspective and point of view of an omniscient agency placed at the *extradiegetic* level. Usually, it exploits *long* and *medium* shots where the camera remains fixed as a mere spectator, whereas the *point-of-view* shot to represent the subjective view of a specific character is never used. In order to portray emotions, the film shows the faces of the characters in extreme close-up. For example, this kind of shot is used to indicate Fan's excitement when he realizes that Frank is his son, or to display the sense of pride of Frank's grandfather after he graduates as a doctor.



Fig. 11. Use of close-up shots in *Gu Xing Xue Lei*

The adoption of the parallel editing (cross cutting) technique to show two scenes taking place simultaneously, but in different locations, also indicates the presence of an *extra-beterodiegetic* narrative agency, which is identified with the *image-maker*. Furthermore, no character's perspective is privileged, which means that the film presents a narrative with *zero focalization*. There is a clear separation between the *intradiegetic* level, where

characters are placed, and the *extradiegetic* level from where the *heterodiegetic* narrator tells the story. Since hero and narrator are different persons, there is no temporal break between the moment of the *factual narrative* and the moment of the *narrating process*. That is, the narrator tells the story at the time when the events are taking place. Moreover, in terms of knowledge and information, (s)he provides us with complete access to the story world.

## Narrator

Having defined the type of narrative instance that drives the narration in *Gu Xing Xue Lie*, it is time to consider the nature of that omniscient narrator. As discussed above, the narrative is *non-focalized*; moreover, there are no variations towards *internal focalization* through Frank. The story is wholly narrated through a third-person omniscient narrator, who remains outside and never takes part in the *diegesis*. As an *external source of information*, this kind of narrative agency should be considered a reliable narrator. However, the significant ideological charge of the film aims for another conclusion applicable to this narrative. *Gu Xing Xue Lie* is an example of how the implied author or teller uses different materials (narrator, characters, events, film techniques, cinematic elements, and so on) to influence its audience in particular ways. Similarly, the audience and its unfolding responses determine the way in which the account is constructed (Phelan, 2017: 2).

The implied author of the film drives our attention not only through the narrator, but also through the character-character dialogue. Therefore, it capitalizes on two types of mediated channels of communication (author-narration-audience and author-character-audience) that interact with each other. Furthermore, the author uses several author-character-audience tracks that are functionally independent of each other, but eventually merge into the same climax. Thus, the film deploys the author-Frank-Fan-audience channel to introduce the inciting incident and the main plot of the story. The author-Frank-grandfather-audience track enhances values as solidarity, loyalty, generosity, family or hardworking. In opposition to it, the author-Frank-Mr Toh-audience channel shows the antagonist forces that attempt to corrupt the protagonist. Ultimately, the first two channels win over the last one in a final sequence where all the characters and plotlines come together. Besides that, the implied author makes use of

film conventions to suggest different emotions. Following this, it will be examined how cinematic storytelling manipulates the emotions of the audience, revealing character and plot without their immediate knowledge.

In the opening sequence, Frank's mother walks along the z-axis toward the audience. It is pouring with rain, a climate element that, together with the sound of the storm, adds drama to the scene. The woman, holding a baby and a suitcase in her arms, is exhausted and looks for some place to take cover. Despite her arduous efforts, she seems to be walking on the spot. By using a *telephoto* lens, the spectator gets the impression that her advance toward the camera does not produce her any gain. As her motion appears slowed down, the scene gains suspense and the viewer suspects that she will not survive.



Fig. 12. Use of telephoto lens to add suspense

*Close-up* shots are exploited with two different purposes. It can give the audience a physical proximity to the character's intimate sphere. The longer people stay in close proximity, the more sympathy they feel. It is remarkable how Fan is given a number of dramatic *close-ups* when he realizes that Frank is his son. *Close-ups* augment the emotion of the shot and immerse spectators in pathos. However, this kind of camera position is also used to evoke revulsion for Mr Toh and his servants. The forced proximity to a character already established as a hated antagonist makes the audience want to escape from his close proximity.



Fig. 13. Use of *close-up* shots to evoke revulsion towards the antagonist characters

Music also carries much weight as an instrument of indoctrination. The lyrics of a song is used twice as the voice of Polly, thus revealing her inner feelings and establishing the main conflict of the plot. As discussed above, the ethical and moral content of the lyrics set the tone for the audience. It determines the distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, in a world dominated by corruption. Although not explicitly named, the lyrics alludes to Frank and reminds him to follow the right path.

Finally, the wardrobe choices in *Gu Xing Xue Lei* establish differences in the social status of the characters. In addition, it works as a metaphor of Frank's moral progress. As a young boy, he wears old, worn out clothes. While he is at high school, "he wears the same school uniform every day" according to Rainbow. It is during his stay at university that Rainbow convinces Frank to go out with her, which entails leaving his uniform in order to wear a suit. This external metamorphosis reveals the beginning of an inner transformation that will drive Frank to break his promise of becoming a good doctor. The change in the wardrobe sets up the idea of Frank's corruption and rupture with his villager origins.



Fig. 14. Wardrobe emphasizes Frank's social improvement

Thus far, the thesis has argued that the implied author in *Gu Xing Xue Lie* uses different elements to drive the narration. The omniscient narrator provides a reliable

account of the events taking place in the diegesis. Nevertheless, the deployment of both the character-character dialogue and certain cinematic elements allows him/her to suggest specific meanings and ways of understanding the story.

## Temporality and order

The use of an omniscient narrator placed outside the *diegesis* makes possible a clear distinction between the *extradiegetic* level, where the omniscient narrator is placed, and the *intradiegetic* level of the story. The starting point of the narrator's account coincides with the time of both the factual and the telling narratives, meaning that the narrator tells the story at the very moment when the events are taking place. Therefore, it can be assumed that the discourse follows an organized structure and a linear narrative. Namely, this observation suggests that there is no rupture of the temporal succession.

The comparison between the arrangement of events in Dickens' *Great Expectations* and in *Gu Xing Xue Lie* introduces greater complexity. Although some of the cardinal functions coincide, most of them have been altered or omitted, while some new ones have been added. Notice, for example, that *Gu Xing Xue Lie*'s point of departure is the death of Frank's mother and his subsequent adoption by Sam Wong. This event happens when Frank is a baby, and, after that, there is a temporal break of ten years until he meets the convict Dickson Fan in the forest. *Great Expectations*' opening scene portrays 8-year-old Pip visiting the tombstones of his parents and siblings. There, he meets the convict Magwitch. Despite this difference at the level of the inciting incident, both narratives continue with similar cardinal functions: the young boy steals some food and some tools for the convict, who is captured by the soldiers later on. Besides that, some events taking place in *Gu Xing Xue Lie* loosely recall cardinal functions present in the novel. Thus, the death of Polly's mother reminds of Mrs Gargery's decease, although they take place at different moments. Similarly, Polly's adoption by Sam Wong evokes the arrival of Biddy to the Gargery's house, whereas Frank's wish of becoming a doctor alludes to Pip's desire of becoming a gentleman.

The other point of connection between both narratives has to do with the existence of a mysterious benefactor who sends money to the protagonist in order that he can fulfil his dreams. Both Pip and Frank are mistaken about the identity of the donor, and the

revealing of the real nature of their *great expectations* means a turning point in the lives of the two men. They realize the corruption of their moral values and face the antagonist forces (Miss Havisham in the first case, Mr Toh in the latter) that have driven them to such debasement. In the two accounts, the convict dies after fighting against his sworn foe (Compeyson and Mr Toh), while the protagonist returns to the *right* path.

Despite those coincidences, the cardinal functions in between consider completely different incidents, so they do not admit any likely comparison.

## Narrative rhythm

Since most of the cardinal functions present in Dickens' *Great Expectations* have been omitted or transformed in the book-to-film movement, a comparison between the narrative rhythm of the novel and the narrative rhythm of the film must be approached with caution. Firstly, it is importance to consider the imbalance among the three stages of Frank's expectations. Around 50 minutes (*circa* 45 per cent) of the running time is devoted to the first part, from Frank's adoption to the beginning of his great expectations. Specifically, the film pays major attention to the first meeting between Frank and the convict Dickson Fan. This episode covers 1 day in the life of Frank, but the film devotes 30 minutes to narrate it, which means one third of the running time, approximately. This encounter has also significant weight in the book, which dedicates 39 pages to it. However, considering the length of the novel (the edition used for this research has a total of 484 pages), the narrative rhythm looks more balanced. Over the episode *Frank and the convict*, the film establishes its basic premises, themes and motifs: the importance of hardworking, generosity and loyalty. Frank is presented as a kind-hearted and faithful boy. The ten-year-old orphan child gives his food to his adoptive grandfather, supports him at the forge and takes care of his poor friend Polly. For villagers, Sam is "lucky to have Frank" because he "is so helpful". On the contrary, in *Great Expectations*, young Pip is accused of being ungrateful to those who brought him up by hand (Dickens, 2005: 26); moreover, he disobeys his sister when he visits his parents' tombstones at the churchyard (somehow, the meeting with the convict is a *punishment* for his disobedience). Hence, the feeling of guilt that pervades Pip's childhood is completely lost in the film, where helping the convict seems to be the *right* thing to do. Otherwise,

any attempt to compare the rest of the episodes concerning the first stage of Frank's expectations with those included in the first part of Pip's expectations brings no added value, but greater complexity. Ultimately, they are different enough to make significant inferences. Still, it is apparent from the table below that the novel keeps, in general, a steady narrative rhythm (with the exception, perhaps, of the episode *Great expectations*), while the film focuses most of its attention in the episode *Frank and the convict*, as has been already pointed out.

The second stage of Frank's expectations covers 57 minutes of the film (again, *circa* 45 per cent of the running time). Notwithstanding, while the duration of the first part covers a few months in the life of Frank, the second stage comprises a period of eighteen years, from the moment he starts attending school to his graduation as a doctor. The film focuses on a few incidents that emphasizes the importance of hardworking. These events are quickly sketched and lightly told, with many temporal ellipsis in between. From this standpoint, it is arguable that the film is interested in the result rather than in the intervening period: what matters is that Frank succeeds due to his effort and becomes a doctor, as he promised. Previous film adaptations also summarize in a few minutes the episode concerning Pip's new life as a gentleman (which would be the equivalent one). However, the duration of *The Londoner gentleman* covers a few months in the life of Pip rather than several years. Again, it is noticeable that the narrative rhythm of *Gu Xing Xue Lei* lacks a steady balance.

Anyhow, perhaps the most relevant results comes out of the the third part. Contrary to the novel and previous adaptations, Fan's revelation as Frank's real benefactor has little weight in the film. This event works as a catalyst for Frank's self-awareness, likely because the audience already knows that they are father and son, as well as Fan's true story. Notwithstanding, it is remarkable the tendency to reduce the length of the film as long as it is made clear the importance of values as loyalty and honour. After Fan reminds Frank of his duty, he summons up the courage to face Mr Toh. From then on, the speed of the narration is increased. The story reaches its climax and the plot is quickly resolved. Thus, the film devotes only 6 minutes (less than 10 per cent of the running time) to the final episodes.

<p><i>Frank's adoption (00:00 – 05:09)</i>. A woman asks Sam Wong to adopt his baby, named Frank.</p>	
<p><i>Frank and the convict (05:10 – 34:09)</i>. Temporal break (ten years). First encounter between Frank and the convict. Frank steals some food and some tools for the convict. The convict is arrested.</p>	<p><i>Pip and the convict (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42)</i>. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.</p>
<p><i>The apprentice doctor (34:10 – 43:08)</i>. The convict escapes and decides to pay for Frank's education. Polly's mother dies as Mr Toh refuses to treat her. Consequently, Frank decides to become a doctor.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>
	<p><i>The blacksmith boy (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>
<p><i>Great expectations (43:09 – 47:02)</i>. Temporal break (some months). Frank receives the news of his great expectations.</p>	<p><i>Great expectations (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160)</i>. Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>
<p><i>At high school (47:03 – 54:47)</i>. Spatial break (move to the city). Frank attends high school.</p>	<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>
<p><i>The village doctor (54:48 – 1:22:44)</i>. Temporal break (ten years). Frank receives a new sum of money to attend University (via Mr Chan). He graduates as a doctor (temporal break of eight years) and returns to the village (spatial break) to open a hospital.</p>	
	<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285)</i>. Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>
<p><i>End of great expectations (1:22:45 – 1:33:22)</i>. Mr Toh convinces Frank to open a pharmacy in the</p>	<p><i>End of great expectations (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421)</i>. Temporal (several years) and</p>



<p>city. Frank's acceptance disappoints his grandfather.</p>	<p>spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>
<p><i>Attempt of framing (1:33:23 – 1:44:45).</i> Spatial break (move to the city) Mr Toh deceives Frank to sale fake medicine. Frank discovers that the convict is both his real benefactor and his father. Frank resolves to face Mr Toh.</p>	<p><i>Attempt of murder (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433).</i> Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.</p>
	<p><i>Magwitch's decease (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460).</i> Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.</p>
	<p><i>Return to the marshes (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480).</i> As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.</p>
	<p><i>Clarriker and Co (Chapter LVIII, p. 480).</i> Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).</p>
<p><i>Return to the right track (1:47:39 – 1:53:16).</i> Spatial break (move to the village) Frank faces Mr Toh. Village people come to aid Frank and fight against citizens. Frank promises Fan he'll become a good doctor. Both Mr Toh and Fan die.</p>	<p><i>Second return to the marshes (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484).</i> Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.</p>

According to this chronology, the main variations of speed in the narrative of *Gu Xing Xue Lei* with regard to the novel work out approximately like this:

Frank's adoption: around 5 minutes for about 5 minutes	
Frank and the convict: around 30 minutes for almost one day.	Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.
The apprentice doctor: around 10 minutes for some weeks	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.
Great Expectations: around 4 minutes for 4 minutes.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
At high school: around 8 minutes for 10 years	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
The village doctor: 28 minutes for about 8 years	Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
End of great expectations: around 10 minutes for around one day.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
Attempt of framing: around 11 minutes for several weeks.	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
Return to the right track: around 6 minutes for 6 minutes.	Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

The following sections offer a detailed account of the narrative movements concerning the four canonical forms: ellipsis, pause, scene and summary.

## *Ellipsis*

As discussed above, the first and the second stages of Frank's expectations cover a period of several years. Thereby, temporal ellipsis emerge as a necessary element to comprise such a duration in the limited length of the film. Right at the beginning, there is a ten-year gap between the first and the second sequence. First, the audience meets Frank as a baby. After that, the initial credits appear on the screen until an expository title informs that it is 1929. Frank appears again, now as a young boy. While he is in the temple with Dickson Fan, Frank tells the convict that he is ten years old. In turn, Fan reveals Frank that his father "was framed by bad people ten years ago". From these data, it is inferred that the first scene occurs in 1919.

The second temporal ellipsis takes place in the episode *At high school*. The film combines several cinematic elements to show the pass of time. First, Frank gets into a train that drives him to the city. The train moves from right to left in the X-axis. Subsequently, an American shot shows little Polly while singing. The camera gets close to her face and then moves down on a vertical axis. The bottom of the tilt shows Polly's foot. A dissolves blends this shot into another, which reveals the foot of an adult. After that, a tilt-up is used to portray Polly, now as a young lady. The following sequence shows again a train, this time moving from left to right in the X-axis. Frank, who has turned into a young man, descends from one of the wagon and meets his grandfather and Polly. This temporal break covers a period of ten year, as it can be implied from a conversation between Mr Toh and his two followers. The three men are planning how to use Frank to find Dickson Fan. At some point, one of Mr Toh's supporter reproaches the other that he has been following Frank for ten years with no result.

There is a new temporal ellipsis in the episode *The village doctor*. As in the previous example, the movement of the train in the X-axis (first, from right to left, then from left to right) delimits the beginning and the end of Frank's education at University. Furthermore, a new conversation between Mr Toh and his followers reveals that this episode covers eight years in the life of Frank. All this means that, by the end of the film, Frank is 28 years old. As an anecdote, there is an error in the time measurement. After Frank's graduation, Mr Toh plans to frame him as he did with Dickson Fan "25 years ago". Considering that Fan was imprisoned before Frank was born, it is clear that the numbers do not work.



Fig. 15. Use of *tilt-down* and *tilt-up* movements to express the passage of time

### *Pause*

There is no example of pause in its purest form, although the use of certain film elements makes the pace to reduce its speed in some sequences. Specifically, it seems of interest to call attention to the average shot length in this film. Overall, until 1960 the average shot length hovered between 8 and 11 seconds (Bordwell, 2006: 121). On the contrary, in *Gu Xing Xue Lei* shots are longer, from up to more than twenty seconds in some cases. Because time seems to pass slower, tension and drama increase. Going further than this general comment, there are some instances that deserve consideration. For example, in the opening scene, the use of a *telephoto* lens to show Frank's mother walking along the x-axis toward the audience makes her motion to appear slowed down. This sense of descriptive pause is also perceived while Frank gathers firewood in the forest. He is shown in two different camera shots (long and full), each one lasting for more than

twenty seconds. Besides, the camera remain fixed except from some panning that follows Frank's movements to elevate the tension until he meets the convict. Subsequently, the speed of the narrative is accelerated by using a *shot reverse shot* in fast cut.



**Fig. 16. The telephoto lens slows down the pace and adds tension**

Later on in the temple, when Dickson Fan realizes that Frank is his son, his excitement is shown by using a close-up of his face. This shot calls attention over this character and underscore the importance of that scene. After that, the guards warn the convict he has three minutes to surrender. This warning marks the temporal lapse that Fan and Frank spend together. Additionally, the repetitive dialogue between the boy and his grandfather (the first shouting “grandpa”, the latter calling “Frank”) makes that time appears braked.

### *Summary*

This narrative element is used almost at the end of the film, once Frank tells his grandfather that he is going to accept Mr Toh's offer to open a pharmacy. A *close-up* of the front-page news informs the viewer about the release of a new medicine. This image fades in a medium shot where we see a crowd of people buying the drug (which transmits the idea of success). After a few seconds, a *close-up* of Mr Toh overlaps the scene. Since

he laughs maliciously, the audience implies that his plan of framing Frank has been accomplished.



Fig. 17. The *visual match-cut* suggests Mr Toh's success in framing Frank

By using a *visual match-cut*, the film connects these two ideas to suggest a third one: the success of Mr Toh's plan will have dramatic effects for Frank, as it is confirmed in subsequent scenes.

### *Scene*

Most of the scenes in *Gu Xing Xue Lei* presents a narrative time that is equivalent to the story time. The film omits those episodes in Frank's life that considers of less importance (marked by temporal ellipsis of several years) and directs the audience attention to those events that enhance moral values against unethical behaviours.

## Political, economic and sociocultural background

*“Empty your mind, be formless, shapeless like water.  
You put water into a cup, it becomes the cup.  
You put water into a bottle, it becomes the bottle.  
You put it into a teapot, it becomes the teapot.  
Now water can flow or it can crash. Be water, my friend.”*

Most readers shall identify this inspirational quotation, a Bruce Lee’s speech originating from the four-episode TV series *Longstreet* in 1971. He became one of the most significant celebrities of the twentieth century, “whose power, impact, charisma, *relevance* seem to defy death itself” (Donovan, 2008: 73). In fact, his influence in different disciplines demands to approach Lee’s figure from an intertextual perspective (Bowman, 2013: viii). Having made such an impact in many people’s life through his guide to martial arts excellence, good health or inner peace, what remains less well-known in Lee’s career is his initial artistic experience. Being born in November 1940, he was introduced into films very shortly. He debuted as a baby in *Golden Gate Girls* (E. Eng and K. M. Ching, 1941), released a few months after his birth. Since he was not catapulted to stardom until the 1970s, most of his earliest works have remained rarely discussed. However, interestingly for this research, at the age of 15, Lee played the leading role in *Gu Xing Xue Lei*, a Cantonese adaptation of the English novel *Great Expectations*. Although the film is barely known, the fact that Lee takes part in the cast has driven some attention to it. Therefore, it is likely that people take interest in this film because of Lee rather than because of Dickens, but it is still interesting to wonder about the reasons behind the decision to adapt an English writer’s novel. The following pages critically examine the implications of this film production in the political, economic and sociocultural context of Hong Kong in the 1950s. *Gu Xing Xue Lei* portrays a microcosm of the domestic film industry at that time, and also represents a good example of how foreign literature was refashioned to suit ideological principles and moral values. But the question remains: why was it decided to adapt *Great Expectations* in 1955 for a Cantonese-speaking audience? A brief summary of the major events that took place in Hong Kong from 1935 on may provide certain clues. In the lead-up to the Second Sino-Japanese War (a military conflict facing the Republic of China and the Empire of Japan between 1937 and 1945), there was a growing exodus of Chinese people to Hong Kong. According to Kar and Bren (2004:

130), “they included many intellectuals, filmmakers, studio bosses, and prominent business people”. Thus, after 1935, the tension caused by an imminent conflict that might suspend the activity of the film industry compelled many directors, actors, scriptwriters and sound recordists to look for new opportunities outside the Mainland.

For Hong Kong, that migratory movement meant a domestic cultural and commercial expansion. The influx intensified after the outbreak of the war, which permitted a compelling exchange of talent, especially with Shanghai. Concerning the cinema industry, the country lived its first *golden age*, “quite suddenly achieving a very high output and a diversity of genres that had never appeared before” (Kar, 2000: 44). However, the mixture of both cultures also led to an intensification of the conflict between the two broadest spoken Chinese dialects: Cantonese and Mandarin. Such a struggle had begun as early as 1931 with the release of the first Chinese sound film, and it continued over the following years, depending very much upon the different conflicts and subsequent shifts in political power. Before the *talkies*, Hong Kong cinema had been submitted to Shanghai. Limited invested capital or constricting social conditions had affected the development of a film industry of its own. Metropolitan Shanghai, with its reputation of international city, emerged as the first *Asian Hollywood*. Hong Kong generally produced low-budget films for Shanghai companies (Odham Stokes & Hoover, 1999: 17) while its theatres projected Chinese films made in Shanghai. This flow did not work the other way round. However, the adoption of sound meant a turning point. The Cantonese-speakers of Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Nanyang, and the U.S. Chinatowns showed a natural preference to see and hear films in their mother tongue. This inclination allowed the Cantonese to compete against the Mandarin cinema. At the same time, the new scenario drove Shanghai companies to open branches in Hong Kong to make Cantonese films (Kar, 2000: 68). Additionally, the Sino-Japanese War came to strength these synergies. In fact, Kar and Bren (2004: 133-6) have illustrate how most of Hong Kong’s own productions during wartime, directed either by local or mainland filmmakers, were anti-Japanese patriotic films and shared a sense of national defence. This became the most popular genre within the cultural elite and, to some extent, among the general audience. However, by the time Great Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939, folklore drama, horror, and fantastical martial arts films had taken the leadership.

The Pacific War (1941-1945) led to a second exodus of film industry workers from Shanghai to Hong Kong. Nevertheless, what they found was also a chaotic, declining



movie picture business. The price of film devices and resources had considerably increased as they had become scarce. Therefore, most companies were forced either to reduce their output or to produce low-cost movies that could provide a quick return (Kar & Bren, 2004: 138). Over the second half of the 1940s, the tensions between Japan, China and Hong Kong were far to disappear. After the Second World War, “northern film and theatre people who had remained in southeast China trickled back to Shanghai while those from Hong Kong returned to the territory or went to Guagzhou to seek work” (Kar & Bren, 2004: 143). In 1946, China went to civil war between the Kuomintang (hereafter, the KMT) and the Communist parties, resulting in a new great influx of all kind of personnel from the film industry to Hong Kong. Albeit most of their facilities were ruined, the cinema business in post-war Hong Kong recovered shortly since many newcomers settled small-to-medium-scale productions there. One of the strategies to assure a wide distribution was the use of Mandarin language instead of Cantonese, for the KMT government had banned *dialect* films in China. Suddenly, Cantonese filmmakers found themselves expelled from the business. In order to relaunch their films, they promoted some initiatives. For instance, some movies were dubbed in Cantonese to secure their distribution in Hong Kong, while a few productions were distributed in both Cantonese and Mandarin. Those measures were also prompted by a renew interest of local movie audiences in watching Cantonese films after a period of absence (Kar & Bren, 2004: 145).

Hong Kong cinema was characterized by a mixture of Eastern and Western elements. It is particularly significant the American influence in early Hong Kong filmmakers. Many of them had spent their youth in the United States either to study or to work, or for family reasons. They imbibed the American culture and its artistic forms, such as Hollywood films, Western music or Burlesque shows. Those performing arts would inspire lately their film careers when they returned to Hong Kong. On the other hand, Cantonese opera, the most popular entertainment in Southern China in the nineteenth century, had assimilated both Chinese and Western influences, which, in turn, had a major impact in Cantonese cinema. The interflow of people and resources between Hong Kong and the United States was a constant feature from the 1920s on, and provided Cantonese films with a peculiar personality. Additionally, it offered Hong Kong filmmakers an alternative when the domestic cinema business declined because of the

Pacific War. Thus, some companies continued their operations in the United States whereas their films were screened in American Chinatown outlets (Kar, 2000: 44-54).

By the end of the 1940s, the Hong Kong film industry became bilingual, but the Cantonese and the Mandarin blocs remained split in terms of quality and ideology. According to Odham Stokes and Hoover (1999: 20), post-war Cantonese dialect-films were of the cheapest kind. They were characterized by “little direction, minimal sets and pre-recorded sound.” On the contrary, Mandarin dialect-movies were “generally more costly and with longer production schedules”. The increasing left-right polarization played also a key role. Whether many left-wing Chinese filmmakers moved to Hong Kong to escape prosecution under the KMT government, the establishment of the People’s Republic Party of China (hereafter, the PRC) favoured the opposite drive. In October 1949, the Communist Party proclaimed in Beijing their political leadership of the Chinese nation. To succeed fully, Chinese communists considered necessary to *remake* society by altering and reshaping the traditional culture and values of the nation. Not only had the economy of the country disintegrated after three years of civil war between the KMT and the Communists. Differences among regions, ethnic groups, languages and levels of development were also notable. To save these gaps and build a single and unified idea of national identity, the PRC regarded cinema as a direct means to appeal to and link with a mass audience. Thus, the Government decided to create a centralized national system of production, censorship, distribution and exhibition. “Most of the mere 500 theatres and other places that showed films were in large cities”, in an attempt that production companies and exhibitors could “reach out to the nonurban, less educated population” (Clark, 1987: 20). The arrival in power of the Communist party caused that a new wave of people from the film industry emigrated towards Hong Kong. The stream of refugees from Mainland continued until 1952, when the border between both countries was closed. During those years, “the Korean War (1950-1951) and subsequent Cold War suddenly made Hong Kong an arena for the political and ideological struggle between the West and Communist China” (Kar & Bren, 2004: 153). Both the PRC and the KMT (a government-in-exile in Taiwan) aimed to influence the Hong Kong film industry. Left-wing companies produced films that criticized class oppression, portrayed feminist struggle or satirized capitalism. In response, right-wing cinema capitalized on tales of tradition, longing and exile (Odham Stokes & Hoover, 1999: 21). However, the taste of the general audience at that time leaned toward the consumption of domestic,

Cantonese productions, even though they were technically and aesthetically low-quality films. Hong Kong population showed preference for entertaining rather than *didactic* movies. Only a few Cantonese productions were truly concerned with social or ideological issues. Very often, they depicted family or romantic melodramas, dealt with traditional folklore or lampooned the frustrations of the everyday man. Overall, Cantonese films established a close link with their spectators, thus dominating the Hong Kong industry throughout the 1950s.

It is in this context of a reviving film business that Zhonglian Film Company Ltd. (Union Film Enterprises Ltd.) was established on November 25, 1952. According to Odham Stokes (2007: 564), it was founded by 19 filmmakers as a collective film cooperative. For Chu (2003: 14), the number of directors, producers and actors that participated in this association was 21. What remains of interest is Zhonglian's attempt to raise the quality level of Cantonese cinema through the production not only of entertaining, but also of educated and socially responsible films (Odham Stokes, 2007: 564). As a result, this independent company succeeded in gaining positive reputation for Cantonese movies. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, this status of quality allowed Zhonglian's films to access the Mainland market when most of the Hong Kong companies, even the left-wing ones, found so much difficulties. The majority of the 44 films that Zhonglian produced over its 15 years of operation were adaptations, either from novels or from other artistic forms. *Gu Xing Xue Lei (An Orphan's Tragedy)* provides an example of this trend, although it is likely more recognized by the appearances of two of the best-loved and respected members of the Hong Kong film community, Josephine Siao and Bruce Lee, rather than by adapting a literary classic.

There is little information available, especially in English, about Charles Dickens' introduction in Hong Kong and China. Hung (1980: 36-7) has pointed out that the first recorded mention of Dickens in Chinese writings was in 1906. His name was transcribed as *Ji Ken Shi* and he was praised for criticizing social and economic inequalities in his works, thus "(improving) the minds of the English". Between 1907 and 1909, 6 of his novels were translated into classical Chinese, starting by *Nicholas Nickleby* and followed by *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, *Dombey and Son* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. After that, nevertheless, there was no translation of Dickens' novels in China for over 30 years, until the decades of the 1940s and the 1950s. And yet, according to Bauer (1964: 82), Dickens became one of the favourite literary authors both in China and

Taiwan in the period between 1949 and 1960. Curiously enough, Dickens relationship with Hong Kong and China worked also the other way around. In the article titled “Opium, wholesale, resale, and for export: on Dickens and China”, Professor Tambling has examined the meaning of these two countries in the novels of the English writer. His eldest son, Charles Culliford Boz Dickens (hereafter, Charles Dickens Jr.), visited Hong Kong in October 1860 “to buy tea on his own account, as a means of forming a connexion (sic) and seeing more of the practical part of a merchant’s calling, before starting in London for himself” (Hogarth & Dickens, 2011: 496). After that, he continued on to Shanghai. By that time, Dickens was already thinking about the “very fine, new, and grotesque idea” (quoted in Hammond, 2015: 14) that would become *Great Expectations*. The journey of his son through Hong Kong and China influenced the novel, which began serialization in *All the Year Round* on December 1860. According to Tambling (2004a: 34), in the draft, Herbert Pocket was introduced as the pale gentleman who dreamed to become a merchant willing to go to “the West Indies, for sugar, tobacco and rum. Also to China, for teas”. But Dickens changed his mind, and Herbert was finally portrayed as an insurer of ships in order to avoid any reference to Dickens Jr. Contrary to Pocket’s success at Clarriker & Co., Dickens’ son returned from Hong Kong and China having gained nothing.

At the end of the Second Opium War, some articles published in *All the Year Round* mirrored Dickens’ preoccupation with the difficult situation in China and Hong Kong, especially concerning the British commerce with these countries. Tambling (2004b: 104-7) connects this event with the elimination of any reference to China or to free trade in relation to Herbert Pocket’s prospects. It may be the case that an earlier translation of *Great Expectations* to Chinese would have occurred if Dickens had maintained any allusion to China or Hong Kong. Anyhow, the fact remains that after Mao Zedong’s Chinese Revolution, his novels were perceived as a social critique of the evils of Capitalism. Among the most popular ones were included *David Copperfield*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Hard Times*, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *The Haunted Man* and *Oliver Twist* (Bauer, 1964: 25). What about *Great Expectations*? Centred on the hopes of a poor boy who dreams of becoming a gentleman to win the heart of his beloved, the novel failed, perhaps, in pinpointing the causes of the social injustices. In the context of a Communist government, *Great Expectations* lacked a clear denounce of Capitalism. This fact would explain also why it did not get translated until 1954. That year, China re-established its

diplomatic relationship with Britain, an important element to be considered. In Hong Kong, on the contrary, *Great Expectations* was already familiar to moviegoers since David Lean's film adaptation had been projected in local cinemas in 1948. There is little information regarding the process of dubbing or the reception of the film, although Guo (2011: 802) has pointed out "the great popularity that foreign films have enjoyed among the public" in that country, apart from highlighting the fact that there were no import restrictions there.

1946's *Great Expectations* was not screened in China until 1958 since, contrary to Hong Kong, Chinese was a closed and censored market. Guo (2011: 799) has provided valuable information regarding the projection of the film in the Mainland. At that time, many Chinese scholars criticized Dickens for his revisionist rather than revolutionist political position. Therefore, despite his *moral correctness*, some changes were necessary for indoctrination purposes. In this sense, dubbing was used as a strategy to "filter out undesirable information", and it is reasonable to believe that this technique was also utilized in Hong Kong with the same purpose. Another aspect that remains of interest for this research is whether the projection of the film could have created new demand. By the 1950s, Dickens had won public sympathy through his empathy with the lower classes and condemnation of economic, social and moral abuses. Hence, his popularity led the film industry to consider his novels for translation or adaptation to the screen. Producers not only appreciated their literary and aesthetic values; furthermore, their plots were regarded as both entertaining and educational material. The implication that emerges from these observations is that, considering the political and sociocultural context of Hong Kong in 1955, it is of no surprise that the Zhonglian decided to produce the first film adaptation of a Dickens' novel in Cantonese.

## ***Chapter 10. Great Expectations (1974): A muted musical***

### ***Great Expectations becomes a no man's land***

The most striking thing about 1974's *Great Expectations* is that it was originally intended as a musical, according to the available contemporary sources. Producers were probably influenced by the release of the Oscar-winning *Oliver!* (1968), the musical version of *Oliver Twist* directed by Carol Reed; as well as by Ronald Neame's multi-nominated *Scrooge* (1971). However, at the time *Great Expectations* was in the preproduction stage, another musical, Michael Turchner's *Mr. Quilp* (1974), was in the pipeline. Defined as "the worst of the musicals being produced by Reader's Digest from what used to be called family classics" (Ebert, 1975) and "a boneless and tentative excursion through *The Old Curiosity Shop*" (Eder, 1975), this adaptation proved that the one-time successful formula of the musical was exhausted. It is likely that *Scrooge*'s negative reviews and *Mr. Quilp*'s flop prevented producers from making a musical version of *Great Expectations*. In August 1974, *CinemaTV Today* ("What the Dickens?", 1974: 1) noticed that "in an unprecedented move, the bulk of the score for Sir Lew Grade and NBC's musical version of *Great Expectations* has been scrapped seven weeks into shooting". Later on, *Films Illustrated* ("The musical that never was", 1974: 53) informed that the idea of a musical had been declined and, instead, the film was to "contain only a traditional score by Maurice Jarre".

Another remarkable aspect is that the adaptation was planned both as a TV movie (to be broadcasted in the American television) and as a film (for theatrical release in Britain). However, likely because it aimed to fit in both formats, it did not seem to adjust to any of them. The period in which the film was produced was one of political, economic and social instability. The British film industry was both object and mirror of these changes. Filmmakers capitalized on hybridization in a moment when Britain had lost its imperial power and, somehow, its identity. In this context, it seems reasonable that ITC and Transnational production companies, following the trend of the *heritage films*,

regarded at the Victorian era and appealed to Charles Dickens to recover the sense of the *Britishness*.

## **Narrative discourse in *Great Expectations* (J. Hardy, 1974)**

It is reasonable that 1974's *Great Expectations* was widely influenced by Lean's version. Despite the release of *Gu Xing Xie Lei* in 1955, it is unlikely that someone in the British film industry would have known about its existence. Consequently, Lean's film was the main referent for any filmmaker who attempted a new adaptation. However, the result of scriptwriter Sherman Yellen and director Joseph Hardy's work is far from being equal to its model. The gaudy touch of the initial credits gives an impression that the film is one of the cheapest kind. A waltz with a melody of intense lyricism played by stringed instruments sounds while the leading actors/characters appear individually in oval frames over a blue glossy background. Four faces are shown before the title: adult Pip (Michael York), adult Estella (Sarah Miles), Magwitch (James Mason) and Pumblechook (Robert Morley). The prominence of the latter is of interest, for previous adaptations had paid little attention to this character. A possible explanation might be that Morley had won a supporting actor nomination in 1939 for W.S. van Dyke's *Marie Antoinette*, in which he played the role of Louis XVI. Indeed, he was often cast as a gentleman. Méndez (2006: 253) notes that he gained renown both in the United Kingdom and in Hollywood over the 1950s and the 1960s, when he worked with filmmakers as John Huston or Carol Reed. His indubitable *Englishness* and enormous versatility, which allowed him to play successfully both funny and dramatic roles, seems to have made him suitable for a mixed character as Pumblechook. Besides, it is natural that the film aimed to take advantage of Morley's renown and quality status. Right after the title, as if she were merely a supporter character, appears Miss Havisham (Margaret Leighton), followed by Jaggers (Anthony Quayle), Mrs Joe (Rachel Roberts), Joe (Joss Ackland), Bidley (Heather Sears), Pocket (Andrew Ray) and young Pip (Simon Gipps-Kent). It is remarkable the misspelling in Magwitch's name (the *t* is missing), as much as the fact that Mr Jaggers is referred as *Jaggers* and Herbert Pocket simply as *Pocket*. In addition, it is somewhat surprising that Mrs Joe appears in the credits before Joe, Bidley or Herbert Pocket considering her brief

appearance (she dies at the beginning of the film). Ultimately, as McFarlane (2008) has noted, there is a general beaming, friendly expression in the faces of the characters, which contrasts with the dark tone of the novel.

All these elements together portend that the film may likely disappoint those who expect an adaptation with a more *Dickensian* flavour. Curiously enough, Joseph Hardy surrounded himself of a group of distinguished collaborators: two triple Oscar-winners, Freddie Young for the cinematography and Maurice Jarre for the soundtrack; or double Oscar-winner Elisabeth Haffenden and Oscar-winner Joan Bridge for the costume design. Besides, the film counts on a solid cast. Apart from Robert Morley, Sarah Miles had been nominated to an Academy Awards for Best Actress in 1970, as well as Margaret Leighton, in this case for Best Supporting Actress in 1971. Heather Sears had won a Golden Globe nomination for Best Supporting Actress in 1958. And, of course, one cannot forget to mention the appearance of multi-nominated James Mason, one of the Hollywood's bigger stars. Notwithstanding, this film proves that the sum of outstanding professionals does not guarantee a positive overall result.

## Narrative functions

As previous adaptations, 1974's *Great Expectations* covers the three stages of Pip's expectations, which are delimited by titles announcing *THE BEGINNING 1830*, *LONDON 1836* and *THE RETURN 1850*. However, this chronology departs from the original one. There is a consensus among literary scholars that the Dickens' novel starts in 1812 and ends in 1840 (on this behalf, see chapter 4). However, this is a minor issue for a film that seems to conceive cardinal functions as separated, individual caves with almost no connection. Most of the key moments in the novel have been retained in the film, but they seem so unmotivated that they lose any thematic or narrative resonance. A possible explanation for this might be the initial conception of the film as a musical. When producers decided to film a *straight* version, no re-shooting was made because the songs had been conceived to be done as voice-overs ("What the Dickens?", 1974: 1). This means that the absence of music left some gaps that were not filled, but merely ignored. And it is reasonable to believe that the lyrics of the songs contained key



information to understand characters' feelings and motivations, as well as to make the plot advance.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS (NOVEL)</i>	<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS (FILM)</i>
<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>	<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>
<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>	<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>
<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>	<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>
<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella.</b>
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file	
<b>Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jaggers, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek</b>	<b>Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jaggers, walks Miss Havisham and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek</b>
	<b>Mrs Joe falls ill</b>
	<b>Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House</b>
<b>Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham</b>	<b>Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham</b>
	<b>Mrs Joe dies</b>
<b>Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice</b>	
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
Mrs Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)	
<b>Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House</b>	
<b>Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman</b>	<b>Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman</b>
	<b>Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice</b>
	Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad
<b>Mr Jaggers brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>Mr Jaggers brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>
<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>	<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>
<b>Pip goes to London</b>	<b>Pip goes to London</b>

	<b>Pip gets money from Jaggers to set himself up</b>
<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>	<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn</b>
<b>Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting</b>	<b>Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting</b>
<b>Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket.</b>	<b>Pip is educated by Herbert Pocket</b>
<b>Pip gets money from Jaggers to set himself up</b>	
<b>Pip dines with Jaggers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle)</b>	<b>Pip dines with Jaggers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle)</b>
<b>He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)</b>	<b>He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)</b>
<b>Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn</b>	<b>Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn</b>
<b>Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)</b>	<b>Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)</b>
<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>	<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>
<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella</b>	<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella</b>
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>	<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	
<b>Ms. Joe dies</b>	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age	
Pip takes Estella to Satis House	
She and Miss Havisham argue	
<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>	<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>
<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>
<b>Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers</b>	<b>Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers</b>
<b>Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape</b>	<b>Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape</b>
Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)	Drummle tells Pip he is to marry Estella
Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella	
<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>	<b>Estella confirms Pip she is to marry Drummle</b>

Wemmick warns Pip of being watched	
Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape	
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	Pip discovers Magwitch and Molly are Estella's parents
<b>Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)</b>	<b>Jaggers confirms Pip Estella's true story</b>
Pip goes to deserted sluice house	
Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house	Pip and Herbert make further plans for Magwitch's escape
<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>	<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>
<b>Pip loses fortune</b>	
Magwitch is tried	
<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>	<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>
	<b>Pip loses fortune</b>
<b>Pip becomes ill</b>	<b>Pip becomes ill</b>
<b>Joe looks after Pip</b>	<b>Joe looks after Pip</b>
Biddy and Joe get married	
<b>Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.</b>	<b>Pip spends eleven years working in India with Pocket</b>
<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House</b>	<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House.</b>

Writing for *Monthly Film Bulletin*, a reporter claimed that the film had “reduced one of the Dickens’ most subtle and complex novels to an insipid seasonal confection”, visually containing “no trace of authentic Dickensian atmosphere” (Millar, 1975: 261). Indeed, even in open spaces, the feeling is that characters live cloistered in a world very much constrained by the TV sets. The problem does not lie at the level of the cardinal functions. As can be clearly seen in the table above, most of the cardinal functions present in the novel have been retained in the film. Rather, there is a significant flow with regard to the complementary narrative units or *catalyzers*. While these units are not functional in terms of action, they are necessary to the story in order to give information about characters’ identities, establish relationship between them, set the tone and the atmosphere, etc. In 1974’s *Great Expectations*, there is a disturbing feeling that relevant information is constantly missing. In short, it seems that cardinal functions have been merely stuck together, one after another.

The opening scene shows Pip at the churchyard while the narrator voice-over (apparently belonging to adult Pip) says:

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip. My first most vivid impression of life was gained on a memorable raw afternoon the day before Christmas. I knew for certain then that my parents were dead and buried in this bleak churchyard; that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard was the marshes; the low leaden line beyond, the river; that the distant savage lair from which the wind came was the sea; and that the bundle of shivers, fear and loneliness beginning to cry, was Pip.

The use of the narrator's voice recalls that of 1946's *Great Expectations*. However, in this version, the painted canvas pretending to be a church at the background, the several cuts that show Pip moving in opposite directions through the X-Y axis (which causes a lack of *raccord* that disorients the spectator), and the camera zooming in Pip's face give the sequence a sense of artificiality that will prevail over the rest of the film. The convict appears at the back of the boy, who does not realize of his presence until the man covers the child's mouth with his hand. This attempt of adding suspense to the scene would have worked if the boy would have shown some kind of reaction. In contrast, he remains quiet and motionless, driven by the convict as a puppet instead of trying to shout or escape (as one would expect). He seems neither worried nor terrified, in contrast to Pip's feelings in the book:

I was in mortal terror of the young man who wanted my heart and liver; I was in mortal terror of my interlocutor with the iron leg; I was in mortal terror of myself, from whom an awful promise had been extracted; I had no hope of deliverance through my all-powerful sister, who repulsed me at every turn; I am afraid to think of what I might have done on requirement, in the secrecy of my terror (Dickens, 2005: 15).

The traumatic encounter with the convict, which produces a sense of guiltiness in Pip that will shape and affect his whole life, becomes a mere anecdote in this film. Similarly, his meeting with the second convict (he is neither referred as Compeyson nor he is related to Miss Havisham in any way) does not arouse any feeling in the audience. The scene goes with no dialogues, so it is likely that a song was planned to be added at that point.

It is also remarkable that, in this version, the marshes are replaced by a lively and cheerful village street which looks like a Christmas card. This is in contrast with the novel, where the misty marshes of Kent have a significant meaning and constitute a recurrent motif in Pip's life. They set the mood of the story and become a symbol of danger and uncertainty. It is the place where Pip's parents and siblings are buried, which means a reminder of his orphanage. The mist is also present when he meets the convict for the first time, and later on when Orlick tries to kill him. Only at the end, there is some sort of reconciliation between Pip and the misty marshes. For "in all the broad expanse that the tranquil light" of the evening mists show to him, Pip finally sees "no shadow of another parting from [Estella]" (Dickens, 2005: 484). In the film, the marshes are portrayed as separated from the Gargery's home, which is placed at the core of the village life.

The sequence depicting Pip's journey to Satis House together with Pumblechook is accompanied by a *vivace* piece using pizzicato. This music gives the scene a funny and humorous touch that contrasts with the gloomy atmosphere depicted by Dickens. Satis House is still a messy, abandoned place, full of dust and illuminated by candles. In addition, the film shows a special interest in portraying Estella as much older than Pip. To achieve this purpose, it uses the same actress (Sarah Miles) to play both young and adult Estella. She also stresses the age difference by telling Miss Havisham "He's much too little". Pip replicates that he is "nearly fifteen", to which Estella answers "Then you're smaller than a weasel for your age. I am older than you are", without specifying her age. However, her childish and pretentious behaviour does not match the insistence on her maturity. Meanwhile, Margaret Leighton seems quite right as Miss Havisham. As it might be expected from a person whose life has been reduced (due to her own choice) to be sat on a chair and to live locked in a house with no daily light, she looks tired and sickened, and shows no patience with anyone. She is cruel and nasty to Pip, and there is some sort of perverse pleasure in her revenge on him. As in previous versions, the Satis House

episode covers several visits before Pip is forced to become Joe's apprentice. The first visit portrays Pip and Estella playing cards. It is interesting how Miss Havisham arranges the game while a very naïve Pip does not catch the real meaning and the implications that this event will have in his life. It is a brilliant dialogue of the film invention:

(Miss Havisham to Estella) You can break his heart

(Pip) Beg pardon, ma'am?

(Miss Havisham) I said you should play a game of broken hearts

(Pip) I'm afraid I don't know that, ma'am

(Miss Havisham) Estella will teach you

This version adds a scene that is not included in any previous adaptation. At home, Pip tells the Gargerys and Pumblechook about his visit. As in the novel, he invents all the details because the truth "was too terrible". The episode has a triple function: (a) it alleviates the sense of cruelty experienced at Satis House and adds a touch of humour; (b) it highlights Pumblechook's pretentious character; (c) it means the beginning of Pip's aspirations and moral weakness. He wants to prove Estella that he is not common and "can learn to call jacks knaves, and deal cards, and speak softly". For Joe, he has all the necessary learning "to help me at the forge someday". At this point, the film establishes the main conflict, which will be recurrent over the film. The second visit covers the Pip-Herbert fight and Pip's subsequent victory, which gives him permission to kiss Estella's cheek. After that, a new scene at the Gargerys household shows Mrs Joe as she stays in bed. "She fell into one of her rampages", says the blacksmith, and this is all the information that the film provides. Pip's sister dies off-screen for nonspecific reasons, so the scene seems to work only to introduce Biddy. Pip confesses her that he wants to become a gentleman, and she offers herself to teach him to read. However, as in the novel, Miss Havisham asks Joe to take Pip as a blacksmith's apprentice, and gives him 25 guineas for Pip's services. It is noticeable how, in the previous scene, Pip tells Joe that Miss Havisham "is the kindest lady in the world", while, subsequently, Pip's fantasies about his great expectations are rapidly broken by and connected to an exquisite suffering at the hands of the old lady. Pip goes back to the forge, to that "coarse work" where he hopes to be found and despised by Estella. Biddy becomes again Pip's confessor: "There hasn't been a day I haven't hated this forge", he says. Pip is ashamed of his work, and

ashamed of the very shame he feels, a statement that mirrors his inner struggle between virtue and corruption. Despite being heartlessly humiliated by Miss Havisham, he still hopes that she intends him and Estella for each other. This desire is uplifted when Mr Jagger brings the news of his great expectations. The scene also serves to inform us that Joe and Biddy have got married. "I keep no secrets for my wife, sir", says Joe to Jagger when the lawyer asks to have a private conversation with Pip and the blacksmith. Pip is required to leave and move to London, what he does with a mixture of happiness and fear.

The second stage is preceded by the title LONDON 1836. The city is also reduced to a crowded street dominated by a supplier market. (Herbert) Pocket introduces himself as Pip's roommate, but the novelty is that Bentley Drummle becomes their neighbour from the flat below (likely with the aim of easily introducing him in the narrative discourse). More than ever, in this second part, there is a sense that one event follows hot on the heels of another. The film gives no time to the spectator to assimilate the information and to connect the different plotlines. A possible explanation might be that the filmmaker expects that the audience has read the novel and is able to follow the story even if the scriptwriter has taken some liberties in the process of adaptation. Pip, via Jagger, arranges a job for Pocket as a clerk in the Bank of England. However, the film does not provide any information about Pocket and his background/expectations, so it seems as if the idea just came up to Pip's mind. The scenes concerning Pip's education and new life as a gentleman (attending balls, galleries, ridding, archery...) could have been relevant or powerful, but the filmmaker pays so little attention to Pip's moral growth towards snobbism that the sequence lacks any sense of contrast. Neither the scene in which Joe visits him in London is leveraged to reveal the shame that Pip feels towards his humble origins. He seems uncomfortable, but does not really lose his patience as in other adaptations. Pip describes Joe as "my blacksmith" when Drummle asks about him, but Joe is already gone and the dialogue between the two young fellows mean nothing. Pip returns to the marshes, neither to visit Joe nor Biddy, but to see Estella. Persuaded that he should follow Miss Havisham's instructions in order to marry the young lady, Pip cannot credit the true nature of his expectations when Magwitch returns to reveal himself as his secret benefactor. Notwithstanding, after verifying the convict's story with Jagger, he decides to help him to escape. As noted above, the link between Magwitch, the second convict and Miss Havisham is eluded. The film solves the situation by adding a scene

where Pip asks Miss Havisham who Estella's parents are. The old lady shows Pip a tin locket with the names of Molly and Magwitch on it, and so both Pip and the audience know that the convict is Estella's father.

Eventually, the plan for Magwitch's escape fails and he is sentenced to be hanged. He dies at the hospital, but not before Pip confesses him that he has a daughter. Pip loses all his possessions, falls ill and Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip admits he has never been a gentleman, but "merely a snob, an ingrate". He accepts to go to India in order to work together with Pocket. After eleven years, Pip returns to the forge, where he meets Joe, Biddy and their baby, whose name is also Pip. Here, Pip is informed that the railroads will cross Satis House, which makes him to decide to visit the mansion for the last time. In a final sequence that evokes 1946's *Great Expectations*, Pip walks through the desolated house while he recalls the voices of Estella and Miss Havisham from the past. Pip meets there Estella, who occupies now Miss Havisham's old chair, veiled and engrossed. She tells him that "Drumle was killed in Paris" and that he made her life an agony once he learnt about her secret. However, contrary what the audience and Pip himself expect, Estella's secret has nothing to do with her real parents, but with the fact that she "married (Drumle) to escape from loving (Pip)". Echoing Dickens' ending, she offers Pip "let us part friends", but the film goes further and finishes with both protagonists kissing their lips and walking together out of Satis House.

### The narrating instance

As discussed above, 1974's *Great Expectations* imitates the 1946's version in the use of adult Pip's voice to drive the narration. The film opens with the well-known episode of the churchyard. As young Pip goes across the cemetery, the narrator's voice reads a passage, which is adapted from the beginning of the novel, to introduce the character. The same resource is used twice more. In the first occasion, he makes an account of his period as a blacksmith's apprentice while a dissolve is used to show his transition from child to young man:

Once it had seemed to me that when I should at last roll up my shirtsleeves and go into the forge as Joe's apprentice, I should be



distinguished and happy. Now the reality was here, life had lost all interest and romance. What stretched out before me was nothing save dull endurance.

The narrator's voice appears again after the end of Pip's expectations and subsequent illness, and his return to the marshes. On this occasion, the narration fills the eleven-year period that Pip spends working in India:

For eleven years, I have not seen Joe nor Biddy (though they had both been often in my thoughts), when on one Christmas Eve, an hour or two before dark, I knocked softly at the cottage door.

The introduction of adult Pip's voice indicates that he works both as the hero and the narrator of the story. This fact entails two further conclusions. On the one hand, the narrative agency has a *homodiegetic* character, for he also takes part in the story world. On the other hand, this narrative presents two narrative levels. There is an *extradiegetic* level, from which the narrator tells the story; and an *intradiegetic* level, where he participates as a character. Additionally, the introduction of the voice-over at certain points of the film implies the existence of *metalepses* or transitions from the *intra* to the *extradiegetic* level.

Apart from the voice-over, the film uses *point-of-view* shots to represent Pip's subjective view. On these occasions, the camera lens is physically placed at his eye level, so the audience is able to see what he sees. This film element is especially used to show Pip's perspective with regard to Satis House. On his first visit, the camera, pretending to be Pip's eyes, shows the audience the outside of the wrecked mansion. Since the young boy is afraid of the unknown, the use of the *point-of-view* shot lends empathy to him. On his last return, Pip repeats the same tour of the first visit, this time without Estella (although her infant voice is heard). By coding Pip with a *point-of-view* shot, the film is able to flashback twenty years and re-establish young Pip's innocence without dialog or any other visual assistance. The *point-of-view* shot works also as a metaphor, where Satis House becomes that place where time has stopped.

As shown when examining 1946's *Great Expectations*, the use of the voice-over and the *point-of-view* shot establishes a clear separation between the narrator and the rest of the characters that take part in the story world. It also entails that the narrative discourse is characterized by internal focalization, for it is Pip's point of view that orients the

narration. This means, additionally, the use of the first-person voice as well as a restriction of the field of vision of the events. Ultimately, although internal focalization prevails, it is mixed with a *non-focalized* narrative applied to the camera. This is especially clear in the only scene where Pip does not appear: the one where Pocket arranges the boat passage for Magwitch's escape (while the second convict spies on him, as in the 1946's version). Although outside the scope of this section, it is remarkable how unmotivated seems to be the presence of the second convict. He has not appeared since the beginning of the film, and the only clue we have about his presence is Magwitch's confession that someone is looking for him. "The young man with the ugly mug, my enemy", he says, "is seeking me out for the reward. Not to mention the joy of seeing me hanged". One would expect that Pip asks the reason behind this hate; in contrast, he merely promises Magwitch that he will be safe with him. Thus, the fact that the second convict spies on Pocket might be of no surprise for the audience, but the lack of connection with Pip's world belittles the potential of the scene. Anyhow, what seems of importance is that this scene can only be explained if the presence of an additional omniscient narrative agency, the *image-maker*, is accepted.

## Narrator

With the songs removed from the shooting, 1974's *Great Expectations* "emerged as a straightforward, naturalistic telling of the story in colour" (Richards, 1997: 347). It is likely that if the film had been produced as a musical, the lyrics of the songs would have worked as the voice of the characters, revealing their inner thoughts and parcelling out themes and events. Pip, as the narrative agency, could have added more information than he does by merely showing his point of view or introducing his voice at some points. By getting rid of the songs, there is a *devitalisation* of the novel: the film presents an upbeat view of Dickens, which contrasts with the set and the mood of the story. The *retrospective* narrator enters into his lived experience from a conventional narrative distance that focusses on external facts or behaviours. He is an "enlightened and knowing narrator who" merely attempts to "elucidate his mental confusion of earlier days" (Cohn, 1978: 143) by carrying out a comprehensible arrangement of the events. The film offers such an aseptic and sanitized vision of Pip's expectations that it almost leaves no room for his personal

interpretation. Notwithstanding, it is of interest to analyse the second intervention of the voice-over, which has been already quoted in the previous section:

Once it had seemed to me that when I should at last roll up my shirtsleeves and go into the forge as Joe's apprentice, I should be distinguished and happy. Now the reality was here, life had lost all interest and romance. What stretched out before me was nothing save dull endurance.

In this example, the distance between the *I-narrator* and the *I-character* is minimal. If Pip believed "once" that he was going to be happy working at the forge, "now" he has realized that his life has become miserable. Although he does not use the present tense, the word "now" suggests an identification between adult Pip's narrator and his own past tense. The perceptions and feelings described in this passage can be unambiguously attributed to the young blacksmith apprentice or to the adult narrator. Nevertheless, despite this instance, the narrator either distances himself from the character or disappears, acting as a mere reporting of events. Furthermore, it is apparent that there is no conflict between adult Pip's narration and those experiences he recounts through the images. There is a verbal acknowledgment of his growing snobbism when the narrator's voice admits that "life had lost all interest and romance", or when the *I-character* confesses Pumblechook that he has spent the night at the Blue Boar instead of at the forge when he returns to the marshes. In no way one perceives that he is biased or confused. Neither has he tried to induce the audience to understand the story differently from the real meaning that he himself provides, even though his field of vision is restricted. The conclusions on this subject clearly mirror those of 1946's *Great Expectations*. Therefore, the reader is kindly invited to examine chapter 8 for more details. All that remains to say is that the use of *point-of-view* shots not only lends sympathy to Pip, but also marks his testimonial or emotive function as narrator.

## Temporality and order

As noted above, 1974's *Great Expectations* presents an *extra* and an *intradiegetic* levels. The introduction of adult Pip's voice-over the discourse suggests that the narrating process

occurs later than the point of departure of Pip's story. From the narrator's perspective, both the *factual* and the *telling narratives* are *analepses* that reach into the past.

At the *intradiegetic* level, the events are arranged in temporal succession. However, it is noticeable that the past is sometimes evoked through character dialogues. For instance, Pocket tells Pip about Miss Havisham's jilting while they have dinner at the Archway Tavern. In this case, the old lady's past story goes unnoticed, not because it is not shown visually, but because it is not connected either with Magwitch or Compeyson. The reasons for her self-seclusion and her plan to revenge on men seems superficial, which, ultimately, makes it difficult to feel empathy or pity for this character when she realizes the terrible consequences of her behaviour. Another example occurs when Jaggers tells Pip about Estella's adoption. Again, the account seems very flimsy, for the film does not provide any background to explain how Magwitch becomes a convict or why Molly becomes a murderess. As in the previous illustration, this account refers to an event that took place before the beginning of Pip's story. Finally, during his last visit to Satis House, Pip recalls the voices of young Estella and Miss Havisham. As he enters the different rooms of the mansion, the memories of those voices come to his mind, but the images still belong to the present. By using this film element, the episode refers to an event that took place earlier in the narrative, but after the point of departure of Pip's story. Additionally, it is remarkable that this scene evokes its equal in 1946's *Great Expectations*, in which, as noted in chapter 8, David Lean uses the same device of cinematic storytelling.

Compared with the temporal succession of events in Dickens' *Great Expectations*, most of the cardinal functions (without considering those ones that been removed) follows the same arrangement, except for some minor variations. The most remarkable difference has to do with Mrs Gargery's death, which in the film takes place much earlier than in the novel. Despite the similarities in cardinal functions and chronological arrangements, it can be argued that the problem with 1974's *Great Expectations* lies in the fact that most of the events are superficial or seem unmotivated. The link between them is weak and, overall, the actions are not adequately explained. It is not a matter of length, for the film is almost 2 hours long. Rather, the script fails in its attempt to cover as many events from the source text as possible, and to soften the darkest moments of the novel so the film could be seen by all kind of audiences. Intended both for television and cinema, conceived as a musical, but eventually released as a film, this adaptation seems to swim in no man's land. At this point, it seems appropriated to bring up David Lean's confession

with regard to the script that Clemence Dane wrote for him. He complained that her screenplay tried to include all the events, thus comprising them in such a way that it became difficult to follow the plot. Lean rejected this draft and focused on the major themes and narrative lines of the novel. His success, as well as the fiasco of 1974's *Great Expectations*, seems to depend upon which events are selected or removed, and how they are arranged, rather than with a *faithful* observations of all the cardinal functions present in the source text.

## Narrative rhythm

Having discussed the order in which events have been arranged in the 1974 version of *Great Expectations*, it is time now to measure the likely changes in its narrative speed, and to compare them with the novel. As the table below shows, much of the running time is devoted to the first and second stages of Pip's expectations. Both parts cover, respectively, around 54 minutes, meaning 44 per cent of the film. Specifically, this adaptation pays particular attention to the numerous visits that young Pip makes to Satis House. In addition, it is remarkable that 30 minutes, approximately, are devoted to portray Pip's new life as a gentleman in London. However, despite it means 25 per cent of the film, it is still less than the amount of running time that other versions dedicate to this episode. On the other hand, the episode concerning Magwitch's return and subsequent plan for his escape goes very much unnoticed. The plan is quickly arranged, and its final failure happens so unexpectedly (the audience is not informed about who the second convict is and why he aims to capture Magwitch) that no sense of tension or climax is experienced. Moreover, Pip's attempt to discover the identity of Estella's parents overshadows the episode. Ultimately, the third part is the shortest one. It accounts for 30 minutes, which means 22 per cent of the total running time.

*Pip and the convict (00:00 – 14:42)*. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.

*Pip and the convict (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42)*. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.

<p><i>At Satis House (14:43 – 32:23)</i>. Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>
<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (32:15 – 33:55)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Mrs Gargery falls ill and Biddy comes to look after her. Mrs Gargery dies.</p>	
<p><i>At Satis House (bis) (33:56 – 39:06)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House before becoming a blacksmith apprentice.</p>	
<p><i>The blacksmith boy (39:07 – 45:13)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>	<p><i>The blacksmith boy (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>
<p><i>Great expectations (45:13 – 53:07)</i>. Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>	<p><i>Great expectations (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160)</i>. Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>
<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (53:08 – 1:22:48)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>	<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>
<p></p>	<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285)</i>. Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>
<p><i>End of great expectations (1:22:49 – 1:40:01)</i>. Temporal break (several years). Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip and Pocket conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>	<p><i>End of great expectations (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421)</i>. Temporal (several years) and spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>
<p></p>	<p><i>Attempt of murder (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433)</i>. Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.</p>

<i>Magwitch's decease (1:40:02 – 1:43:35).</i> Pip, Pocket and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.	<i>Magwitch's decease (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460).</i> Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.
<i>The labouring gentleman (1:43:36 – 1:47:39).</i> As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip decides to join Pocket for working (spatial break: move to India).	<i>Return to the marshes (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480).</i> As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.
	<i>Clarriker and Co (Chapter LVIII, p. 480).</i> Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).
<i>Return to the marshes (1:47:39 – 1:53:16).</i> Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella at the ruins of Satis House.	<i>Second return to the marshes (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484).</i> Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.

According to this chronology, the main variations of speed in the narrative of 1974's *Great Expectations* with regard to the novel work out approximately like this:

Pip and the convict: around 15 minutes for about one and a half day.	Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.
At Satis House: around 18 minutes for several months.	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
Mrs Gargery's funeral: less than 2 minutes for several months.	
At Satis House (bis): around 6 minutes for several months.	
The blacksmith boy: around 6 minutes for about six years.	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.

Great Expectations: around 8 minutes for a few days.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
The Londoner gentleman: around 30 minutes for about three years	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
	Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
End of great expectations: around 37 minutes for a few days/weeks.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
Magwitch's decease: around 3 and half minutes for a few days.	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
The labouring gentleman: around 4 minutes for some days.	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
Return to the marshes: around 6 minutes for a few hours.	Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

Subsequently, the main changes in the pace of the film are considered more in depth by analysing the four canonical forms: ellipsis, pause, scene and summary.

### *Ellipsis*

This resource is of particular importance in this version, as it tries to cover a great deal of events. The most remarkable ellipsis is the 11-year leap between Magwitch's decease and Pip's return to the marshes. This temporal break is also present in the novel and coincides with the period of time that Pip spends in India working with Pocket. In the film, it is indicated through the use of Pip's voice-over: "For eleven years, I have not seen Joe nor Biddy [...], when on one Christmas Eve, an hour or two before dark, I knocked softly at the cottage door".



There are other temporal ellipsis that are not indicated so clearly, but, still, they can be inferred from the narrative. For instance, temporal breaks occur in between the different visits that Pip makes to Satis House. On one occasion, Miss Havisham asks Pip “How long is it since your first came here? Six months? A year?” This dialogue indicates that a long period has passed although the film only portrays a few visits. Similarly, when Jaggers visits the forge to announce Pip that he has inherited a handsome property, he also informs him that “someone will meet your coach in London next Tuesday afternoon”. Before moving to London, some shots show Pip as preparing himself to become a gentleman. Although all the scenes are related, the camera cuts from one to another, so it gives the impression that some abridgment has been required. Another illustration of temporal ellipsis takes place when Pip returns to the marshes to visit Miss Havisham at her request. There, he meets Estella, who asks him “to be my page and escort me to London”. Then, she adds: “We are to meet tomorrow at midday at the Blue Boar Inn, and we shall take the London coach together”. An audio bridge is used here to connect two scenes with a single line of dialogue. Shot one shows Estella and Pip walking together through the Satis House garden. Subsequently, the camera cut to a second shot, a close-up of a sign that indicates “Blue Inn Boar”. Now, the camera tilt-down to find Pip, who is waiting for Estella. The audio bridge indicates that one day has passed. Apart from these, there are other minor ellipsis, which are not especially relevant for the narrative discourse. Ultimately, the information eluded is not key to make the plot advance.

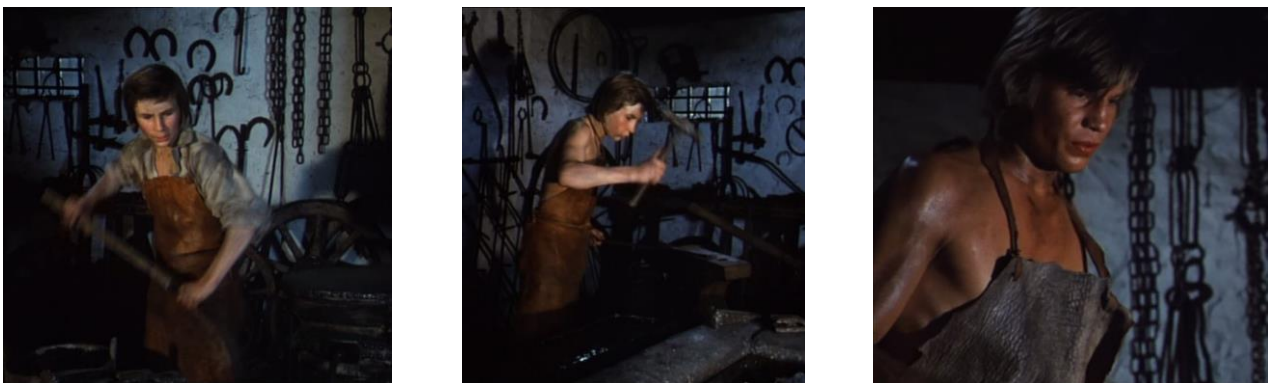
### *Pause*

There is no remarkable use of this figure in the film, although it is arguable whether the opening scene could fall into this category. By using long and full shots of 10 seconds on average, in which the camera shows Pip as he loiters through the cemetery, there is a sense that time is slowed down. The final frame, where the camera goes from a general shot to zoom in on Pip’s face, increases the sense of pause. This period of calm and silence is broken by the sudden appearance of the convict. In a similar manner, the film pays attention to Pip’s impressions in his way to Satis House. While travelling in the coach with Mr Pumblechook, the camera is used twice as Pip’s point of view to show the exterior of the mansion. The second *point-of-view* shot is especially remarkable since it lasts

for 23 seconds. Another possible example might be found in the last episode. In his return to Satis House after eleven years, Pip evokes the memories of his first visits. The sequence uses medium shots and close-ups of Pip as he goes across the mansion. They are combined with the *point-of-view* shots, which pretend to be Pip's eyes. The camera remains fixed while zooming in/out and panning to follow Pip, who walks slowly across the different rooms. By recalling the past and using shots of up to 25 seconds on average, the pace of the film seems to slow down. The effect is to emphasize the decadence of the ruins of Satis House.

### *Summary*

Apart from the ellipsis, this film capitalizes on the use of the summary to provide a great deal of information. Pip's transition from childhood to adulthood is portrayed in three different shots where he appears working at the forge at different ages:



**Fig. 18. Pip's transition from childhood to adulthood**

The three scenes cover a period of around five years considering that: (a) the film begins in 1830; (b) Pip spends from six months to one year visiting Satis House (as previously discussed); (c) he moves to London in 1836, shortly after this sequence. Similarly, summary is used to comprise the social occasions in which Pip escorts Estella. The montage includes gallery, riding, archery and a longer ballroom sequence. All the scenes contribute to show Pip's increasing lust for Estella while he feels jealous of Drummle. Finally, this device is used to comprise the period that Pip is ill in bed. By using dissolves, the film blends one shot into another to indicate the passage of time. In

this case, the film uses four *close-ups* of Pip's face. He is unconscious and delirious for "a while", according to Joe, until he wakes up and recovers.

### *Scene*

Most of the scenes presents a balance between the narrative and the story time. This fact, together with the film's attempt to cover a great number of events, drives to the emergence of many gaps or ellipsis between sequences to fall into a suitable running time.

## **Political, economic and sociocultural background**

While the 1960s British Cinema has been studied extensively, very few critical studies concerning the decade of the 1970s have emerged to date. In one decade, the political, economic and sociocultural grounds shifted dramatically and dynamically. All through the 1960s, British films were successful not only in the domestic market, but also in foreign countries. Many of them were partly financed by American companies because of the Anglo-American Film Agreements of the early 1950s. However, the situation changed drastically in the following decade. "The 1970s is characterized by unpredictable relations between economic determinants and cultural production, and in the mainstream market, the consensus between filmmakers and consumers had broken down" (Harper & Smith, 2012: 7-8).

### **Production, distribution and exhibition systems**

Over 1950s and the 1960s the British film industry was highly influenced by the American market. After the 1948 *Paramount Decree*<sup>18</sup>, which forced Hollywood studios to divorce from their exhibition circuits, the majors regarded with interest at the foreign markets to

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<sup>18</sup> This sentence, ruled by the American Supreme Court, outlawed block booking and blind bidding practices.

invest in *runaway productions* (that is, films intended for initial release in the United States, but filmed in other country), as Street (2009: 23) has argued. In line with this, they came to agreements with many British first-run cinemas to obtain preferential treatment, or owned their own multiplexes. Since the early 1940s, the duopoly of the Rank Organization and the Associated British Picture Corporation had dominated the British distribution and exhibition markets, but their control ended by 1969. Street (2001:53; *see also* Harper & Porter, 2003: 6) also draws attention over the influence of some economic incentives, as the devaluation of the pound sterling in 1949 and the limit of the amount that American companies could repatriate annually. As a result, the majors agreed to spend the remainder of their earnings in the British film industry.

The National Film Finance Corporation (NFFC), a specialized British film funding agency, warned about the risks of an increasing dependence on the American companies' investment. According to the agency, "no medium of mass communication of the psychological power of the film should be subject to complete control by outside influences", adding that there was "no assurance that the US distributors will continue to finance British films on the present large scale, or at all." (NFFC 1966, quoted in Drazin, 2017: 127). The last prediction became a reality and, by the mid-1970s, American finance had dropped dramatically. The Hollywood industry experienced a period of economic revival promoted by a new generation of directors, new marketing and management strategies, and the exploitation of the blockbuster (for more details, see chapter 11).

Apart from Hollywood's declining interest on the British market, local government support for the film industry also was insufficient. Neither the quota, the NFFC nor the Eady Levy (a tax on admission tickets intended to support the production of films) policies provided domestic films with "adequate funding" or ensured that "profits from successful films were ploughed back into the industry" (Barber, 2013: 23). Although they were intended to protect the domestic market against foreign domination, they were not effected to fight against Hollywood supremacy. As a matter of fact, both Stubbs (2009) and Fenwick (2017) have demonstrated how the Eady Levy favoured Hollywood dominance of the British film industry. Producers received the Eady money depending on the box office earnings of their films. However, this financial aid "made no distinction between wholly British companies and the British subsidiaries which the Hollywood companies had previously established to repatriate their blocked currency, and so British registered runaway productions were able to qualify as British films" (Stubbs, 2009: 5).

Since these movies were the most popular during the 1950s and the 1960s, they became the largest beneficiaries of this fund.

Eventually, the drastic loss of financial sources led to a decrease in film production, which now “tended to centre on either films aimed at the American market [with, consequently, high levels of financial risk] or low-budget efforts of limited ambition directed at the domestic market” (Shail, 2008: xv; *see also* Newland, 2010: 14). Drazin (2017: 128) regards the year 1974 as a “significant turning point” when “the make-believe of a profitable British film industry finally evaporate”. The NFFC was compelled by the government to offer financial support on a strictly commercial basis, meaning that they invested on films with commercial hit potential. Hence, it could not make “any fundamental contribution to the problem which beset British film production” any longer (NFFC 1974, quoted in Drazin, 2017: 128). These observations suggest that, albeit the British film industry had always “suffered from a weak, under-capitalised production base” (Spicer, 2017: 140), the vulnerability of film production became more apparent in the 1970s. Smith (2008: 74) notes that the industry moved towards “one-off projects, often financed from a range of diverse sources (from wider media, entertainment and business concerns).” It was not until 1979 that the Government declared the costs of films eligible for 100 per cent capital allowances the first year. As a result of this regulation, Britain became more attractive as a base for production. City institutions became involved in the support of domestic films, as much as Hollywood majors, which were also stimulated by the lower costs of technicians, transportation and construction workers. Nevertheless, after some amendments that reduced capital allowances from 100 percent to 75 percent, and subsequently to 50 percent, the tax shelter device was abolished in 1984 (Hill, 1993: 208; *see also* Street, 2009: 24; Feder, 1985). Being said that, it is no surprise that over the 1970s, “television drama became almost an alternative national cinema” (Rolinson, 2010: 165). While the film industry lacked financial stability, the TV duopoly BBC/ITV counted on guaranteed fund resources that allowed them to take major risks. Besides, many executives, writers and filmmakers brought their skills to the small screen, attracted by the large audience and rapid production schedules of television. Made-for-television films became more and more common, being most of these dramas based on historical periods and adapted from canonical texts. As will be shown, many of these films focused on the late-Victorian and Edwardian era, and

appealed to a national past characterized by unchallenged social order and imperial power.

Distribution and exhibition were dominated by three cinema circuits: Odeon, Gaumont and ABC. By 1972, they controlled 32 per cent of cinemas and accounted for 52 per cent of box office receipts (Street, 2009:11). Moreover, they had exclusive access to the mainstream features produced by the Hollywood majors. Given this scenario, independent cinemas found it difficult to compete, being many of them forced to shut down (Eyles, 2001: 167; *see also* Hanson, 2007: 120). Another aspect to take into account was the frequent disagreement between the decisions taken by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) and the local censorship boards. Often, films rated by the BBFC were later on banned by local boards. Consequently, “a number of films [found] their distribution considerably disrupted” in the 1970s (Simkin, 2012: 77). Interestingly enough, some films that have become *cult movies* in the passing time (like *A Clockwork Orange*) had to struggle against harsh criticism and difficulties at the distribution and exhibition levels. In contrast, movies with *suggestive* titles as *Diary of a Half Virgin*, *Sex and the Vampire*, *Bedroom Mazurka*, *Kama Sutra*, or *Diary of a Nymphomaniac* were released in some theatres without problem<sup>19</sup>. Besides censorship, exhibition practices and patterns

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<sup>19</sup> As an instance of these discrepancies between the BBFC and local boards, some films that have become *cult movies* in the passing time (like *A Clockwork Orange*) had to struggle against harsh criticism and difficulties at the distribution and exhibition levels. In contrast, movies with suggestive titles as *Diary of a Half Virgin*, *Sex and the Vampire*, *Bedroom Mazurka*, *Kama Sutra*, or *Diary of a Nymphomaniac* were released in some theatres without problem. Differences of opinion occurred also within the audience. On this matter, it is of interest to examine some reports appearing on the magazine *Film and Filming*. One spectator complaint about “the indifference the British people appear to show towards their film industry”, claiming that filmmakers as Ken Russell were not given the credit they deserved (“Fellini of Britain”, 1971: 4). Another one moaned that “Local Authorities (were) quite willing to pass films whose qualities (were) obviously less valuable than the ones they prohibit(ed)”, which, under his point of view, was “an indication of bias and inconsistency in their judgements.” To conclude, he argued the necessity that audiences cultivated their own judgement in order to choose the film to watch, rather than promoting too-much restrictive censorship (“Confused Censorship”, 1973: 4). The opposition of some religious and social groups also pressured against the projection of certain movies. One moviegoer reported how the local Catholic and Lutheran priest and minister stood outside the cinema of his town before *What do you say to a naked lady?* (X rated) was run, in an attempt to discourage spectators from entering (“What do you do with an irate priest?”, 1971: 4). In the midst of the debate concerning the impact that cinema might have in the moral standards, some viewers demanded their right and freedom to decide what to see: “I must protest

of ownership were profoundly affected by the dramatic decline in movie attendance from the end of the 1940s on. Whereas cinema admissions peaked in 1946 with 1.635 million, by 1974 this number had dropped to 138,5 million. In 1984, it reached its lowest level with 54 million, in order to rebound somewhat in the following years (*BFI Statistical Yearbook*, 2016: 15). This fall may partly be explained by the spread of television as a household mass media entertainment. As Spraos (1962: 21) observes, “in regions where the penetration of TV has been greater it has, through its effect on admissions, led to proportionately more cinema closures, and this were, in turn, responsible for a further aggravation of admission losses in these regions”. In order to bring the audience back to the theatres, exhibitors introduced new widescreen formats, such as Cinerama and CinemaScope, and stereophonic sound (Eyles, 2001: 166). However, by the 1960s, it was clear that the total seating capacities available in most theatres far exceeded the numbers of cinemagoers. Therefore, cinema chains developed a new strategy based on dividing big movie houses into two or three *mini cinemas* (Hanson, 2007: 121; see also Eyles & Stokes, 2002: 134-5). This allowed exhibitors to offer a greater choice of films, as well as to maintain hit films during longer periods of time (Eyles, 2001: 167). However, this conversion also resulted in significant disadvantages for the audience’s enjoyment, such as poor sight lines, reduced screen sizes, or narrow (or even non-existent) halls to wait before the movie started. Those and other problems made that cinemas were not a pleasant place for the audience any longer, as will be discussed in the following section.

## Cinema audience

Changes in the socio-cultural landscape also affected the perception of the national identity and drove towards the transition from a mass to a segmented audience. Immigration and the rise of inner-racial tensions, the development of the Women’s Movement, the Ulster crisis, major industrial conflicts, the rise of nationalism in Wales and Scotland, and the re-emergence of the North-South split in England questioned the post-war consensus on the white male middle-class London (Newland, 2010: 12). Certain

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most strongly about the system that allows six people to say that Kent Russell’s film *The Devils* shall be banned from Nottingham” (“The Devils Repression”, 1972: 6).

works and studios published in the 1970s showed the existence of “a consolidated, coherent upper class, enjoying quite disproportionate wealth, power, and life chances” (Marwick, 2003). There was a general trend of people moving from the working to the middle class, although they still lacked enough power to have real influence in the public sphere. Claiming for better working conditions, mineworkers’ pickets and building workers’ strikes became common in the period 1972-74. Not only was the British society divided by classes, but also by race. From late-1950s to early 1960s, the number of immigrants coming from the former colonial territories grew exponentially. Racial tension broke out over the 1960s and the 1970s, “associated with poverty, unemployment, rotten housing and a growing bush war between blacks and the police” (Porter, 2001: 354).

United Kingdom’s initial rejection to join the European Economic Community (EEC) after the Second World War became another bone of contention that caused disagreement between different parts of the country, although they finally accepted to join in 1973. Britain remained in a liminal point between Europe and the United States. As discussed in Chapter 8, the British film industry mirrored this side-line position. It aimed to reach the popularity of American films while appealing to an *art cinema*; it fought against Hollywood’s dominance, but also signed different agreements with it. McLeish (2014) has defined Britain’s attitude as a “post-war delusion about still being a great power influenced our world view”. Although it is a very complex question that requires an in-depth discussion, the loss of Empire contributed to strength the individual identities of England, Scotland and Wales. In these two latest countries, nationalist parties gained much popularity over the 1970s. They attracted new voters and laid on the table the question of separatism. Besides this, terrorist group IRA emerged in 1969 with the aim to remove North Ireland from United Kingdom.

Therefore, by the end of the 1960s, the nation started to feel the loss of its former world power. The collapse of the British Empire erased its long-held status as a global force, on which the country had largely depended both internally and abroad. As noted above, Britain joined the EEC in 1973, which led to a general concern about how the rapprochement would affect the traditional sense of *Britishness*. Moreover, it increased the internal tensions. The credibility of the Union was in decline, starting to be regarded as an artificial nation. In this sort of dystopian scenario, how these socio-cultural changes affected audiences and British cinema? It is remarkable that albeit unemployment and



inflation rates increased over the 1970s, and “despite images of social breakdown, power cuts, the three-day week, and the rampant bureaucracy and corruption”, British’s judgement on their living standards was, overall, positive. The European Values System Study Group in 1981 found that the British were highly satisfied with their lives in terms of jobs, health, housing, education or leisure (Mandler, 2006: 228). Another report (“Chasing Progress...”, 2004) pointed out that 1976 was the year when Britain peaked as a society (considering rates of prosperity and technological development *versus* social and environmental costs). By the early 1970s, half the population afforded their own homes, including commodities as central heating, indoor lavatories, kitchens and bathrooms, telephones or electronic devices as washing machines or fridges. People increasingly travelled abroad. And there was a wider offer of cultural and leisure activities, being the TV set the epitome of the spare time, for even working-class families were able to bear its expense (Newland, 2010: 15). In short, as Marwick (2003) has stated concerning British society in the 1970s, “still there was joy in the present, and hope for the future.”

As noted above, the advent of television as an accessible mass medium from the 1950s changed patrons of consumption. Cinema was no longer the essential means of family entertainment. Betts (1973: 226) offers a possible explanation when he argues that “one of the attractions of the film for the majority had been that it took them out of their homes into the splendours of the picture palace. The little black box reversed this process and took them back again, usually into homes which were by then a good deal pleasanter to live in”. Especially relevant is the spread of television among the working classes. They had constituted historically a vast proportion of the cinema audience (around the 80 percent, according to the Hulton Readership Surveys, 1950-1955), but now preferred to spend their time in front of the small screen. As a consequence, many theatres shut down, although it is difficult to find out how far the decline of admissions was the cause or the effects of closures. Commenting on this issue, Spraos (1962: 33-5) noted that when a movie theatre went out of operation in a given neighbourhood, spectators’ choice diminished and, consequently, there was a small supply of films to suit their tastes. “Film-goers can still go to further cinemas, but this means an increase in the overall cost of going to the movies. To the cost of the admission, it has to be added the cost of transport and, possibly, of a whole meal out, which may put some people off”. Spraos’ report covers the decades of the 1950s and 1960s, but Cameron (1986: 45-9) has proven that

the association between the decline in movie attendance and the closure of theatres has extended over the 1970s as well.

Changing leisure patterns and new ways of consumer culture led also to the fragmentation of the cinema audience, meaning that “British filmmakers could no longer rely on a mass audience when marketing a film” (Newland, 2013: 3). By the 1960s, young adults between the ages of 16 to 24 were the most active in cinema-going. 44 per cent of them frequented the movies regularly (once a week or more), while another 24 per cent went to the cinema occasionally (at least once a month) (Spraos, 1962: 61; *see also* Aldgate & Richards, 2002: 186). These results, appearing in the Hulton Readership Surveys and the IPA National Readership Surveys, reflect those of Street (2009: 20), who also states that young, urban, working class audiences were “lost by stages, particularly during 1955-59” and only recaptured in recent years with the advent of the multiplexes. At least, this is true if by “young, urban, working class” she means people aged 25-34 and 35-44. The boom in birth after the Second World War, along with earlier maternities, are two key factors to be added to the social and cultural changes already mentioned.

In short, the British film industry found a compelling and urgent need to renew itself in order to meet the demands of the different niche audiences, whose responses were less predictable. Despite technological improvements and multiplex conversion, moviegoers complained about cinemas’ design and maintenance, as well as about ticket prices. According to Hanson (2007: 119, 125-6)<sup>20</sup>, exhibitors saw this process also as an opportunity “for which they could charge at the box office”. Consequently, movie theatres were no longer regarded as pleasant places to be. Moreover, even though new

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<sup>20</sup> Referring to an Odeon theatre placed in Essex, one cinemagoer complained that the cinema was “more interested in trying to flog over-priced refreshments (and to) blow-up plastic Disney ‘favourites’ and friendly bendy monsters at 10p each”. He also moaned the rise in the price of admission which “help pay for the ‘lavish improvements’” that the conversion of that theatre brought about (“The incredible shrinking local”, 1976: 6). Another spectator accounted how youngsters under age were allowed in for ‘X’ films in Bristol, whose “idiotic remarks” spoiled adults’ entertainment, and how usherettes did nothing to control them (“Youth power”, 1972: 6). There were also concerns about “the apathy of some cinema managers, mainly those in the Rank and EMI circuits” (“Kama Camp”, 1972: 6). According to another report, some of the most common incidents included: “(1) faulty projection, (2) curtains closed when credits were projected, (3) sales girls standing in front of your seat when film has not ended, (4) left to find your own sit in the dark, told to wait outside of cinema because it’s a new modern one with no foyer, and (5) paying the same price for one film as two” (“Hammer horror”, 1972: 4).

movie theatres were built over the 1960s and the 1970s, they failed to be placed in the new towns or suburbs, where part of the population had moved. The result was that cinema-going continued to drop and attendances would not recover until the mid-1980s. To this should be added that the audience became increasingly selective in their choice of film as a result of the rise in ticket prices. According to Harper and Smith (2012: 211), the 1970s saw “a widening gap between the regular cinemagoer and the new ‘event-movie’ audience”. They point out a tendency towards a profound divergence in popular tastes, although by the mid of the decade “the British box office were often more international in their scope”.

Social and cultural changes drove the BBFC to revise its criteria in order to adapt them to a more permissive society. As Richards (2001: 169) has noted, over the 1960s, “changes in the censorship system appear(ed) startling and speedy”. In 1960, Penguin Books was prosecuted under the Obscene Publications Act 1959, but declared non-guilty, for publishing *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. The acquittal was key to promote moral relaxation, sexual tolerance and literary freedom (“The trial of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*”, 2010). Death penalty was abolished in 1965 and abortion was legalized a couple of years later. In 1968, homosexual behaviour was decriminalized (Barber, 2012: 22) and theatre censorship was abandoned. One year after, divorce was allowed if a marriage had irretrievably broken down (“A brief history of divorce”, 2009). The *Swinging Sixties* “combined youth, sex, rebellion and individual self-expression as opposed to authority, tradition, hierarchy and age” (Aldgate & Richards, 2002: 214). In the light of these new policies, the BBFC allowed films to address controversial themes as sex, violence, drugs, homosexuality, madness or abortion as long as they were treated discreet and seriously. The Board redefined its role, arguing that it could not

assume responsibility for the guardianship or morality. It cannot refuse for exhibition to adults films that show behaviour that contravenes the accepted moral code, and it does not demand that ‘the wicked’ should also be punished. It cannot legitimately refuse to pass films which criticise ‘the Establishment’ and films which express minority opinions (“1970 – Changes in the age rating system”, 2017).

Despite the seemingly public tolerance towards controversial subjects, some political, religious, educational and press pressure groups claimed that cinema had a

psychologically damaging effect, as it raised violence or suicide rates in society. Besides, as noted previously, local authorities were allowed to overrule the Board's decisions, "thus creating a situation in which a film could be banned in one area but shown in another" (Barber, 2012: 26). One spectator summed up the situation as follows:

It looks a triple-headed hydra: it has a sex-head, a violence-head and a political-head. The critics, most of them, are genuinely concerned that true artistic talent shouldn't be stifled. The politicals (*sic*) see repression on principle, and there are parts of the world where they are admittedly in the right. The public has a seemingly endless appetite for both sex and violence, wherefor (*sic*) cop-series on TV and endless dishonest and badly-made exploitation movies sell right out, and the occasional genuine film-maker finds himself able to work within the framework; good films get swept under the carpet and the most important issues are countered largely with apathy ("Forbidden Exercises", 1976: 4).

In an attempt to reach a compromise between those in favour and those against more permissiveness, the Board modified its rating system in 1970. The new system raised the minimum age for X certificate films from 16 to 18. This decision responded to the increasing graphic representations of sexual and criminal activities in mainstream movies, both from the United States and from continental European countries (Simkin, 2012: 81). Besides, it split former category A into two categories: A, intended for children of 5 years or over (whether accompanied or not), but containing some material that parents might prefer their children under 14 not to see; and a new AA rating, for which the admission of those under 14 was forbidden, whether accompanied or not. The U category, intended for general admission, was maintained. Over the decade, the BBFC struggled to find "the most suitable rating of films for work of quality and integrity" (Barber, 2012: 32). John Trevelyan, the Board's Secretary between 1958 and 1971, stated that the BBFC rated films depending on their individual merits. "We could, of course, have rules which were applied strictly and indiscriminately to all films, but I firmly believe that this would lead to unintelligent censorship" (BBFC file: *The Party's Over*, quoted in Hargreaves, 2012: 57). It has been assumed, over the years, that the BBFC's judgements about the representation of controversial themes have been more lenient towards *art-house* pictures than towards mainstream films. As Simkin (2012: 86) notices, such

assumption hinges on the belief that the formers attract more “intelligent viewers”, who are, supposedly, “less likely to be negatively influenced by what they view”. As a matter of fact, Trevelyan divided the film audience into two types: “intelligent people” and “the great majority of cinemagoers” (BBFC file: *Victim*, quoted in Hargreaves, 2012: 57-8). In short, any Board’s decision was taken considering this distinction, as well as the “individual merits” of the film. From this observation, it can be argued that its judgement were subjective and responded to its “own definitions of quality and cultural value”. Ironically, many exploitation films of the decade were not considered culturally worthwhile despite their popularity, which suggests that they met a particular cultural need (Barber, 2012: 32). Nevertheless, *popular* was not a stable label any longer.

## Film forms and genres

Social and cultural changes made that no production company or filmmaker had the formula to keep a finger on the public pulse. On this subject, Newland (2013: 5-12) has pointed out that the fragmentation of the audience in the post-war era broke the boundaries of the genres. Filmmakers created generic hybrids to attract as much moviegoers as possible. Besides, Newland notices an increasing polarisation of the British society as long as separatist movements spread. While part of the population got involved in underground cultural activities, fought against shifts in gender politics and were opened to visible sexual permissiveness, some others yearned for earlier times. Generally speaking, the former group was composed of the young population, while the latter included the adult and old generations. This split in society affected the kind of productions that were released over the 1970s. Since around the 70 per cent of the spectators were made up of people between the ages of 16 and 35, it can be assumed that films targeted the youth culture and values (Simkin, 2012: 73). Coupled with this, Smith (2008: 74-9) has distinguished three trends that he has labelled “Glam”, “Spam” and “Uncle Sam”. The first one is directly related to the music business and the crossover potential of the youth market. The musical departed from its classical form and became influenced by rock/pop/punk culture. Most of them involved rock and pop stars. Promo videos using soundtrack and/or performance by the original artists in a fictional setting were launched to make them gain more exposure (Street, 2009: 112-13).

The term “Spam” refers to the low-budget TV spin-offs comedies that embodied a nationalistic representation of *Britishness*. With varying degrees of quality, they capitalized on characters and patterns of successful television sit-coms. Producers hoped that the popularity of these TV formats could be replicated in films, thus recovering (at least) part of the audience that had crossed over to the small screen. However, the larger running time of films forced writers and directors to develop complex plots, which deviated from the original, small-scale situations that worked successfully in the sit-com. According to Street (2009: 110-11), those variations did not meet the expectations of the audience. Television comedy spin-offs were not the only comedy format featured during the 1970s. Big-budget, star-oriented comedies were another trend. Some of them addressed an international audience and performed well at the box office. Other kind of comedies (surreal and anarchic satire or light/observational comedies) were also produced. However, as the censorship relaxed its standards, the most successful trend moved towards the partnership between comedy and sexploitation (Street, 2009: 105-11). Apart from comedies, among low-budgeted, B-films, it should be included horror and science fiction as two of the most popular of the decade. Often, sci-fi movies included horror elements, which proves the existence of a trend towards hybridization and narrative mutations.

Finally, “Uncle Sam” includes those films that looked directly at the international markets, many of them in the form of co-productions. Generally big-budgeted, those features engaged traditional genres (crime, thriller, war, adventure, costume) with an all-star casting. Specifically in the case of costume/historical films, it is of interest a particular trend identified as *heritage films*. While many films of the decade tackled social concerns and dealt with the socially divided post-Imperialist British working class, *heritage films* offered a nostalgic vision of the national past. They “re-construct[ed] an Imperialist and upper-class Britain” (or, rather, its contrary, the “picturesque poverty”) (Higson, 2006: 93) through a wide number of categories. For the purpose of this research, it must be noted that ‘heritage films’ encompassed single dramas made on film for television, being many of them adaptations from works of classic literature (Hall, 2001: 191-92). This is the case of the 1974 version of *Great Expectations*. This production was conceived as a TV movie for the American market while it had a theatrical release in Britain. Based on Charles Dickens’ novel, whose status of *classic* gave the film certain prestige, this adaptation was intended to portray both sides of the Imperialist British society: wealth

and poverty. Traditionally, scholars have tended to relate the *heritage* phenomenon with the 1980s and the era of Thatcherism, as much as with the 1990s. The concentration in these two decades has prevented from “the historicisation of heritage films within broader cinematic traditions of costume drama, period reconstruction and literary adaptation” (Hall, 2001: 193). But if one extends this trend back into the decade of the 1970s, many examples of *heritage* sub-categories can be identified. *Heritage films* were appreciated because of their cultural value rather than their profits at the box-office. They addressed a specific type of audience. Most of them were set in the early decades of the twentieth century, generally appealing to an elite and conservative idea of the national past. As it has been discussed, these characteristics applied to 1974’s *Great Expectations*.

## ***Chapter 11. Great Expectations (1998): Fluidity and eroticism***

### **Postmodern *Great Expectations*: success or flop?**

The most conspicuous fact to emerge from the published information on 1998's *Great Expectations* is related to the filmmakers' own opinion about it. In 2013, both director Alfonso Cuarón and cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki confessed that they regretted having made the film. According to Cuarón, *Great Expectations* was “a complete failed film”, while Lubezki defined it as “the least satisfying of our movies” (Lang, 2016). For better or worse, 1998's *Great Expectations* hit a nerve in the audience, especially among those who believe that canonical literature is *sacred*. This *remediation* revisits the classical text and establishes a profitable dialogue with his author to offer a critical and an ironic perspectives of the novel. The film follows a cultural trend, which has increasingly spread since the 1990s, to revisits the *classics*. Contemporary cinema is intimately connected to a postmodern fascination with reimagining and refashioning well-known stories. Scholars have not reached a compromise on the definition of postmodernity and it is not the aim here to propose a new one. For the purposes of this research, it will be followed Degli-Esposti's definition (1998: 3). According to her, postmodernity appeals to many shapes and modes of expression, “each one pointing to different states of questioning and to diverse ways of remembering, interpreting and representing”. In the following pages, it will be explored the ways in which the film departures from the source text, and the implications of those variations in the context of contemporary Hollywood.



## **Narrative discourse in *Great Expectations* (A. Cuarón, 1998)**

1998's *Great Expectations* combines classical-realist narrative discourse with histrionic-psychedelic visual style. The film disrupts conventional modes of narration and depiction; in doing so, it establishes a distance between moviegoers and the source text. As a result, it is likely that this version might horrify those ones who mind the update in settings and characters, and please the open-minded spectators who let themselves be surprised by contemporary re-readings. Similarly, 1998's *Great Expectations* received mixed criticism. The most positive review was published in *Salon* (Taylor, 1998), which praised “the strange, breath-taking and rapturous new updating of *Great Expectations*”. By defining Cuarón's version as *faithful to the spirit* of the source text, the reviewer argued that “reimagining a book can be just as true a mark of respect, a demonstration that the heart of a work is strong enough to support unexpected transformations”. Moreover, he considered that the heart of the Dickens's novel beat strong, for the film rightly rethought, in a contemporary setting, what *Great Expectations* meant more than two centuries ago. Ultimately, the review appealed to the universal themes (ambition, self-improvement, social status, orphanage, vengeance, crime, punishment...) that make Pip's story to resist the pass of the time, and to be recognized even if *painted* with new colors. *Rolling Stones* (Travers, 1998) praised the “delicate performances” of Ethan Hawke and Gwyneth Paltrow, who play the grownup Finn and Estella. In *The Christian Science Monitor* (Sterrit, 1998), the film was defined as “an update with a vengeance” in search for “a sensational story to showcase its loveliest young talents”, that is, Hawke and Paltrow.

Yet not all the critics were wholly convinced about 1998's *Great Expectations*. *Human Events* (“Great Expectations”, 1998: 22) defined the movie as “a piece of pop fluff with a high-bred name”, and the fact that 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox pulled the film from its Christmas release schedule suggests that the production company had no faith in its good performance at the box office. Overall, most of the criticism concerned the novel-to-screenplay transference, being the script considered to be a “pale shadow by comparison” (Sterrit, 1998). As will be shown later on, much of the original plotlines of Dickens' *Great Expectations* have been compressed, transformed or eluded. Hence, what remains are the bones of the source text, which still make the story recognizable, but reduce the complexity of the novel to the Finn-Estella romantic plot. As Ebert (1998) pointed out,

“The moment this movie declares itself as being mostly about affairs of the heart, it limits its potential”. Furthermore, some reviewers found that Estella’s behaviour towards Finn was too lightly explained, and that Lustig’s storyline had a weak contact to the central plot. “It feels more like a bone thrown to Dickens”, wrote Ebert (1998). Film critic Lisa Thatcher (2014) has pointed out that “the problem with Cuarón’s *Great Expectations* lies in the title”. According to her, as most of the elements of the source text have been remodelled, transformed or omitted; and since “the emphasis on narrative arc was shifted away from coming of age, to the devastating consequences of Miss Dinsmoor’s revenge”, filmmakers should have used a completely different name and “pretend the source material never existed”. However, the question remains: how to pretend that Dickens’ *Great Expectations* has never existed? As Mukherjee (2005: 111) has rightly argued, “the bare bones of the Dickensian masterplot are retained”; hence, it would be dishonest to disguise a story that is clearly inspired in a well-known literary classic.

On the contrary, there was a general consensus on lauding the visual aesthetic and the photography of the film, as well as the music. Sterrit (1998) considered that the colourful camera work and the soundtrack were “the best technical credits”. According to *The New York Times* (Maslim, 1998), “the film makes up in visual exoticism some of what it loses in character and context”, while *Sight and Sound* (Wrathall, 1998) stated that “Cuarón manages to [invigorate] a much adapted classic with a captivating barrage of late-gos style”. Despite the broad palette of mixing colours that it offers to the audience, 1998’s *Great Expectations* has passed unnoticed, perhaps very much overshadowed by the status of *classic* reached by David Lean’s version. However, it is strongly believed that the film deserves a reevaluation that takes into account its multiple genuine motifs.

## Narrative functions

As already noted, 1998’s *Great Expectations* leaves many of the cardinal functions present in the Dickens’ novel aside. Furthermore, it is at least arguable that all the ones that have been retained should be accepted as such, for most of them contain obvious deviations from the original narrative units. Notwithstanding, considering that their purpose and their effect in the development of the plot is similar, their analogy will be assumed. It is noticeable that the names of the characters and the locations have been altered, or, more

accurately, updated (interestingly enough, only Estella and Joe have kept their original names; this question will be examined later on). However, these variations do not modify the *skeleton* of the narrative arc, which still deals with the story of an orphan labouring boy, in love with a wealthy and heartless girl, who, one day, gets some property from a secret benefactor to make his dreams come true... until he finds out that all his expectations were constructed over a mere fantasy. It is the similarity in the structural pattern of both works what makes possible to consider 1998's *Great Expectations* as a true film adaptation.

1998's *Great Expectations* largely concentrates on the Finn-Estella romance subplot; it has “a mind of its own” and imbues the life of the protagonist with “a genuine romantic spirit” (Travers, 1998). Furthermore, it also explores more contemporary issues as physical attraction and sexual desire between the two characters. On the contrary, the script leaves a great deal of Dickens' novel aside. In doing so, the storyline lacks certain unity and coherence since some of the events are slightly developed. A film review published in *Variety* (McCarthy, 1998) defined the film as “something less than a pip”. Despite the “number of memorable images and vividly realized scenes”, it lacked “complexity and genuine surprise”. This observation is especially noticeable with regard to the Finn-Lustig relationship. Truly enough, the film pays much attention to the initial encounter between both characters, and it even extends the original action). However, it hardly provides information about his past story. His return and subsequent plan to escape occur so quickly that they seem unmotivated. The film offers no explanation either to justify his new status as a wealthy man or to clarify how he came to be involved in the mafia. Moreover, the lack of connection between Lustig, Ms Dinsmoor and Estella makes the presence of the convict in the story to appear as an artificial add-on. It could be argued that the film reduces his role to a sort of McGuffin that works as an inciting incident despite lacking intrinsic importance in the development of the plot. As McFarlane (2008) has noted, the character lacks enough “sense of past [...] to make one feel the grateful effort he claims to have made on Finn's behalf”. Or, as Wrathall (1998) has argued, one could rather say that “his return prompts a lurch into melodrama that's unconvincing after the sophistication of what has gone before”. Additionally, the little scope for Lustig to justify himself results in Finn's extremely rapid growth towards moral redemption. Since the film takes great care to portray his transformation from a humble poor labouring boy to an arrogant wealthy artist, the promptness with which he makes

the opposite journey seems of little consistency. In fact, the sequence concerning Lustig's return and subsequent death is very much compressed compared to the novel or to previous film adaptations (especially the Universal 1934 version), and most of the dialogue between the two characters is unsubstantial, being Lustig constantly beating about the bush. From these observations at least hint that the film's greatest weakness lies in the development of this subplot.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (NOVEL)	<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (FILM)
<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>	<b>Finn meets Lustig in village beach</b>
<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>	<b>Finn steals food and bold cutters for Lustig</b>
	Finn visits Paradiso Perduto and meets Estella
<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>	<b>Police arrests Lustig</b>
<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Finn returns to Paradiso Perduto, meets Ms Dinsmoor and kisses Estella <i>on her lips</i>.</b>
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file	
Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr. Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's <i>cheek</i>	
Pip visits Satis House again. He walks Miss Havisham	
Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice	
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
Ms. Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)	<i>Maggie takes off Finn and Joe</i>
Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House	
Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman	
	Finn revisits Paradiso Perduto every Saturday during several years.
	<i>Finn escorts Estella out of the cocktail at Rewald's</i>
	<i>Finn re-visits Paradiso Perduto. Estella has gone abroad</i>
<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>Mr Ragno brings news of Finn's 'great expectations'</b>

<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>	<b>Finn tells the new to Ms Dinsmoor</b>
<b>Pip goes to London</b>	<b>Finn goes to New York</b>
<b>He sets up house</b> with Herbert Pocket <b>at Barnard's Inn.</b>	<b>Finn sets up at the Carter Hotel</b>
Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting	<b>Finn re-meets Estella</b>
Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket.	
<b>Pip gets money</b> from Jaggers <b>to set himself up</b>	
<b>Pip dines with Jaggers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle).</b>	<b>Finn has lunch with Estella and her partner, Walter Plane</b>
He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)	<i>Finn paints a portrait of naked Estella</i>
	<b>Finn gets some digs and money to work on his opening exhibition</b>
	<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Walter</b>
	<i>Finn and Estella consummate</i>
<b>Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn</b>	<b>Joe visits Finn at Finn's portrait exhibition</b>
Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)	Ms Dinsmoor informs Finn of Estella's wedding
<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>	
Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella	
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
Pip meets and escorts Estella in London	
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	
Mrs Joe dies	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age	
Pip takes Estella to Satis House	
She and Miss Havisham argue	
At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle	
<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>Lustig returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>
Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers	
Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape	Finn helps Lustig to escape from some "armed gentlemen"

Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)	
Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella	
<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>	
Wemmick warns Pip of being watched	
Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape	
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	
Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)	
Pip goes to deserted sluice house	
Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house	
<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>	<b>The scape plan for Lustig fails</b>
Pip loses fortune	
Magwitch is tried	
<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>	<b>Lustig dies in the metro car</b>
Pip becomes ill	
Joe looks after Pip	
Biddy and Joe get married	
<b>Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.</b>	<b>Finn spends some years in Paris</b>
<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House</b>	<b>Finn re-meets Estella in the ruins of Paradiso Perduto</b>

As previously mentioned, in 1998's *Great Expectations* most of the characters' names have been changed. Pip Pirrip becomes Finn (Finnegan) Bell, an orphan boy who lives in Florida with her sister Maggie and *her man*, Joe. Abel Magwitch is renamed Arthur Lustig, an escaped convict related to the mafia. There is no second convict; only at the end of the film, a group of mobsters pursue Lustig with the aim of assassinating him (probably, a settling of scores, although no explanation is provided). Satis House becomes *Paradiso Perduto* ('Lost Paradise' in English), an enormous mansion in complete decadence that, despite the spoiled garden, seems to have been like the Eden in a distant and glorious past. The house's dwellers are Estella and her aunt, Ms Dinsmoor, who plays the role of Miss Havisham. The film does not provide any information about Estella's parents. Besides, although the audience knows about Ms Dinsmoor's jilting, the identity of her

fiancé remains unknown. Thus, this version avoids any connection between her and Lustig, whereas the plot concerning Estella's parentage is eluded. Mr Jaggars takes here the Italian name of Mr Ragno, which seems to be in accordance with Lustig's relations to the mafia, if only as a cliché. Furthermore, *ragno* means 'spider', which is, curiously enough, the word used by Mr Jaggars to nickname Bentley Drummle in the novel. The latter becomes here the wealthy and snob Walter Plane.

An in depth-analysis of the film should, in first place, draw attention to the opening credits. With the exception of 1974's *Great Expectations*, technological limitations in previous decades reduced credits to a mere list of names that appeared on the screen in vertical succession. In contrast, in the 1998's version, there are three features that should be taken into consideration: the use of the green colour, the drawings appearing at the background and the ripple effect placed over the names that surface on the screen. These three elements will become constant motifs throughout the film. Not without purpose, both Estella and Ms Dinsmoor wear green clothes in all the scenes, except for the last one, in which Estella wears a white suit. Drawing is the talent of the hero, and to make of him an artist will be the aim of his secret benefactor. Finally, the ripple effect suggests water, an element present from the very beginning, for the story begins at the coastal waters of the Florida Gulf. But, above all, water is important because it is present in all the scenes where Finn and Estella kiss or have a sexual encounter.

After the initial credits, the opening scene introduces young Finn as he sails in a boat. The boy stops close to a dock, jumps off from the vessel and starts to walk while he looks around in search for inspiration to draw. A voice-over (presumably belonging to adult Finn) reflects that:

There either is or is not a way things are. The colour of the day. How it felt to be a child. The feeling of saltwater on your sunburned legs. Sometimes, the water is yellow. Sometimes, it's red. The colour in memory depends on the day. I won't tell the story the way it happened. I'll tell it the way I remember it.

Seagulls circle and fishes slide through the transparent water as Finn sketches a fish and some stars in his notebook. The editing alternates different shots while the camera simulates either Finn's eyes or the circular movements of the seagulls: long and full shots

of the coast, with Finn at the forefront and, at the bottom, the sunset of a sky which almost merges with the water; medium shots of Finn while he is concentrated in drawing; close-ups of both the fishes and Finn's face; and extreme close-ups of the boy's drawings. Soft strings and flutes can be heard together with the howl of the seagulls and the sound of the waves. The music fades away and only the sounds of the nature remain while Finn focuses his attention on a certain fish, which rapidly slips away to leave in place the face of a man who, suddenly, emerges from the water. Dark trumpets sound now, which, metaphorically, represent the threat and the obscure character portrayed by the convict. The seagulls screech and beat their wings with force as Finn offers resistance tries to shout. The dialogue between the boy and Lustig contains the essence of the conversation that Magwitch and Pip maintains in the novel. However, in this version, the convict neither asks Finn for his parents nor does he inquire with whom he lives. He requires the boy to bring him some food and bolt cutters (an updating of the terms 'wittles' and 'file' used by Dickens) and, then, lets him go.

On his way home, Finn runs into the dishevelled and kind Joe, an uneducated fisherman and gardener, a sort of handyman ready to do whatever work to earn some money. At this point, adult Finn's voice-over explains that the family is poor and that they survive thank to Joe's earnings. Notwithstanding, it is remarkable that the images show Maggie (Finn's sister) as she prostitutes herself. Despite young Finn sees the scene, the adult narrator does not make any comment. From a child's perspective, it seems reasonable that young Finn was not able to fully understand the scene; but the same cannot be said of adult Finn. Albeit it is beyond the scope of this research, it is worth drawing attention to the apparent implied silence over this issue. Another implication from this observation is the possibility that Maggie contributes more to the economic sustenance of the family than Joe. At night, Finn steals the food (from the fridge) and gives it to the convict together with the bolt cutters. Concerning the dialogue they maintain, two sentences deserve further consideration. Among the stuffs that Finn brings with him, there are "birth control pills" that belong to his sister, what bolsters the previous suggestion that she works as a prostitute. After that, Lustig reprimands Finn when noticing that the boy bites his nails: "Hands. That's the sign of a *gentleman*," he states. Here, the word 'gentleman' works as a hint of the future developments. Following the Dickens' source text, Finn should be allowed to go home after giving the food and the bolt cutters to the convict. However, this postmodern version goes beyond and adds



a new twist: Lustig forces the boy to go with him to Mexico, but the plan fails when the coastguard service intercepts the boat. The convict manages to escape as he throws himself to the water without being seen, just before the police tows Finn's boat. Discreetly, the boy launches a life jacket, "and this was the end of this," adult Finn states.

The next day, Finn's vicissitudes drives him to *Paradiso Perduto*, where Joe has been required for gardening works. Wild trees, flowers and grass invade the garden, where the decadence of the dusty tables with spoilt food contrasts with the sprouting of animal life. Suddenly, a female voice sounds and Finn's gaze chances upon the face of a beautiful young girl who shows up from the forest like a nymph. Finn finds out that her name is Estella during his second visit, for he is requested by Ms Dinsmoor to come back and play with her niece. After getting the news, Finn discovers on television that Arthur Lustig, "the murderer of the mob Gene Valiente", has been captured and is scheduled to die by lethal injection.

At the agreed date, Finn comes back to *Paradiso Perduto*, where he meets Ms Dinsmoor and Estella. The postmodern version of Miss Havisham has nothing to do with the handicapped old lady who always appeared on her wedding dress. Here, Ms Dinsmoor wears flashy and colouring hippie clothes, seems to be full of energy (on her first appearance, she starts dancing and singing to the rhythm of *Bésame mucho*), and she clearly takes care of her appearance (both her nails and her hair are perfectly styled). The over-exaggerated make-up on her face makes her look like a cat and, in fact, it resembles the facial make-up of Peter Criss when he took the personae of *The Catman* as member of the rock band Kiss (interestingly enough, the film is set in the 70s and 80s, when the music group enjoyed great success). Cats move back and forth through the mansion, and the characteristics traditionally associated to those felines become a metaphor of both Ms Dinsmoor and Estella's personality: they are solitary, proud and difficult to tame; they only accept strokes if they fancy, while owners must pay attention to them at their request. Besides this, it is noticeable that both characters always wear green clothes, except for the last scene, in which Estella uses the white colour. Moya and López (2008: 179), in an interesting article discussing the North-American mainstream discourses on identity in relation to the phenomenon of *success*, have identified the major connotations of the green colour, especially with regard to Estella, although most of them might be also applied to Ms Dinsmoor:

Green has been reinterpreted by late twentieth century American culture to signify a state of heightened sexuality in specific situations, and is a colour often associated with expectations/hope in Western cultures. Green is also the colour of money in the U. S., the word *green* being even used in slang to replace *dollar*. Finn's expectations being pictured in green, his sexual desires are also wrapped up in his financial aspirations so that they are inseparable from his dream of personal success. Furthermore, though Estella is not narrated but visibly accessible for the audience, the camera insistently watches her all the time, framing her into an *objet d'art*. In drawing her, Finn inscribes Estella into a text, in postmodern fashion, as she is represented the way he wants her to be.

In the case of Estella, the film departs from previous adaptations and, apart from characterizing her as a snob and arrogant beautiful young lady, it also puts special emphasis on making her a source of sensuality and eroticism. Close-ups of her lips while she moistens them, of her nose and of her eyes alternate as Finn draws a portrait of her, pretending to be the details in which he focuses on. Later, while young Finn is drinking water from a fountain, Estella gets close to him with her mouth open and her tongue hanging out (all this in close-up). The scene is shocking not because she kisses him (to his surprise), but because she does it in a rather lust and seductive way for an eight-year-old girl. To make it clear the power that Estella has over Finn, she holds his gaze and look into his eyes with intensity. Water, a symbol of purity, will be once and again corrupted by the increasing sexual tension between the protagonists. Besides, the liquid blending into their lips suggests the fluidity and humidity of the kiss.

That night, Maggie bids Finn farewell before going to work. Her character has nothing to do with Mrs Gargery's, for she shows a loving and caring tone with his brother. According to adult Finn, Maggie left home and never came back. No further explanation is provided; she seems to be driven out for the same reason she was put there: just because there is a sister in the original novel. The film continues with Finn's new visits to *Paradiso Perduto*, which are condensed in one scene where the children dance together as they turn into adults. Estella, being launched socially by her aunt, is going to a cocktail, to which Finn quickly offers himself to escort her. Once he arrives to the place, she asks him "to get me out of here" and suggests going to Finn's house. He accepts, but

it is noticeable the shame he experiences when he shows her the old, small, messy and poor place where he lives (especially in comparison to the magnificence of *Paradiso Perduto*, whose design is inspired by the Alhambra in Spain and the Thousand-Wing Ceiling at Venice's Accademia, according to Estella). After Estella snoops the house, they go to Finn's bedroom. There, she discovers all his drawings while he gets increasingly excited. Estella presses her thigh against Finn's hand in a very sexy manner, and she feels aroused as his hand ascends to her crotch. However, it is she again the one who controls the situation and decides when stopping. She leaves Finn at the threshold of ecstasy, informing him in French that she is moving abroad next day. The use of a language that Finn cannot understand suggests, metaphorically, the insurmountable gap that separates them. It won't be until next day when Finn discovers, via Nora Dinsmoor, that Estella has gone to "Switzerland for two years, then Paris".

The end of this episode in Finn's life leads to a seven years ellipsis. He has stopped visiting *Paradiso Perduto*, stopped painting, and "put aside fantasy, and the wealthy and the heavenly girl who did not want me. None of it would happen to me again. [...] I elected to grow up." However, just after this confession, lawyer Jerry Ragno arrives to inform him that he has been required at the Thrall Gallery in New York for a one-man show. Although he shows very reluctant to trust Mr Ragno, Finn eventually accepts his offer. Interestingly enough, the news of his *great expectations* seems to give him certain security and self-confidence, for he proudly affirms that it is him the one who has gotten his life in order. "I was in control", states the adult's narrator, thus manifesting a clear distortion of reality. The fact remains that, from the beginning of the film, Finn has been controlled all the time: by Lustig, who forces him to steal and, later on, to accompany him to Mexico; by Maggie, who takes him to *Paradiso Perduto* for her financial convenience; by Nora Dinsmoor, who chooses Finn as her victim for male's revenge; and first and foremost by Estella, who plays with his heart. Before moving to New York, Finn visits Nora with the aim of figuring out if she is his mysterious benefactress. Like in the novel, she lets him believe she is. This scene supports the assumption that Finn's life is controlled by the people surrounded him. Naively, the adult narrator states: "Ms Dinsmoor, as my secret benefactor, sent me to New York to draw. To have the girl. To have it all".

The stagecoach that takes Pip to London is here substituted by a plane and the subway. Finn's new life as a promising artist and the hope that he could meet Estella again, inspire his new drawings. The couple re-meet in Central Park, in a scene that recalls

their first encounter at *Paradiso Perduto*: when Finn is about to drink water from a fountain, Estella's mouth appears in close-up on the frame. By using a similar pattern, the spectator can easily foresee that they are going to kiss again. Estella invites Finn to a gathering with some of her friends at the snobbish Borough Club. There, Finn meets Walter Plane, Estella's partner and future fiancé. Walter refers to Finn as Estella's "charming little version of a wake-up call", which suggests that he considers Finn as a mere instrument used on purpose to make him jealous. Again, the film puts the emphasis on the misperception of reality that characterizes male personages: both Finn and Walter believe they have control over Estella, meanwhile she plays with them as she pleases. "We are who we are. People don't change", she warns Finn, but he refuses to accept the statement. According to him, why was Ms Dinsmoor promoting him, "if not to make [him] equal to Estella"? In his delusion, Finn's attitude becomes high and mighty, but justifies himself by saying that "New York held it out, and I'd take it and say thanks". Subsequently, he adds: "you would too". With this statement, the adult's narrator addresses directly to the audience, likely in search of empathy or to feel less guilty.

Finn's moral progress towards snobbism reaches its highpoint when he is interviewed by a journalist. His own fantasy about becoming a famous artist drives him to make up a new background, in which the difficultness and scarcities endured during his childhood are over exaggerated. The only fact that remains truthful is Maggie's desertion. In his fictitious tale, Joe was a "big drug smuggler" who "spent most of the seventies in the Raiford Penitentiary." Young Finn found his corpse on the couch and, lacking economic resources, was forced to live in a car for the next years. When the journalist asks him about the beautiful girl appearing on his paintings (Estella), Finn replies that he can't even remember her name. From that moment on, as if it were a punishment for his bumptious and ungrateful behaviour, Finn begins to suffer the collapse of his great expectations. Estella announces him that she is going to marry Walter Plane. Still believing that he has power or control over her, Finn is determined to stop the wedding. The night of his opening showing, he takes Estella to his apartment before the astonished gaze of Walter. The couple runs under a pouring rain, which presages the increasing sexual tension that will culminate in an intercourse. Estella promises Finn to attend his second showing, but she does not come. Instead, Joe appears as a phantom from the past. Just like in 1946's *Great Expectations*, he seems to be out of place, wearing an old-fashioned suit, shouting out and using a tasteless vocabulary. Embarrassment

overpowers Finn as Joe tells to those present some anecdotes from his childhood, gesticulating with such an emphasis that he throws a tray full of glasses. Overwhelmed by the event, Finn shouts “Joe, just leave it!” to the astonishment of the guests. Joe clears out of the gallery show, alleging that he is starved and is “going to find a McDonald’s or something”. Fast (and cheap) food is to satisfy Joe’s appetite. By using one of the main epitomes in the era of Capitalism, the film stresses the different social status of both characters. Not only there is no remorse in Finn’s behaviour, but he considers the incident as a victory (in fact, as his own victory):

That night all my dreams came true. Like all happy endings, it was a tragedy of my own device. For I’d succeeded. I’d cut myself loose from Joe, from the past, from the gulf, from poverty. I had invented myself. I’d done it cruelly, but I’d done it. I was free.

Finn believes that after selling all his paintings and becoming rich, he is good enough to deserve Estella. In his own words, he is a “wild success”. Instead, he finds out that Estella has married Walter and that he was chosen by Ms Dinsmoor only to be her “teaching device”. Heartbroken, Finn returns home. A well-dressed fellow intercepts him at the stairs and asks him for permission to use the phone, for there are some armed gentlemen chasing him. The trick works and the man gets inside, where he eventually confesses his true identity: he is the convict that Finn met when he was a child. Visibly uncomfortable because of his presence, Finn asks him to leave. Lustig obeys him, but before going out he states “Ragno did a good job.” The sentence does not go unnoticed to Finn, who after checking that the armed guys are still waiting outside for Lustig, decides to help him to escape. However, whether Finn comes at this point to the conclusion that Lustig is his true benefactor or not is a fact that remains unclear. In a subsequent scene, the convict openly reveals himself as his secret supporter and Finn gets visibly shocked. This observation may support the assumption that, before that, he is not aware yet of the implications of Lustig’s statement or, at least, he pretends not to know it. In fact, this is in line with the whole film, where Finn constantly proves to be unable to accept reality. On the other hand, the fact that he aims to help the convict may be seen as a proof of the kindness that still remains in him. Since he ignores that Lustig is his benefactor, he has no particular reason to save him.

The attempt to escape from the mobs that pursue Lustig fails, and he is finally stabbed in a subway car. While lying on Finn's arms, the convict confesses him that he gave to him all the money he earned to make of him an artist, and that he was actually the purchaser of all his paintings. Eventually, Finn becomes aware of the fact that he has been living in a bubble made of false illusions. Hence, the "wild success" he believed he was, becomes a dreadful failure. Lustig shows him the notebook where Finn used to draw when he was a child, which he has kept over the years. The sketchbook establishes a connection between the arrogant-and-snob adult Finn and the good-hearted little boy he was once, and drives him to a new moral progress towards humility and kindness. To symbolize the grief that this process causes in Finn, water, which has been present over the whole film as a source of pleasure (Estella's lips, tongue and body) turns here into blood.

Finn's new life drives him to Paris, to where his benefactor advises him to go. There, he spends some years working and receives "everything I thought I wanted". The adult narrator informs that Estella has divorced (it is noticeable that in the original novel, Drummle dies while in some of the film versions the engagement is conveniently broken before the wedding) and that Ms Dinsmoor has died alone. The images show that Joe has a new partner and two children. Finn and Estella meet again at the ruins of *Paradiso Perduto*. She appears with no make-up, dressed in pure immaculate white, and looks now strained and shattered. These elements seem to suggest that her act of revenge has turned against her. Estella asks for forgiveness, which the again-good-hearted Finn grants. They shyly hold their hands and look at together towards the light of a brilliant sun. Rather surprisingly, the end is quite conservative, if just by the fact that Estella has a little daughter. After a kiss full of eroticism when they were children, a *coitus interruptus*, nudity images and a sexual encounter, the holding hands is even less risky than the final kiss depicted by previous adaptations of the novel.

### The narrating instance

As 1946's and 1974's versions, 1998's *Great Expectations* introduces adult Finn's voice-over to approach *mood* and *voice*. As the narrator claims "I'm not gonna tell the story the way that it happened. I'm gonna tell it the way I remember", he is indicating the existence

of two separate narrative levels. On the one hand, there is an *extradiegetic* or first level, from which adult Finn reports his *mémoires*. On the other hand, the events included in those *mémoires* are included in this first narrative, so they are placed at an *intradiegetic* level. This distinction implies, additionally, that the narrative agency has an *extra-homodiegetic* character, as well as that Finn plays a double role as narrator and hero of the story.

The introduction of the adult narrator's voice at some points of the film highlights the existence of *metalepses* or transitions from the *extra* to the *intradiegetic* level. Despite this, it can be argued that the film presents a *non-focalized* narrative, which is driven by the *image maker*. Although point-of-view shots are used throughout the film, it is rather the camera that, as an outsider *voyeur*, invites the audience to be a witness of Finn's life. It also reveals the inconsistency of Finn's account, who, driven by his own self-delusion, fools himself. To give an illustration, after coming to New York, the adult narrator claims that "Ms Dinsmoor, as my secret benefactor, sent me to New York to draw. To have the girl, to have it all". However, the images shows him in a seedy-looking apartment, taking just some poor cereals with milk for dinner. Another example occurs in the scene where Estella visits Finn's apartment to be portrayed. After she leaves, the camera remains fixed in front of Finn, who is sat on the floor. The young man stays in the same position for around 10 seconds; then he stands up and chases the girl. The camera follows him through the building until he gets into a taxi. Being said that, it has to be noted that the *zero focalization* does not apply for the whole narrative. The use of the subjective camera and shot/reverse shots also identify Finn as an active gazing subject, which suggests that some scenes are focalized through his eyes (that is, they present internal focalization). The opening scene provides an example of this. Finn is placed at the centre of the frame, focusing all the attention on him. All the sequence is mixed with *point-of-view* shots that represents what he sees:

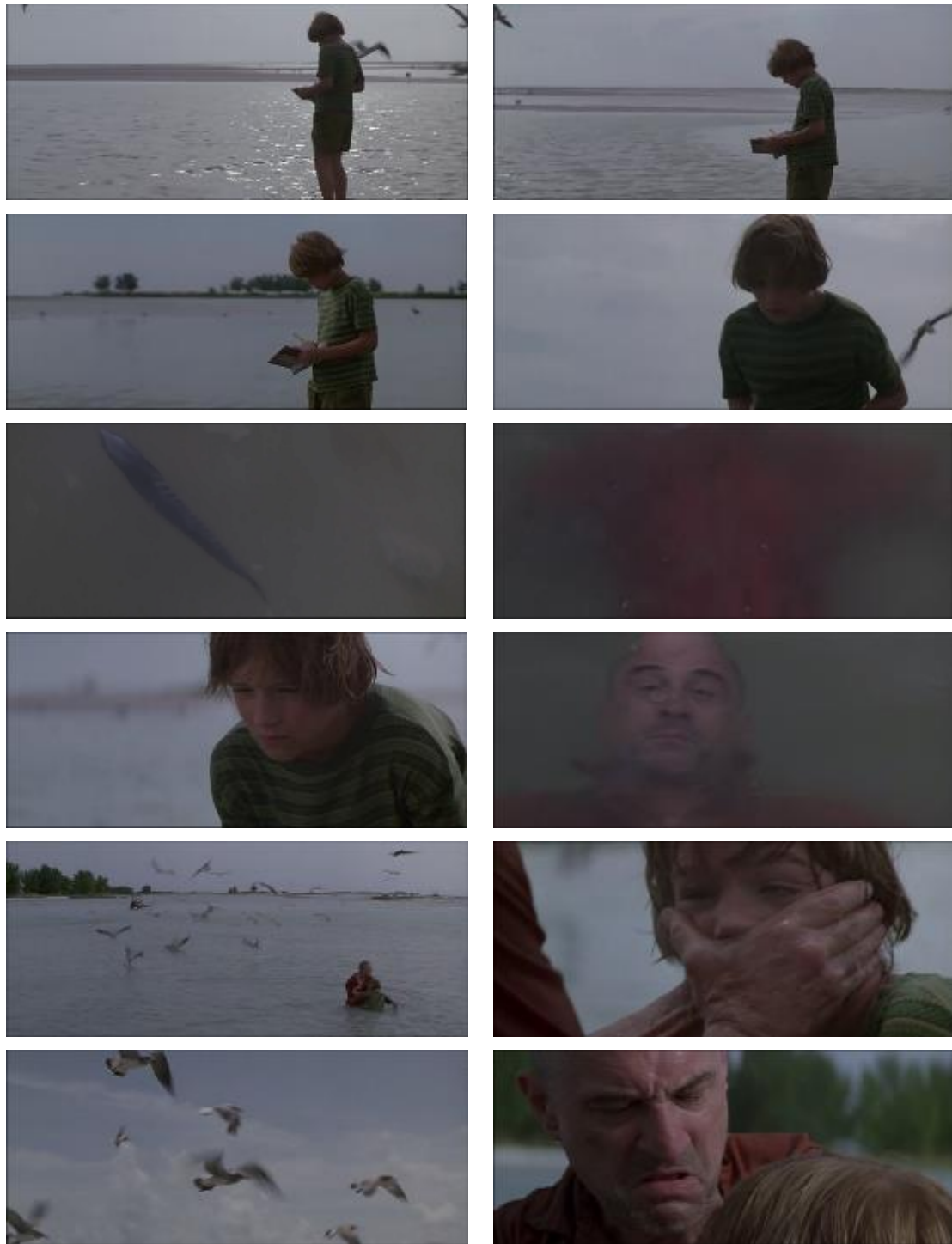


Fig. 19. *Internal focalization* through Finn's character

## Narrator

As already noted, 1998's *Great Expectations* introduces a first-person narrator that coincides with the hero of the story. However, contrary to the 1946's and the 1974's



versions, the adult narrator seems to gain special relevance here. The overlapping of the experience and knowledge of the *I-character* and the *I-narrator* becomes more complex in terms of identification/dissociation and subjective immediacy/narrative distance. The analysis of the film illustrates that adult Finn still *has* the experience of the child. This assumption is supported by his first claim: “There either is or is not a way things are. [...] I’m not gonna tell the story the way that it happened. I’m gonna tell it the way I remember”. The film uses psycho-narration and represented perception to embody Finn’s psychological functioning. The adult narrator merges with the character through the verbalization of his perception. However, such verbalization is not *faithful*, as he recognizes when confessing that “the colour in memory depends on the day”. Moreover, the present tense (“depends on”) in this statement is discordant with the rest of his speech, in which he uses the past tense. This ambiguity reinforces the belief that his account may have been distorted with the passage of time.

The content of the reported experiences are not evaluated by the adult narrator, but seems to be the direct expression of the *I-character*’s consciousness. At most, he adds some sense of humour to his narration: “Old Ms Dinsmoor hadn’t been seen in years. I’d heard she was crazy. But nobody knew how crazy. Her room smelled of dead flowers and cat piss”. As this example illustrates, it is noticeable that, in most cases, the adult narrator enters into his lived experience from a *reliving* or phenomenological orientation (Galbraith, 1994: 123). In this sense, what the audience *sees* raises doubts about the veracity of what Finn *reports*. Adult Finn’s subjective perception, as noted in the previous section, contrasts with the *image maker*’s vantage point, which elucidates Finn’s mental confusion of his earlier days through a *non-focalized* narrative. Notwithstanding, the narrator’s verbalization of his self-delusion should not take the reader to conclude that he is an unreliable narrator. On the contrary, the fact that he narrates what he experienced in the way he felt it at that time (“You remember it. You remember how it felt”, he says after Estella kisses him for the first time) supports the assumption that he is trustworthy. Adult Finn knows more than the character, but he does not avoid to show the most shameful aspects of his life. His earlier fantasies and unconscious desire materializes in some sort of awareness after the collapse of his expectations: “The girl, the money, fame, revenge. They had been Dinsmoor’s sick obsessions. And now they were mine”. The word “now”, despite the use of the past tense, suggests certain distance between the *I-character* and the *I-narrator* who makes a retrospective evaluation of his life. By the end of

the film, the adult narrator uses framing verbs of consciousness and perceptions in a neutral way: “I went to Paris, worked there... and received everything I thought I wanted. I heard about Estella from time to time. She was divorced”. Lately, he adds: “I sat there and thought back over the things I’d done. Over my life. And where, in that brief, violent time, it had gone”. Eventually, the adult narrator recovers his *own voice* and places himself at a safe distance, which allows him to walk away from the fictional character. Thus, he achieves that the past does not matter, “as if it had never been”, for “there was just my memory of it”.

## Temporality and order

As noted in the cases of 1946’s and 1974’s *Great Expectations*, the use of adult Finn’s voice establishes a clear separation between the *extradiegetic* level, from where the narrator tells the story, and the *intradiegetic* level, where the story actually occurs. The distinction between these two narrative levels implies that the temporal point of departure of Pip’s story (*factual narrative*) is earlier than the starting point of the *narrating process*. In short, as a *memoir*, the retrospective narrative of Pip’s life works as an analepsis.

Focusing attention on the *intradiegetic* level, the analysis of the temporal succession of events shows that they are arranged in chronological order, meaning that the film does not use either *analepses* (flash-backs) or *prolepses* (flash-forwards). Notwithstanding, it must be noted that past events are evoked through the characters’ reports. To give an illustration, when the adult narrator introduces Nora Dinsmoor to the audience, he affirms that “she lost her mind years ago when her fiancé left her at the altar”. In the same vein, in a subsequent scene, it is Nora Dinsmoor herself who evokes that traumatic experience and reveals her desire of taking revenge on men. The narrative of Ms Dinsmoor’s wound refers to an episode that is earlier than the temporal point of departure of the first narrative. It is, therefore, an external *analepsis*, for it remains external to the extent of the first narrative. There is also an internal *analepsis* when Lustig evokes his first encounter with young Finn: “I remember when you were a little kid. A good-hearted little kid. Little Finn. The one person who did a really pure and good thing for me”. This event coincides with the film’s starting point, so it is included in the first narrative. Additionally, references to Lustig’s past story makes the audience aware of his

life from the moment he is arrested until he reveals himself as Finn's benefactor. Lastly, the film recalls Finn-and-Estella's first encounter when they finally re-meet at the ruins of *Paradiso Perduto*. The same shots (a ladybird on Finn's finger, a frog in the pond, the statue of an angel) are used, whereas Finn (now an adult) remains in a similar posture and/or repeats the same movements. The voice-over also alludes to this retrospect when the narrator confesses to be "[thinking] back over the things I'd done, over my life". Then, a quick travelling of 180 degrees reveals the presence of a little blonde girl who reminds of young Estella. "And then, she came back again," adds adult Finn. This is a trick, for she is not young Estella, but Estella's daughter. However, it masterfully connects Finn's past with his present and the forthcoming future.

On the other hand, the comparison between the arrangements of temporal sections in the film with the chronological order in which these events are arranged in the Dickens' novel proves to be irrelevant since much of the plotlines have been eluded or transformed. It can be noted that, in the film, Finn's first visit to *Paradiso Perduto* takes place before Lustig is arrested, while in the novel this episode happens after the detention. Nevertheless, this change does not affect the development of the action. In short, it can be concluded that, concerning the cardinal functions that have survived the process of abridgment and omission to which the film has been subjected, there is almost a full correspondence between the arrangement of the temporal sequences in the novel and in 1998's *Great Expectations*.

## Narrative rhythm

It is apparent from the analysis of the narrative rhythm in 1998's *Great Expectations* that the film pays more attention to the second stage of Finn's story, which involves two episodes: *The New Yorker artist* and *End of great expectations*. Overall, they mean 48 minutes (more than 45 per cent) of the running time. Although the film also dedicates a good deal to the first stage (around 44 minutes or 41,5 per cent of the running time), what stands out is that no previous film adaptations has paid such attention to the life of the protagonist after receiving the news of his great expectations. So far, the preceding versions have focused on the first stage and, to a lesser extent, on the third one, while the second part have been usually very much condensed. As previously discussed, 1998's

*Great Expectations* centres on the Finn-Estella relationship and on how she uses him as a victim for her revenge on men. On the contrary, it merely dedicates 11 minutes (approximately 10 per cent of the running time) to the dénouement of the film, which occurs so fast that it lacks motivation, detail and clarity.

It can be argued that one of the most appraisable aspects of this film is the management of the internal rhythm. The delicate balance between acceleration and deceleration of the speed is reached through the editing, the movements of the characters and/or the camera, as well as through the use of fast or slow themes depending on the intended effect. For instance, the scene where Estella kisses Finn for the first time joins together these elements to create an atmosphere in which time seems to have been stopped. Both children move slowly along the frame; close-ups depicting their mouths, their eyes or their hands mix with a general shot in which the camera slowly approaches the characters. Meanwhile, the main theme of the film starts to play: the melody of the guitar is accompanied by the sound of a violin that is constantly repeating the same motif, thus creating an internal cadence that makes time to languish.

This sequence contrasts with the subsequent scene, where Finn and Estella dance to the sound of *Bésame mucho*. The camera constantly jumps from the children to Ms Dinsmoor, as well as from general to closer shots. The fast rhythm of the bolero allows characters to move quickly along the frame, performing several twists and waving arms vigorously. When the song ends, so Finn and Estella stop dancing. The narrative rhythm slows down again until the next scene, in which a very much nervous Finn is getting dress to escort Estella to a cocktail. He moves quickly and speaks loudly while trying to put on a jacket; when Joe smacks his head, Finn calms down and the narrative rhythm gets slower again.

Editing and camera movements are also used to speed up the rhythm when Finn starts drawing again after moving to New York. Quick jumps from his gaze to the things (people, animals, objects) he is contemplating, fast panning and travelling movements mix while Finn rapidly sketches the world surrounding him. This contrast between acceleration/deceleration is also accomplished when Estella visits Finn's apartment. She enters the room and approaches him, who lays in bed half-asleep. To simulate Finn's state of drowsiness, Estella's silhouette is blurred and her movements are depicted in slow motion. She gets undressed very slowly while a romantic ballad with voice and guitar starts to sound. Suddenly, the music turns into a pop-rock song with drums and electric

guitars. *Close-ups* of Estella's body are shown in quick succession, mixed with fast glimpses of the outlines that Finn draws. The beat of the song raises to create tension until the climax of the scene, when Estella gets dressed again while announcing she must leave. The music stops. Finn remains sat down on the floor for a few seconds; then, the music sounds again and he gets running behind her. Finn and Estella get in a taxi, where the dialogue between both characters develops in real time.



**Fig. 20. First kiss between Finn and Estella**

The tables below show a comparison between the narrative rhythm in the film and in the novel. Additionally, this section analyses other examples of narrative movements concerning the four canonical forms: ellipsis, pause, scene and summary.

<p><i>Finn and the convict (00:00 – 18:16)</i>. First encounter between Finn and the convict. Finn steals some food and bold cutters for the convict. Finn meets Estella at <i>Paradiso Perduto</i>.</p>	<p><i>Pip and the convict (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42)</i>. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict.</p>
<p><i>At Paradiso Perduto (18:16 – 27:02)</i>. Finn visits Ms. Dinsmoor at <i>Paradiso Perduto</i>, where he paints a portrait of Estella and receives her kiss in return.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>
<p><i>Maggie's departure (27:02 – 27:49)</i>. Maggie leaves Finn and Joe.</p>	
<p><i>At Paradiso Perduto (bis) (27:49 – 29:30)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined) Finn's visits to <i>Paradiso Perduto</i>. Temporal break (several years).</p>	
<p><i>Estella's game of seduction (29:30 – 35:55)</i>. Finn escorts Estella out of the cocktail at Carl Rewald's place and takes her to his home. Estella plays with Finn's feelings.</p>	
<p><i>Estella's departure (35:55 – 38:27)</i>. Finn visits <i>Paradiso Perduto</i> to discover that Estella has moved to Europe for school.</p>	<p><i>The blacksmith boy (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>
<p><i>Great expectations (38:27 – 43:34)</i>. Temporal break (seven years). Finn receives the news of his great expectations.</p>	<p><i>Great expectations (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160)</i>. Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>
<p><i>The New Yorker artist (43:34 – 1:22:44)</i>. Spatial break (move to New York). Finn's new life as an artist.</p>	<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>
<p></p>	<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285)</i>. Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>
<p><i>End of great expectations (1:22:44 – 1:30:05)</i>. Finn discovers that Lustig (the convict) is his real benefactor.</p>	<p><i>End of great expectations (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421)</i>. Temporal (several years) and spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers</p>

	that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.
	<i>Attempt of murder (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433).</i> Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.
<i>Lustig's decease (1:30:05 – 1:36:53).</i> Finn helps Lustig to escape from certain armed mobsters, but eventually the convict is murdered.	<i>Magwitch's decease (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460).</i> Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.
<i>Return to Florida (1:36:53 – 1:37:46).</i> Temporal (several years) and spatial break (move to Florida). After some years in Paris.	<i>Return to the marshes (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480).</i> As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.
	<i>Clarriker and Co (Chapter LVIII, p. 480).</i> Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).
<i>Return to Paradiso Perduto (1:37:46 – 1:41:23).</i> Finn meets Estella at the ruins of <i>Paradiso Perduto</i> .	<i>Second return to the marshes (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484).</i> Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.

According to this chronology, the main variations of speed in the narrative of 1998's *Great Expectations* with regard to the novel work out approximately like this:

Finn and the convict: around 18 minutes for two days.

Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.

At Paradiso Perduto: around 9 minutes for some hours.	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
Maggie's departure: less than 1 minute for a few days.	
At Paradiso Perduto (bis): around 2 minutes for several days.	
Estella's game of seduction: around 6 minutes for one or two hours.	
Estella's departure: around 3 minutes for a few minutes	
	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.
Great Expectations: around 5 minutes for seven years.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
The New Yorker artist: around 40 minutes for several months.	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
	Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
End of great expectations: around 8 minutes for around 8 minutes.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
Lustig's decease: around 6 minutes for a few hours.	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
Return to Florida: around 1 minute for around 1 minute.	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
Return to Paradiso Perduto: around 4 minutes for 4 minutes.	Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.



## *Ellipsis*

Temporal breaks in 1998's *Great Expectations* are indicated by means of the characters themselves or by adult Finn's voice-over. For instance, after Maggie's departure, the narrator reports that he still visited *Paradise Perduto* every Saturday, which suggests that an undetermined period of time passes since the night his sister abandons him and the next scene in which he is dancing with Estella. The latter scene, taking place at *Paradise Perduto*, shows a new temporal break of several years. Young Finn and Estella appear dancing to the sound of *Bésame mucho*. During one of the twist, the children become adolescent, while Ms Dinsmoor changes her wardrobe and hair-style.



**Fig. 21. Finn and Estella's transition from childhood to adulthood**

After Estella moves to Switzerland for school, there is a 7-year temporal break indicated by Finn's voice-over. Similarly, another temporal ellipsis occurs between Lustig's death and Finn's return to Florida. "The years went by," says the narrator, "and then, one day, I went home."

## *Pause*

In the introduction to this section, it has been argued that *Great Expectations* (1998) plays skillfully with the internal rhythm of the story, increasing and decreasing the speed of the narrative to arouse different feelings in the audience. The film includes some specific descriptive pauses, where the narrative time is longer than the story time. The clearest example takes place when Estella visits Finn's apartment to pose nude for him. The

camera uses a point-of-view shot to represent Finn's gaze. He is still half-asleep, and looks at Estella while she approaches him in slow motion. This technique is also used when Finn watches on television that Lustig has been arrested. The face of the convict appears in close-up, moving in slow motion until the image freezes. Another example is found when Finn visits *Paradiso Perduto* for the first time. The alternation of shots depicting Finn with those one portraying what he is watching slows down the rhythm of the narrative. Similarly, the film dwells on the *coitus interruptus* scene, in which shots depicting Finn's nervousness mix with close-ups of his hands touching Estella's crotch and close-ups of Estella's face while she becomes excited.

### *Summary*

Adult Finn's voice-over is of particular interest with regard to this aspect. His narration is used at some points to accelerate the rhythm of the narrative. In many occasions, these narrative abridgments coincide and mix with temporal ellipsis, thus increasing the feeling of higher speed. When the narrator indicates that "seven years passed", he also provides some glimpses of his life during this period of time ("I stopped going to *Paradiso Perduto*. I stopped painting."). The images depict a now-older Finn, who has given Estella up and has remained beside Joe to become a fisherman. In the same way, during the years that he spends in Paris, Finn notices that he "worked there [and] heard about Estella from time to time. She was divorced". He also informs that "Ms Dinsmoor had died alone some years back" and that "the mansion was due to be torn down for a housing tract". In other occasions, it is the editing of the images what gives the impression that the narrative rhythm has been accelerated. For instance, Finn's journey to New York is summarized by showing different shots of his hand while they play with a miniature aeroplane.

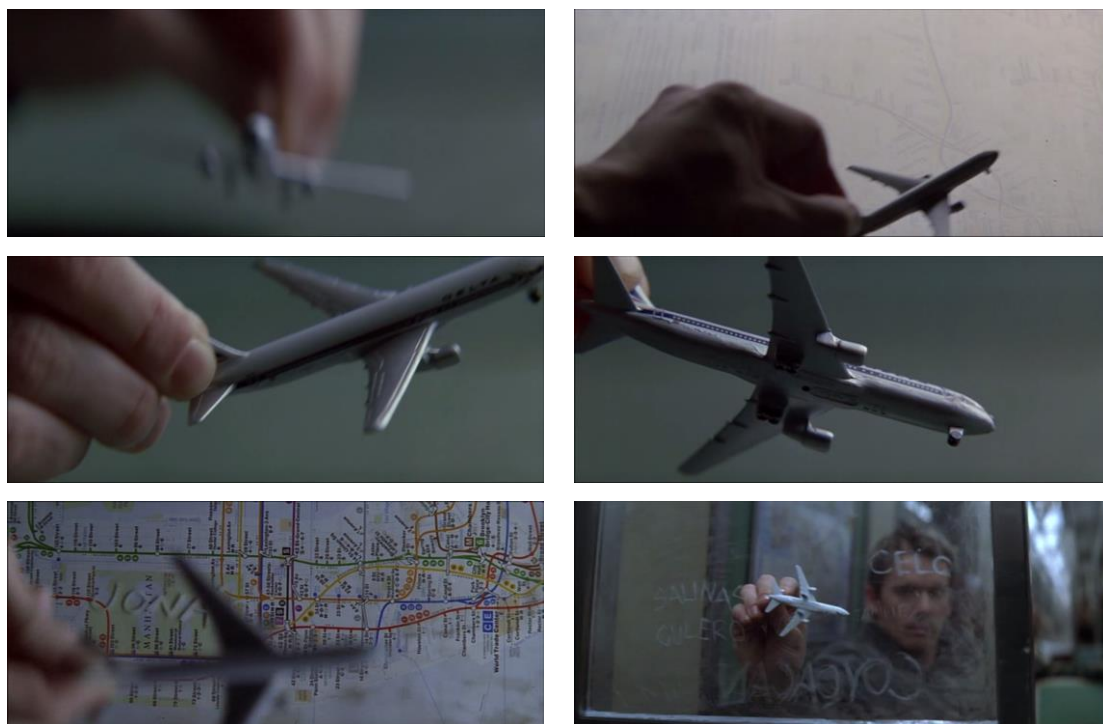


Fig. 22. Several shots of a miniature aeroplane summarize Finn's flight to New York

### Scene

Examples of scenes, where the story time and the narrative time coincide, are numerous and necessary in the movement from higher to slower rhythm. In most cases, scenes are related to dialogues between characters. One example takes place when Maggie informs Joe and Finn that the child has been requested by Ms Dinsmoor to visit *Paradiso Perduto*. Subsequently, both adults have an argument, for Joe does not approve it. Another instance is the conversation in which lawyer Mr Ragno brings Finn the news of his great expectations. Or the sequence at the Borough club, where Finn meets Estella, her fiancé Walter Plane and her friends Ruth and Owen. In all these cases, scenes play a descriptive-discursive function. Besides, as they always appear preceded or followed by summaries, they offer a contrast between dramatic/non-dramatic, and action/non-action, which helps to modify the narrative rhythm.

## Political, economic and sociocultural background

Thesis on the philosophy of Hollywood history have largely discussed the development of the American film industry after 1945 and the fundamental break between classicism and a distinctive cinema that has been indistinctly defined in terms of *New Hollywood*, *Post-classical Hollywood* and *Postmodernism* (Smith, 1998: 10-4). Current scholarship approaches make a critical usage of these concepts, describing the post-war Hollywood era from a wide variety of perspectives. However, no critical agreement about the dimensions, central aspects or timeline that delimit them have been accomplished. Keeping a more conservative stance, Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson (1985) have argued that, generally speaking, the classical mode of practice have persisted beyond the 1960s. Notwithstanding, they recognize that certain technical and aesthetic norms have varied since then, while new ones have been introduced. Elsaesser (1998: 191) identifies post-classical filmmaking with the *New Hollywood*. He relates it to the economic revival of the Hollywood industry since the mid-1970s, driven by a new generation of directors, new marketing strategies and new media ownership and management styles in production companies. According to Gomery (1998: 48), the first *New Hollywood* emerged during the 1950s and the 1960s, when independent film and television productions pioneered an innovative visual aesthetic. Subsequently, he places the beginning of a second *New Hollywood* one decade later, with the creation of vertically integrated media conglomerates. For Wyatt (1998: 74), this *New Hollywood* is also connected to the processes of conglomeration and globalization that took place in the film industry from the 1980s on. Maltby (1998: 24-6) uses interchangeably the terms *post-classical*, *contemporary* and *new* to define the breakup with the *Old Hollywood*, which he sets in 1948, when the Paramount decree was ruled. Schatz (2002: 184-90) recognizes the difficulty to delimit the complex changes that have occurred in the American film industry since the late 1940s; however, he argues that the decisive turning point took place in 1975 with the emergence of the blockbuster trend that would dominate the business over the following years.

These examples illustrate the large body of literature that has investigated the development of the film industry over the second half of the twentieth century. They also highlight that there is a lack of consensus among film theorist about the scope and dimension of the changes that have taken place after the studio era. What seems to have been agreed is the existence of a process of transition from mass production methods to

a *post-Fordist* form of production organization. That means a movement from the studio system, where “a small number of producers were responsible for the majority of the industry’s outputs and they simultaneously controlled distribution and exhibition”, to a process of vertical disintegration in which studios became independent producers of differentiated and innovative film products (Storper, 1994: 203-5). Over these years, Hollywood alternated periods of prosperity with some others of recession. By the 1980s, it was placed at centre of entertainment and mass culture, although it is noticeable how other film industries, as Bollywood or East Asian cinema, have gained importance in the last decades.

### Production, distribution and exhibition systems

At the end of the 1960s, a period of recession affected the American film industry. In 1967, it was estimated that 75 percent of motion pictures failed to recover their production and marketing costs (Conant, 1981: 82). Several costly flops, together with the production of theatrical films by TV networks and a dramatic fall in movie attendance made production companies vulnerable to acquisitions from both the financial and the industrial powers (Álvarez Monzoncillo, 1995: 20). Despite the entry of new companies into the film business, overall, seven firms controlled the industry: Warner Communications, Gulf + Western (Paramount), Disney, MCA (Universal), MGM/UA Corporation, Twentieth Century Fox and Columbia (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994: 699). As mentioned, all of them became part of conglomerates.

The structural changes within the industry, which not only involved conglomeration, but also the exploitation of merchandising and marketing strategies, or the development of new technologies, promoted the creation of a new style of filmmaking: the *high-concept* film. According to Wyatt (1994: 12-3), it refers to “a form of narrative which is highly marketable. This marketability might be based upon stars, the match between a star and a premise, or a subject matter which is fashionable”. Although *high-concept* films usually demanded large investment, it was expected that they could maximize their economic potential at the box office. Furthermore, Conant (1981: 82) has noted that production companies, given the uncertainty about whether the story behind a new release would succeed or not, considered that by hiring the best-known actors (and the most expensive

ones), they could reduce the risks of failure. Besides, the reputation of some filmmakers (i.e. Coppola, Lucas, Spielberg) replaced “the director-as-author with a director-as-superstar ethos” (Schatz, 2002: 192). Although their names worked as a lure for moviegoers, their increasing status entailed that their salaries became soaring. Additional costs came as a result of the growing number of multiplexes, for companies must provide a higher number of prints in order to cover the national market. The introduction of digital technology changed the modes of film production in terms of picture imaging, sound and editing (Creed, 2002: 129), and increased the necessary funding to make a movie. Finally, a large amount of capital was also invested in advertising and theatrical trailers, which proved to have a strong potential to attract the audience.

Since conglomerates included a wide spectrum of mass media enterprises, they milked all their resources to maximize profits when a new film was released. Companies merged, partnered or collaborated to emphasize economies of scale and to leverage diversification. As noted by Shatz (2002: 199), over the 1980s and the 1990s, new promotional strategies were based on synergies not only with television production companies, network and cable TV, but also with music and recording companies, publishing houses, newspaper publishers, video games companies, toys, theme parks and electronics hardware manufacturers. The aim, ultimately, was to get the highest returns of investment. Additionally, following the audience’s preferences, production companies realized that sequels and series based on previous successes increased revenues. New releases were promoted by TV advertisement while some studios created their own merchandising division to contribute to a higher exploitation of certain films. Notwithstanding, it is almost certain that the most cost-effective innovation was the development of the home-video market. It made that film revenues boosted greatly, to the extent that companies obtained higher incomes from this ancillary market than from the box-office. In short, it can be concluded that, despite the substantial capital outlay that *high-concept* films meant for production companies, they proved to be, in general terms, profitable and cost-efficient. As Balio (1998: 59) has rightly pointed out, these movies might be defined as “conservative investment” that “reduced the risk of financing”: they constituted media events, offered great potential to be exploited in ancillary markets and were easily distributed internally and in foreign markets.

Another strategy to minimize risks was the creation of domestic partnerships. Some of these joint ventures involved two major companies coproducing a film by sharing the

necessary investment (and, therefore, any possible economic risk). However, they regularly took the form of alliances between the majors and independent producers. Thus, the first ones ensured a budding talent pool and enough products for their distribution pipelines, while the latter obtained complete financing and worldwide distribution (Balio, 1998: 65). Similarly, since the majors produced fewer films, they sold part of their studios either to independent producers, for urban development or for alternate uses. By the 1990s, the increasing globalization led to a denationalizing process of the so-called American cinema. Consequently, the process of conglomeration and the creation of alliances moved into the international arena, where “Japanese, French, Australian, Canadian and Italian companies, at one time or another during the decade, took control of a major ‘American’ film studio” (Lewis, 2002: 3). The Hollywood industry looked at the overseas markets in search of financing to reduce their debt loads and possible box-office failures. Common practices were the pre-sell of the foreign rights of *high-profile* films (that is, estimated top-grossing motion pictures) or the agreement with film subsidies to coproduce movies with non-expected hit potential. Similarly, the majors “formed partnerships with European television producers, broadcast stations, cable and satellite networks and telecommunications services” (Balio, 1998: 64).

Generally speaking, all these merging movements led to what Smith (1998: 9) has denominated “industrial dualism”, where independent producers worked as risk absorbers and plot suppliers for the biggest companies. The seven major studios exploited these advantages through the control of the distribution and the exhibition branches. The decrease in film production made difficult the entry of new distributors or the expansion of the minors (Conant, 1981: 90). In fact, smaller national distributors had to take big risks since one or two net loss films could result in bankruptcy. Joint ventures occurred among the leading distributors, although they were not as usual as in the case of co-productions. Another aspect that modified the marketing policies of distribution concerned population movements. Many people migrated from the city centre (where first-run movie theatres used to be placed) to the suburbs (the habitual location of second and third-run movie houses). New, smaller theatres were built in the suburban areas and shopping centres. This means that distribution companies had to provide films to a higher number of first-run theatres, which, most of the times, were many miles apart from each other. Besides, exhibitors could complain about rivalry between theatres in adjacent suburbs when negotiating rentals (Conant, 1981: 96).

The migration movement from the city centre to the suburbs also affected the exhibition market. Cinemas became smaller and multiscreen to get adapted to the new circumstances of the market, where television and other leisure-time activities reduced the rate of movie attendance. Small houses looked at first and second-run theatres to see how films performed at the box office. Hence, they avoided booking those pictures that had proved to be a flop. At the same time, multiscreen theatres allowed exhibitors to compensate failures with popular and profitable films. The aim, in both cases, was to minimize risks as much as possible.

Besides the production of *high-concept* films, the majors also promoted alternative films and filmmaking practices. Part of their production was made up of mainstream features starred in by moderately priced stars. Generally speaking, their purpose did not go beyond keeping the industry machinery running and, possibly, discovering new talents. Notwithstanding, sometimes they could emerge as surprised hits, to the great delight of the studios. Finally, complementing this offer were the independent companies, which found their market niche in the production and distribution of low-budget features with a certain *cult film* status (Schatz, 2002: 204). It is in this context where one of the majors, the Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, produced (together with the independent Linson Production Company) and distributed a new version of *Great Expectations*. With an estimated budget of \$25 million, the film was released on February 1, 1998. Gross in the US amounted to \$26.4 million, while the revenues came to \$55.5 million worldwide. The previous year, Twentieth Century Fox had coproduced James Cameron's mega hit *Titanic*. That became the most expensive film ever produced so far, costing over \$200 million; but it also emerged as the highest-grossing film to date with a worldwide box office of over \$1.84 billion. Still under the 'hangover' effect caused by the success of *Titanic*, the year 1998 saw the production of fourteen motion pictures. Despite the astonished results achieved by Cameron's film, Twentieth Century Fox must have thought that the uncertainty about getting a return of investment enough to, at least, cover the expenditures, had been too much. The following year, the most expensive film was *Doctor Doolittle*. With an estimated budget of \$71.5 million, it grossed \$144.2 million in the US and \$117 million in the rest of the world. Notwithstanding, the positive surprise for the company was provided by a low-budget film named *There's Something About Mary*. Whereas it cost around \$23 million, it reached the non-trifling gross of \$176.5 million in the US and \$140.5 in the rest of the world. Films as *The Newton Boys* or *Firestone* resulted



in great failures, while other titles managed to pull the chestnuts out of the fire although they made modest profits. That was the case of *Great Expectations*: it did not really catch the attention and interest of the mass audience, but still attracted enough moviegoers to recover the investment.

As noted above, following the trend to create domestic partnership, 1998's *Great Expectations* was coproduced by the independent Linson Production Company. This young firm, created in 1975, has produced to date over 35 films, among which there are iconic and *cult* pictures as *The Untouchables* (1987), *Scrooged* (1988), *Fight Club* (1999) or *Into the Wild* (2007). Generally speaking, their products constitute *unconventional material*. Appealing to a niche market rather than to a mass audience, these *art films* relate to a sense of prestigious status, either because of their aesthetic or their content value. They depict “uncertain, counter-cultural and marginal protagonists, whose goals [are] often relatively ill-defined and ultimately unattained” (Smith, 1998: 10). Usually considered as more serious and complex pictures in terms of their narrative premises, the majors have regarded them as a fertile source to attract the different marginal audiences that have come up over the last decades, while “including status in a category that is prestigious all over the world” (Andrews, 2013). It can be argued that this is the idea lying behind Twentieth Century Fox's decision to partner Linson: to provide *Great Expectations* a double status of *mainstream art film*. However, being Dickens a popular and an intended-to-mass audience writer, why was one of his novels chosen to make an *art film*? Further reasons may be found at a sociocultural level.

## Cinema audience

The demographic transformations of the post-war era changed patterns of leisure consumption and expenditure in consumer goods. The population movement from the city centre (where first-run theatres were located) to the suburbs (in which movie houses were scarce), as well as the rise of ticket prices, made cinema an occasional entertainment (Langford, 2010: 23). Furthermore, the blooming of a baby boom kept more families at home and away from theatres, meaning that it dissuaded parents from developing a movie-going habit. Younger, better-educated generations broke with the unity that movie-going families had traditionally represented, for they showed preference for

different genres. Eventually, demographic bands responding to different tastes came up. As a result, all the production companies shared the same urgent need: find a target audience and provide it with the pictures it wanted. The studios moved towards a new strategy based on selling each movie as a big event (Elsaesser, 2002: 16). Many films mixed fantasy and science fiction, and appealed to well-known stereotypes and traditional stories. Moviegoers dreamt of living the adventures of the protagonist, who was usually portrayed as an archetypal young and good-looking male character from Western mythology. Action, music and noise combined to offer an experience in which the hero had to face an “unpredictable and unfathomable enemy”, which provided a “lethal danger or potential source of redemption” (King, 2000: 18) that was successfully defeated in a last-minute rescue operation. Many times, these films were also concerned with childhood and adolescence issues, thus depicting common fears, desires and fantasies in children. Those topics proved to give films a complete hit potential. On the one hand, while they mostly appealed to the youngest members of the family, children were supposed to attend movies with their parents, thus enlarging the prospective audience of these films. Moreover, the longing for returning home that people usually experience at some point of their lives suggests the likely identification of adults with the young hero in an attempt to experience the backward utopia that they are children again. On the other hand, by systematically associating childhood with cinema practice, children got stuck with the memory of themselves watching a movie, which created a habit of film consumption.

This type of *high-concept* films did not only provide a source of conflicting forces, nor did they only connect past (nostalgia for childhood) with future (fantastic or utopian/dystopian worlds computer-generated). They also set up as a “lifecalendar” that announced the changes of the seasons by colonizing hoardings on key dates as Christmas and Easter (Elsaesser, 2002: 21). Additionally, they solved the problem of the uncertainty about an identifiable and homogenous audience (Elsaesser, 1998: 192). Both Maltby (1998: 24) and Langford (2010: 7) have observed that the American audience had grown younger since 1950, while a significant part of the American society “identified with the broader attitudes and values of *youth culture* (non-conformism, rebelliousness, sexual freedom, fashion-consciousness and conspicuous consumption)” (Elsaesser, 1998: 191). Hence, whereas these films were intended, primarily, to win a mass of teenagers, they quickly looked at the whole of the masses: the aim was to appeal to a wide, vague

audience, composed of fragmented groups with different desires (Corrigan, 1991: 21-4). And they reached that hollow centre by mixing genres, substituting complex characters by stereotypes, and placing plotlines at the service of special effects. That is certainly not to say that contemporary audiences had not the necessary taste or understanding to watch more serious and complex films; it does not mean either that all *high-concept* films lacked aesthetic and narrative qualities. However, it can be assumed that these films privileged the commercial imperative and favoured texts that allowed multiple readings (Schatz, 2002: 202).

As discussed in the previous section, the major production companies applied the *sell them big* mantra to their marketing strategies through high impact print, radio and television spot advertising. Additionally, they premiered a film simultaneously in as many venues as possible (Langford, 2010: 123). The success of the blockbuster formula brought spectators back to the movie theatres, which provided companies with unexpected returns that favoured an increased in studio spending. Another consequence was the construction of new multiplex cinemas in the suburban areas, in which the population were now concentrated. Besides initial complains about noise, dirtiness and internal conditioning, as well as about quality-price value, exhibitors were forced to raise the level of quality of their venues because of the increasingly competitive market. More comfortable seats and sloping stalls to favour the eye-line match were introduced, as well as sound systems using the latest technology. Most of the new multiplexes and megaplexes concentrated in profitable locations, while those theatres that did not undertake such improvements were removed from the exhibition circuits (usually, rural and neighbourhood houses that could not afford those changes).

In the 1980s, video rental revolutionized the market: it was cheap; it allowed people to watch movies in the comfort and silence of their living room, whenever they wanted and without any cut; and it offered the opportunity to pick up films different from the mainstream cinema that monopolized first-run theatres. By the end of the decade, home viewing supplied 75 per cent of Hollywood's incomes (Langford, 2010: 199). This tendency continued with the introduction of DVD in 1997. One year later, the domestic US box office for American films was \$6.88 billion, while only video rentals amounted to \$8.1 billion (Stempel, 2001: 172). For the film industry, both alternatives complemented each other and provided two profitable means to make money. For

moviegoers, they opened a new world of possibilities to choose when, where and whom they watched a film with.

## Film forms and genres

As already discussed, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a movement from *Classical Hollywood* to the so-called *New Hollywood*. This transformation was promoted by the elimination of the Production Code<sup>21</sup> and the Supreme Court's decision to include motion pictures within the free speech as a significant medium for the communication of ideas<sup>22</sup>. In terms of film forms, two trends could be distinguished: mainstream and independent films. The former involved fantasy and escapism, used stars, and favoured action and special effects. On the contrary, *indie* films addressed controversial issues, were cheap and showed preference for unknown actors and individual sensibilities (Biskind, 2016). With regard to genres, thrillers, gangster films, science-fiction, horror and Western yuppies experienced a true period of splendour (Langford, 2010: 121).

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<sup>21</sup> In 1968, the Production Code was abandoned and replaced by a rating system. Initially, the rating system comprised four categories, although the classification has undergone several revisions over the years. Nowadays, the system requires films to be placed in one of five categories according to its appropriateness for the audience: G ('General Audiences'), PG ('Parental Guidance Suggested'; some material may not be suitable for children), PG-13 ('Parents Strongly Cautioned'; some material may be inappropriate for children under 13), R ('Restricted'; under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian), NC-17 ('No one 17 or under admitted'). A specially designed committee called Rating Board of the Classification and Rating Administration watched the films and voted on the ratings, basing their judgments on how theme, language, sex, nudity, violence and drug use were employed in the context of each individual film (Wasko, 2003: 121). According to Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) since 1966, the whole purpose of the rating system was "to give parents some advance cautionary warning, so that the parent can make the decision as to what movies his or her child should or should not see" (Hicks, 1933). It was a voluntary system, but much of the potential of the film depended on the rating designation obtained and, therefore, on the *alleged* suitable audience to which it was intended for. Producers were allowed either to re-edit films and re-submit them if they wished to receive a different rating, or to appeal against a rating decision (Wasko, 2003: 121).

<sup>22</sup> In 1952, the *Joseph Burstyn, Inc. v. Wilson* sentence condemned any prior restraint on the showing of a film on the basis of a censorship board's judgment.

In mainstream films, protagonists were excessively capable heroes, steady fighters who established their credentials as strong protectors and action men. Independent films, in contrast, placed at the leading roles people from the subcultural margins of the contemporary American society (i.e. drifters, tramps, bikers, drop-outs, drug users, criminals...). As noted, these films tended toward the darker side by explicitly portraying corruption, violence, drugs, homosexuality, prostitution, rape, abortion, partner-swapping or sexual relations between generations (Langford, 2010: 116). Directed by young or first-time filmmakers, they appealed to the prevailing atmosphere of pessimism and self-destruction of the period, breaking with the traditional muscular, brave and handsome male hero to offer a bleak view of masculinity (Cousins, 2003).

According to Langford (2010: 233), “the violence of 1980s action films served to reassert masculine power as a figure of national identity”. However, in the 1990s, contemporary masculinity fell into a crisis. The leading male characters of the 1990s suffer from ethical dilemmas and emotional traumas, while their goals present a psychological dimension. Far from the archetypal protagonist, characterized by his ability with weapons and an optimal physical condition that makes him invincible, the new hero is portrayed as a sensitive, vulnerable and romantic man who are not infallible anymore, even if, eventually, he reaches his purpose. Juhasz (2002: 211) denominates this phenomenon as the “phallus unfetished,” and states that the postmodern condition involves the loss of masculinity as it was understood over the 1980s. In this sense, Kord and Krimmer (2011: 6) distinguish nine types of masculinities and discuss their filmic representation in the postmodern context: the cope, the father, the cowboy, the superhero, the spy, the soldier, the rogue, the lover, and the loser. For the purpose of this work, it is of interest to focus on the last category. According to Kord and Krimmer (2011: 200), the male hero of the 1990s aims to gain certain *status* (and the trimmings associated with it, as money, influence or fame) not to improve his subsistence level, but to achieve love. Similarly, 1998’s *Great Expectations* revolves on the assumption that wealth and success will make Finn earn Estella’s love. After selling all his paintings, Finn runs to Estella’s home and shouts: “I am a wild success! [...] You don’t have to be embarrassed by me anymore. I’m rich! Isn’t that what you wanted? Isn’t it great? Are we happy now?” This reasoning suits the meritocratic system promoted by American Capitalism, “in which advancement is based on individual ability or achievement” (Kord & Krimmer, 2011: 199). However, Finn’s accomplishments are constructed over a fallacy, for it is his

mysterious benefactor the one who provides him, artificially, all the necessary help to succeed. Finn is a *looser*, in the sense that he deceives himself: his life is controlled by the people surrounding him, but he still believes that he is the author of his successful career. Lustig's revelation as Finn's benefactor and the subsequent loss of his expectations symbolize the American culture of individualism, in which the individual alone is accountable for his success or failure. No external force, neither public nor private, can promote the success of any person. Lustig's death teaches Finn that he is the one responsible of his own happiness. In short, Finn experiences a progress from emasculation to remasculinization. By the end of the film, he reemerges as a successful artist who has received everything he thought he wanted.

Another relevant aspect concerns females' roles in the film. Finn's personal development is conditioned by women's domination (Maggie, Ms Dinsmoor and, overall, Estella), who control his life for their own benefits. Curiously enough, Finn is constantly escaping from and in search of their pernicious influence, for it is also the source of his pleasure. As an instance, Estella represents both Finn's true love (which can make that everything falls into place) and the emasculating force that retrain Finn from succeeding. Only during the two periods of his life in which Finn drifts away from any female control (after Estella moves to Switzerland and, later on, after she gets married with Walter), he is able to gain some stability and, thus, to find some sort of inner peace. How is, therefore, the *looser* fixed in this film (if fixed at all)? Finn's desire is to get Estella's heart, which he believes will provide him with happiness and a fulfilled life. To achieve his purpose, Finn believes he must succeed as an artist (in other words, he should become a wealthy, renowned man of good standing). Nevertheless, even when Finn makes his fortune after selling all his paintings, Estella remains beyond his reach. Her decision to marry Walter invalidates the most basic assumption of the meritocratic thinking: that success means happiness. A likely explanation may be the fact that neither Finn nor Estella are responsible of their own *fortunes*. She has grown up in a wealthy family and is used to move within aristocratic circles, while he has become rich and famous due to a mysterious benefactor. Once they are stripped of their *status* (by means of divorce in Estella's case; after Lustig's death in Finn's) and liberate themselves from the social pressure to become an *achiever* (as opposed to the *looser*), they can give free rein to their true feelings. Therefore, the *losers* (Estella might be included in this category) are fixed not through the

achievement of success, but through their moral progress towards humbleness and their decision to stay away from the rest of the world.

In conclusion, it can be hypothesized that the collapse of the *real men* status, the end of masculinity as it had been understood in previous decades, is the epitome of the postmodern condition. It has remained a constant feature in the cinema of the 1990s, even in those films starred by superheroes. The new male condition can be summarized in Jack Dawson's statement "I am the king of the world", although the audience knows that, as a steerage passenger, he is condemned to die when the Titanic sinks. In this context, the plotline of *Great Expectations* seems to fit perfectly in this dystopian trend where "a phallus does not refer back to a penis [and] a penis does not refer back to a man" (Juhasz, 2002: 213).

## ***Chapter 12. Great Expectations (2012): Dickens becomes a blockbuster***

### ***Great Expectations: A national celebration?***

The year 2012 was a landmark for Dickens lovers, either young or old, either readers, scholars or critics. On February 7, institutions and organisations from all over the world celebrated the life and work of Charles Dickens to mark the bicentenary of his birth. A programme full of events and activities was delivered to commemorate this anniversary, as exhibitions, film seasons, city-wide readings, literary walking tours, prizes or festivals. New theatrical productions and musicals were staged, and additional TV serials were broadcasted. As part of this celebration, a new adaptation of *Great Expectations* was released on November 30, 2012.

### **Narrative discourse in *Great Expectations* (M. Newell, 2012)**

Director Mike Newell stated that what it is “absolutely irresistible” about *Great Expectations* is that it is a “mystery story” in which “you are peeling the onion the whole time”. He defines it as a “kaleidoscope” where “everything is bearing into the same center, but from widely different points of view” (HeyUGuys, 2012). When asked about why they had chosen *Great Expectations*, producer Elizabeth Karlsen replied that her team found this novel “among the easiest Dickens to adapt, having a simple tripartite structure, a strong narrative momentum with regular dramatic peaks, and fewer subplots and digressions than almost any of his other works” (quoted in Hammond, 2015: 5). It is at least arguable that there are few subplots in *Great Expectations*. On the contrary, it can be noted the existence of different narratives that cross their paths over the novel. They create interdependencies between characters and events, and present their own structure



(beginning, climax and dénouement), rhythm and turning points. It is what Malik (2012: 484) has denominated a “capsular” mode of narrative, which “involves the development of a number of relatively autonomous stories, which can be lightly coupled or decoupled by the addition or subtraction of a sentence or even a phrase”. Thereby, it seems more accurate to affirm that *Great Expectations*’ potential lies in the possibility of removing some of its storylines without losing the meaning of the main plot, rather than talking about few subplots. These sorts of *autonomous pieces* form a mechanic assemblage in which each storyline has a specific weight or level of dispensability. Hence the novel’s suitability for adaptability and remediation reaches a degree that allows multiple re-readings and new perspectives. Additionally, it is remarkable that Karlsen’s statement about the apparent easiness of adapting *Great Expectations* in comparison to other Dickens’ novels collides with the perspective that early 20<sup>th</sup>-century film adaptors had. As have been argued in previous chapters, the first screen versions were slow to come up and their performances at the box office were not successful. The episodic quality of *Great Expectations* might be regarded, in fact, as a double-edged sword. Ultimately, the adaptor’s decision to choose some plots and to leave others aside may result in disappointment if the action does not keep a balance between official and repressed plots. However, a comparison between the cardinal functions in both the novel and 2012’s *Great Expectations* provide evidences that the film has retained most of them.

## Narrative functions

What stands out from the analysis of the narrative discourse in 2012’s *Great Expectations* is that the film tackles issues which are not included in previous adaptations. To give an illustration, it draws attention to the Pip-Biddy relationship, including her kiss (in a moment of the film’s invention) and Pip’s subsequent claim “I wish I could fall in love with you (...), but I can’t”. That kiss never happens in the novel, but it is a useful visual device to make the audience understand Biddy’s feelings. Similarly, the film pays heed to Mr Pumblechook’s sudden interest in Pip after he receives the news of his great expectations. Therefore, considering this particular attention to secondary plots, it is striking that the Pip-Orlick subplot is not included. Scriptwriter David Nicholls (2012) defended the elimination of this character for the sake of time and money, even though

he defined Orlick as a “terrific character” who offers wonderful moments in the novel as “a kind of Pip-gone wrong”. On the contrary, the film enhances the roles of Herbert Pocket (including his dream of becoming a wealthy businessman, as well as his relationship with Clara), Bentley Drummle and Wemmick, although it is at least arguable to what extent stretching on these characters’ storylines adds any value. It can be argued that it is useful to contrast with Pip’s moral progress (especially true in the case of Wemmick). However, it is likely that this interpretation overlooks the potential of Orlick, or even Joe, to deal with key themes in the story, as ambition and self-improvement. Other deviations from Dickens’ *Great Expectations* include the transformation of the *Finches of the Grove* into a sort of *Bullington Club*, that is, a snobbery fraternity composed of upper-class spoiled young men and led by Bentley Drummle. The Pip-Estella romance is boosted. Interestingly enough, the film explores Estella’s dilemma between following either Miss Havisham’s instructions or her true desires. This approach entails that 2012’s *Great Expectations* does not only portray Pip’s point of view, but includes other characters’ perspectives as well, as will be shown. As a final consideration, the last meeting between Pip and Estella takes place in a park instead of at the ruins of Satis House.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (NOVEL)	<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (FILM)
<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>	<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village churchyard</b>
<b>Pip steals food and Joe’s file for Magwitch</b>	<b>Pip steals food and Joe’s file for Magwitch</b>
<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>	<b>Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson</b>
<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets Miss Havisham and Estella</b>
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe’s file	
<b>Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella’s cheek</b>	<b>Pip returns to Satis House, meets Mr Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella’s cheek</b>
<b>Pip visits Satis House again.</b> He walks Miss Havisham	<b>Pip visits Satis House again.</b> <i>He dances with Estella</i>
<b>Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip’s indentures as blacksmith’s apprentice</b>	<b>Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip’s indentures as blacksmith’s apprentice</b>

Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
Mrs Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)	
<b>Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House</b>	<b>Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House</b>
<b>Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman</b>	<b>Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman</b>
<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>Mr Jaggers brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>
<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>	<b>Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham</b>
<b>Pip goes to London</b>	<b>Pip goes to London</b>
<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>	<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn</b>
<b>Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting</b>	<b>Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting</b>
Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket	
<b>Pip gets money from Jaggers to set himself up</b>	<b>Pip gets money from Jaggers to set himself up</b> (via Wemmick)
<b>Pip dines with Jaggers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle)</b>	<b>Pip dines with Jaggers (along with Herbert, Bentley Drummle and other gentlemen)</b>
<b>He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)</b>	<b>He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)</b>
<b>Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn</b>	<b>Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn</b>
<b>Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)</b>	<b>Pip visits Miss Havisham at her request (via Joe)</b>
<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>	<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>
<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella</b>	<b>Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella</b>
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>	<b>Pip meets and escorts Estella in London</b>
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	
Mrs Joe dies	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age	
Pip takes Estella to Satis House	

She and Miss Havisham argue	
<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>	<b>At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle</b>
<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>
<b>Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers</b>	<b>Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers</b>
Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape	
<b>Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)</b>	<b>Pip asks Wemmick to finance Herbert</b>
<b>Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella</b>	<b>Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella</b>
<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>	<b>Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle</b>
<b>Wemmick warns Pip of being watched</b>	<b>Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)</b>
<b>Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape</b>	
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	
<b>Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)</b>	<b>Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)</b>
Pip goes to deserted sluice house	<b>Wemmick warns Pip of being watched</b>
Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house	<b>Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes plans for Magwitch's escape</b>
<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>	<b>The scape plan for Magwitch fails</b>
<b>Pip loses fortune</b>	<b>Pip loses fortune</b>
<b>Magwitch is tried</b>	<b>Magwitch is tried</b>
<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>	<b>Magwitch dies in prison</b>
<b>Pip becomes ill</b>	<b>Pip becomes ill</b>
<b>Joe looks after Pip</b>	<b>Joe looks after Pip</b>
<b>Biddy and Joe get married</b>	<b>Biddy and Joe get married</b>
<b>Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.</b>	<b>Pip spends some years at Clarriker and Pocket</b>
<b>Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House</b>	<b>Pip re-meets Estella</b>

The analysis of the opening scene of 2012's *Great Expectations* provides evidence of the influence of the 1946's version. Both scenes show Pip, in long shot, as he runs close to the river shore towards the churchyard. The dark and oppressive atmosphere, as well as the gothic style of Lean's film, however, is here substituted by the frightening quietness of the open-air space.



**Fig. 23. Influence of 1946's *Great Expectations* in the 2012's version**

Subsequently, the little child arrives to the churchyard and stops by the tombstone of his parents, where the convict catches him by surprise. The dialogue between both characters follows closely the novel; interestingly enough, when Pip is set free and runs into his home, the dark and cloudy atmosphere of the first scene turns into a blue and illuminated sky. This change in colour and illumination may suggest an opposition between a dangerous (cemetery) and a safe (home) places. Joe quickly warns Pip about Mrs Gargery, who enters the scene shouting and beats both men. It is remarkable that Mrs Gargery's authority is emphasizing either by using close-ups of her face or by showing the male characters from the view point of a low-angle shot. After the second encounter between Pip and Magwitch, the film pays very much attention to the Christmas Eve celebration. Apart from Mr Wopsle, Mr and Mrs Hubble, and uncle Pumblechook, the film includes an additional female character. According to the shooting script, she is *Mrs Wopsle*, a fictional character who does not appear in the source text, unless she is identified with Mr Wopsle's great aunt. As in the novel, the scene focuses on the question of education. While the Gargery's guests complain about the natural viciousness and ungratefulness of the young, a close-up of Pip's face shows he is afraid that his theft is discovered. Some soldiers arrive right in the moment when his robbery is brought to light; the audience moves again to the marshes, where Magwitch and a second convict,

Compeyson, fight to death. It is interesting to notice that Pip and Joe, together with Pumblechook and Wopsle, leave home in daylight, while the sky is completely dark when they arrive to the marshes. This fact suggests that a large period of time has passed between both scenes. This seems to be in contradiction with the opening scene, where there is no change in the lighting despite Pip covers the same distance, from the marshes to home. Eventually, the soldiers arrest both Magwitch and Compeyson, and a melodramatic heterodiegetic music sounds during the last seconds of the scene while Magwitch gives Pip a deep look.

One of the aspects that stands out in this film is its interest in Pip's educational and moral progress, in contrast to previous adaptations. At this point of the story, it makes him proud to be able to write (even if with multiple grammatical errors) and to be admired by an illiterate Joe ("ever the best of friends," says Pip to him). Moreover, Pip expresses his desire to stay at the marshes and "rot with this great lumpen noodle". However, his innocence becomes corrupted and his humble aspirations prove inadequate after his first visit to Satis House. Pip feels embarrassed for being so "common" and "know[ing] nothing", and asks Biddy to teach him everything. The more Pip meets Estella, the more he wants to become a gentleman, thus rejecting his origins. In order to accommodate itself to the standards of conventional love stories, the film plays with movements of approach and distance between the protagonists. In fact, it is Estella's decision to teach Pip to dance "like a gentleman", in a scene of the film invention, what drives Miss Havisham to dismiss Pip from his services on the condition that he will become a blacksmith apprentice. The editing suggests that, with that decision, she aims to punish Estella's behaviour rather than Pip's: since she has been educated to take revenge on men, Estella is not allowed to enjoy Pip's friendship. Both children say goodbye at the entrance of Satis House. They are presented in an over-the-shoulder shot. What is remarkable by this *two-shot* is the iron gate that separate the characters. This underscores the distance between them and the difference in social status. Additionally, in previous films, the same scene portrays a cold and insulting Estella. In this version, she shows grief for Pip's departure. "Perhaps we should meet again... one day", he says with a tiny voice. "Seems unlikely", Estella replies. A gloomy *heterodiegetic* melody sounds to reinforce the dramatic value of the scene.



**Fig. 24. The use of a *two-shot* underscores the distance between Pip and Estella and their different social status**

Following this, there is an undetermined temporal ellipsis. Pip has turned into a robust, good-looking young man when Mr Jagger comes to the forge to bring the news of his *great expectations*. There is no sorrow in Pip's departure: while in the book Pip experiences the fear and pity of leaving his daily life with Joe and Biddy, here he reveals joy and excitement for his new gentleman condition. Upon arrival at London, the horde wearing black clothing and the general sense of dirtiness (muddy pavement, boxes full of bloody meat, goats crossing the streets, heads of swine hanged on ropes...) contrasts with the immaculate white colour of Pip's suit. The use of wardrobe expresses Pip's innocence, which is corrupted as the story moves forward (shown in his subsequent use of black clothing and change of hairstyle). In London, Pip establishes a close relationship with Herbert and Wemmick, meets Bentley Drummle at the Finches of the Grove club and is introduced to Molly, Jagger's maid. His growing snobbery reaches its peak when he gets Joe a public reprimand for his rude manners at the table.

Pip revisits Satis House to find the now beautiful young lady Estella. She warns him she has "no heart", but admits they "have no choice, but to obey instructions". Both characters share a moment of intimacy at the Assembly Ball, which is broken by the

sudden appearance of Mr Jiggers. Pip is asked to return home, where Magwitch waits for him and reveals himself as his secret benefactor. Heartbroken, Pip visits Satis House to reproach Miss Havisham for her behaviour and to declare his love for Estella. The scene departs from the source text as it shows Estella visibly moved by Pip's words. The young lady lets him kiss her before she also rebukes Miss Havisham for having made of her a revenge device. Despite this, she finally decides to stay with her mother instead of running away with Pip.

Subsequently, Magwitch tells Pip and Herbert his past story (involving Compeyson and Molly), and Jiggers verifies it (including the Magwitch-Estella parentage). Eventually, Pip decides to help Magwitch to escape, but Compeyson impedes it. Both men fight in the water, resulting in Compeyson's death and Magwitch's imprisonment. He is condemned to death by hanging, but dies before the sentence is executed. In the meanwhile, Pip reveals Magwitch that his daughter is alive, and that he loves her. Fallen into disgrace and evicted, Pip gets sick and spends several months in bed. Joe pays Pip's debts and takes care of him until he recovers (his white pyjamas suggests Pip's return to his childish innocence). Pip goes back to the marshes and discovers that Joe and Biddy have just got married. As a sort of atonement, he isolates himself and focuses on his work at Clarriker and Pocket. Upon receiving a letter, he goes back to London and meets Estella. She informs him that Drummle is dead and that she has been "bent and broken", hopefully, "into a better shape". "I love you", says Pip. "I'm glad", replies Estella. The final shot is a close-up of their hands together, which appeals to the novel's final statement "I saw no shadow of another parting from her".

### The narrating instance

It is remarkable that, after three adaptations that use the voice-over to orient the narration, 2012's *Great Expectations* does not explore the division between the *I-narrator* and the *I-character*. Since Pip only performs the role of the hero of the story, it is assumed that the film presents an impersonal and objective narrative instance, the *image maker*, which drives the events. As discussed previously, contrary to the novel and to previous adaptations, this film does not focus on Pip's perspective, but it is opened up to multiple points of view. Although Pip is present in almost all the scenes (except for the flashbacks



involving Miss Havisham and Magwitch's past stories and one scene depicting a conversation between Mr Jaggers and Miss Havisham), the spectator never gets the feeling that he is the focal point. Long shots prevail, while the film barely exploits the use of the point-of-view shots to represent what Pip sees. Close-ups and medium shots are utilised, but he always appears along with another character, which prevents the audience from regarding him as the centre of attention. These observations suggest that the film presents both a *non-focalized* narrative (which coincides with that of the *image maker*) and a *variable internal* focalization (which represents characters' different perspectives). The following pictures from the film give an illustration of this variability in focalization:



Fig. 25. Changes in focalización in 2012's *Great Expectations*

In the first and second examples, where Pip shows Joe his progress on reading and writing, it is noticeable that the *image maker* invites the audience to be a *witness* of the scene. In contrast, the use of point-of-view shots in the third and fourth instances indicates that the scene is focalized through Bidley and Pip's perspectives. As noted in previous chapters, no singular formula of focalization applies to a whole film, but rather on a particular episode or scene.

## Narrator

Focalization through an *image maker* suggests that 2012's *Great Expectations* presents an omniscient narrator, placed at the *extradiegetic* level and using third-person voice. As noted

in previous chapters, this *image maker* is characterized by a whole knowledge of events and, therefore, it must be considered a reliable narrator. There is a rigorous simultaneousness of *factual narrative* and *narrating process* that eliminates any sort of interference or temporal gap. It can be compared with a present-tense narrative, which strictly focuses on *the moment* and, therefore, may be regarded as *objective*.

Being said that, it is worth drawing attention to the episodes concerning Magwitch's and Miss Havisham's past stories. Interestingly enough, the scene involving Magwitch's account reminds of the same scene in the 1934's version. In both cases, the convict, Pip and Herbert are sat in front of the fireplace at the living room, although the 2012's adaptation capitalizes on the use *close-ups* of the characters, while the latter mainly uses *long shots* that include the three characters in the same frame:

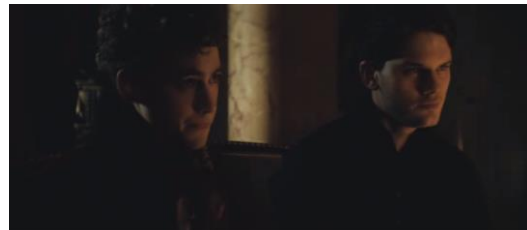




Fig. 26. Similarities between 1934's and 2012's *Great Expectations*

In the first example, it is remarkable that the fire creates an effect of Rembrandt lighting on Magwitch's face. The *chiaroscuro* creates contrasts of light and dark with the aim to express the dichotomy between good and evil, life and death. The other issue that stands out is the fact that, in this episode, it is Magwitch's *voice* the one which drives the narration, even though the images are focalized through the camera. In fact, the *non-focalized* narrative makes Magwitch's speech reliable, since, as an *intra-homodiegetic* narrator, he is characterized by a restricted field of vision. The same conclusion should be applied to Mr Jaggers's and Miss Havisham's accounts about Estella's adoption.

### Temporality and order

2012's *Great Expectations* accounts Pip's adventures in temporal succession, from the first meeting with the convict until his last reencounter with Estella, which takes place many years after. Notwithstanding, the film includes an *anachrony* that reaches into the past when alludes to Miss Havisham's jilting. The narrative of her past story deals with an

episode that is earlier than the temporal point of departure of the first narrative, and it is evoked both through the use of an external *analepsis* and through characters' reports. To differentiate them from the rest of the narrative, the flashback scenes are slightly unfocused on the frame borders and use wide-angle lens, which provide a sense of distortion. Apart from that, the narrative discourse includes also an internal *analepsis* that takes place when Pip and Herbert re-meet at Barnard's Inn as young gentlemen. In this sequence, Herbert recalls their childish fight by mimicking the same gestures and using the same words. No visual support is needed to establish the connection between both scenes.

Ultimately, what can be clearly inferred from the table concerning the cardinal functions, is that the arrangement of the events taking place in the film follows closely that of the novel. Except for the few cardinal functions that have been left aside (mainly concerning Orlick's subplot), the film places the events in the same order than the novel.

## Narrative rhythm

Considering the three stages of Pip's expectations, the film focuses the attention on the first and, especially, on the second parts, while the third one is slightly considered. According to this, 46 minutes (around 38 per cent) of the running time are devoted to the first stage, while the second act takes 58 minutes (48 per cent approximately, which means almost half of the total running time). On the contrary, the third stage is narrated in 16 minutes (around 13 per cent of the running time). Compared to previous adaptations, this time division is pretty similar to 1998's *Great Expectations*, which also puts the emphasis in the first and second parts of the story.

Overall, 2012's *Great Expectations* pays much attention to the episodes *At Satis House*, *The Londoner gentleman* and *End of great expectations*. The film accounts for three visits to Satis House during Pip's childhood, but the most remarkable aspect is that they encompass a high number of events and characters: the "beggar my neighbour" card game, the presence of the Pocket family, the encounter with Jaggers, the fight between Pip and Herbert... The slowness with which character move and walk, as much as the declining voice of Miss Havisham, give the episode an effect of *stop time*. Additionally, these visits are mixed with other scenes taking place at Pip's home, which suggests the

passing of time. Eventually, this blend makes the spectator imply that Pip has come around Satis House for a long time. Similarly, the movie also includes several scenes of Pip's new condition as a gentleman. However, it is remarkable that both Estella and Miss Havisham remain on the side-lines. On the contrary, the episode centres on Pip's friendship with Herbert and Wemmick, on the Finches of the Grove plot (exploring the rivalry between Pip and Drummle), and it also gives Molly a particular presence. As noted, much of the running time is dedicated to Magwitch's return and the collapse of Pip's expectations after discovering the true nature of his property. What stands out is that the episode focuses on how Pip figures out the truth (by listening to Magwitch, Jaggers and Miss Havisham's accounts, and putting them together), whereas the preparation of the escape plan for Magwitch is barely tackled. The climax of the film occurs with the death of the convict, which is followed by a quick resolution where Pip comes to work at Clarriker and Pocket before he receives a letter from Estella and meets her in London.

<p><i>Pip and the convict</i> (00:00 – 14:34). First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.</p>	<p><i>(Pip and the convict (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42). First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.</i></p>
<p><i>At Satis House</i> (14:34 – 35:58). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</i></p>
<p><i>The blacksmith boy</i> (35:58 – 38:42). Temporal break (several years). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>	<p><i>The blacksmith boy (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</i></p>
<p><i>Great expectations</i> (38:42 – 45:22). Temporal break (undetermined). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>	<p><i>Great expectations (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160). Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</i></p>
<p><i>The Londoner gentleman</i> (45:22 – 1:17:48). Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>	<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277). Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</i></p>

	<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral (Chapters XXXV, pp. 278 – 285).</i> Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>
<p><i>End of great expectations (1:17:48 – 1:43:56).</i> Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor.</p>	<p><i>End of great expectations (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421).</i> Temporal (several years) and spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>
	<p><i>Attempt of murder (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433).</i> Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.</p>
<p><i>Magwitch's decease (1:43:56 – 1:55:04).</i> Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan for Magwitch's escape. The convict is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.</p>	<p><i>Magwitch's decease (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460).</i> Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.</p>
<p><i>Return to the marshes (1:55:04 – 1:58:55).</i> As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.</p>	<p><i>Return to the marshes (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480).</i> As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.</p>
<p><i>Clarriker and Pocket Ltd (1:58:55 – 1:59:26).</i> Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Pocket Ltd. (spatial break).</p>	<p><i>Clarriker and Co (Chapter LVIII, p. 480).</i> Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).</p>
<p><i>Pip and Estella last reunion (1:59:26 – 2:02:04).</i> Temporal break (some years). Pip re-meets Estella in London (spatial break).</p>	<p><i>Second return to the marshes (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484).</i> Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.</p>

According to this chronology, certain variations of speed between the film and the novel can be pointed out:

Pip and the convict: around 14 minutes for about one and a half day.	Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.
At Satis House: around 22 minutes for some months.	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
The blacksmith boy: around 3 minutes for several years.	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years.
Great Expectations: around 7 minutes for some days.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
The Londoner gentleman: around 32 minutes for some months.	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
	Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
End of great expectations: around 26 minutes for around some weeks.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
Magwitch's decease: around 11 minutes for several days.	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
Return to the marshes: around 1 minute for some weeks.	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
At Clarriker and Pocket Ltd.: around 1 minute for some years.	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
Pip and Estella: around 3 minutes for 3 minutes.	Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

### *Ellipsis*

Leaps at the level of the temporal space are not specified by any verbal indication or film element, but it is still possible to infer them from the narrative and visual discourses. The most obvious ellipsis takes place after Pip's last visit to Satis House. In the first scene,

Miss Havisham asks the 8-year-old boy to become Joe's blacksmith apprentice. In the next scene, Pip has turned into a young man. Changes in the physical appearance of the character mark a temporal break of several years between both shots. Additionally, it can be argued the existence of two other temporal breaks. The first one occurs after Magwitch's decease. Pip falls ill and he lays in bed for an indeterminate amount of time. Once he recovers, he starts working at Clarriker and Pocket. Pip spends there an undetermined period of time until he receives a letter from Estella and meets her in London.

### *Pause*

As in the case of 1946's and 1998's *Great Expectations*, the opening scene of this adaptation can be defined as a descriptive pause. First, the use of long shots portraying different views of the marshes establishes the location of the story. The camera moves horizontally to the left (pans) in order to show Pip as he rushes to the churchyard. By using a telephoto lens, Pip's advance toward the camera does not seem to net him any gain. Through several long shots, Pip runs until he arrives to the tombstone of his parents. Once there, he kneels in front of the grave and starts to remove the weed slowly. The bells of the church start to ring when, suddenly, the music changes and only one note keeps on sounding during some seconds. The spectator has the feeling that time is expanded. Pacing and music are used to slow down time. They also add suspense and anticipate that something important is going to happen. The sense of pause breaks when the convict enters the scene. Previous lengthy shots (from 5 to 15 second on averages) turn into a quick succession of medium shots and close-ups. Magwitch moves fast and talks with a deep voice. He grabs Pip by the neck and shakes him while the young boy screams. This contrast in the narrative rhythm and the editing underlines the importance of this sequence.

As already mentioned, time seems to stop at Satis House. Especially, it is worth noting the use of descriptive pause when Pip enters to Miss Havisham's room for the first time. The camera lens is physically placed at the eye level of Pip to show his point of view. As he gets inside, the spectator explores the room through his eyes until Pip's gaze focuses on Miss Havisham's face.



## *Summary*

No examples of summary can be found in 2012's *Great Expectations*.

## *Scene*

In most scenes, the narrative time and the story time are equivalent. What remains of interest is that even in these cases, there is still a feeling that the narrative rhythm changes. The film capitalizes on different visual storytelling techniques to achieve this effect. It intercuts sequences of long shots with short ones while introducing *heterodiegetic* music with different *tempo*. Additionally, variations in the speed of the characters' speeches help to break with the monotonous rhythm.

## **Political, economic and sociocultural background**

The lack of historical perspective makes difficult to examine cinema today and the extent to which political, economic and sociocultural changes may have had an impact in the film industry. However, 2012's *Great Expectations* falls within a very specific context. That year marked the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens. A 24-hour *readathon*, public readings, visiting tours, exhibitions, conferences and many other activities were scheduled to celebrate this event. It seems right that a new film adaptation of one of the Dickens' novels were produced as part of this festivity. What it is remarkable is that the chosen one was *Great Expectations*. Over the previous chapters, it has been noted that this novel was never among readers' favourite Dickens' stories. In fact, filmmakers were reluctant to adapt it in the earliest days of cinema. What are, therefore, the reasons behind that decision? What was the audience response? How have been these *great expectations* regarded in the contemporary British film industry?

## Production, distribution and exhibition systems

The core UK film sector contributed £2.8 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2012 (British Film Institute, 2016: 254) while it is estimated that around £2.1 million of visitor spend a year can be attributed to UK films (Oxford Economics, 2012: 11). Especially since the beginning of the new millennium, the UK film industry has experienced significant growth, with the introduction of public funding underpinning the development of independent and inward investment films.

In 2012, a total of 647 films were released in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland (distributors usually consider them as a single distribution territory). The box office earnings peaked at £1.1 billion, but the distribution of these revenues were not consistent: the top 100 films earned 92 per cent of the total gross, meaning that the remaining 547 movies were competing for box office revenues of £93 million (British Film Institute, 2013: 8). These figures betray the difficulties that independent and specialised films find in order to be distributed. While small independent distributors achieved theatrical releases for more independent films than in previous years, they aimed for a lesser share of the total grosses. Notwithstanding, these data also highlight the positive development of the British film industry, which had lived a period of recession since the end of the Second World War until the late 1980s, as shown in chapter 10. In 1998, former UK Minister of Culture, Media and Sport Chris Smith claimed in his book *Creative Britain* (2008) that arts should be of public domain, not just the privilege of a few. Creative industries benefited the nation both economic and socially, and politicians must put it at the heart of their political agenda. In line with that statement, national funds were made again available. The UK Film Council first (1997 – 2011) and, subsequently, the British Film Institute have awarded National Lottery funding to support UK film production, distribution and exhibition, to increase the audiences, to promote education or for market research. Additionally, in 2007, the UK Film Tax Relief was implemented. To benefit this system, movies must either pass a cultural test or qualifying as an official co-production<sup>23</sup>. If so, the production company can obtain a tax refund of up to 25 per

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<sup>23</sup> The first option requires that the film production company must be within the charge of UK corporation tax and have responsibility for all aspects of the filmmaking process. Additionally, the film must score a minimum amount of 18 points (from a total of 35 points) in the Cultural Test. Among other criteria, the test includes questions regarding the proportion of film set in the UK or another EEA state,

cent of the core expenditure incurred, although the exact percentage depends on the budget of the film. In the period 2011-2012, government support for the UK film industry through the Film Tax Relief reached £214 million, meaning 58.5 per cent of the total public investment. Beyond the National Lottery Distribution Fund and the Film Tax Relief systems, public funding for UK films come from BBC Films, Film4, European programmes, national and regional agencies or local governments, among others. It must be noted that, over the past decade, the largest share has been consistently destined to film production, followed by distribution and exhibition (British Film Institute, 2013: 203-4).

Since the mid-1990s, the number of companies in the film industry has not stop growing, especially in the production branch. The top leading corporations in this sector for the period covered in this chapter have been Working Title Films, Press On Features, Black and Blue Films, Vertigo Films and Passion Pictures. In terms of distribution, the theatrical market has been also dominated by a very few large companies. As an illustrative example, in 2012 the top 10 distributors generated double revenues than all the remainder together. Overall, the same distributors appear at the top of the list, with the major US studios occupying the first six places (namely, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, Paramount, Sony Pictures, Universal, Walt Disney and Warner Bros) and a few independent distributors reaching the top 10. The same can be said about the exhibition market. By the end of 2012, there were 10 exhibitors that owned or programmed 20 or more screens. Moreover, the 5 largest exhibitors (Odeon, Cineworld, Vue, National Amusements and Empire Cinemas) owned 74 per cent of all the domestic screens. This observation is in line with the trend observed in previous years, in which a few players hold most of the market share. In conclusion, there is a certain stability among the top studios in the production, distribution and exhibition branches.

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the number of lead characters that are British or EEA citizens/residents, the relation of the plot with a British or EEA state subject matter, or the level of qualification of the personnel involved in the making of the film. On the other hand, to qualify under the official co-production label, the film must meet the requirements of either one of the bilateral co-production agreements that the UK has signed with Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, India, Israel, Jamaica, Morocco, New Zealand, Occupied Palestinian Territories and South Africa; or the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production.

Nevertheless, the domestic market reveals major differences between the top production companies and the independent producers. As stated above, the top 100 films earned 92 per cent of the total gross, which means that the remaining (547 pictures) competed for a small portion of the box office revenues, lower than the figure reached by the top grossing film of the year (*Skyfall*). Besides, the median length of release for UK independent films is generally much lower than for both UK studio-backed films and USA-only films (British Film Institute, 2013: 8-19). Those are critical issues to be considered when examining the performance of 2012's *Great Expectations*, for this is an independent film, co-produced by the British Film Institute, the BBC and Unison Films in association with HanWay Films and Lipsync Productions. Besides, it is worth noticing that USA-only films accounted for the 30.6 per cent of all releases and for 61 per cent of the box office revenues (British Film Institute, 2013: 17). This suggests that UK audiences show preference for Hollywood pictures. The case is rather different for UK films in North America: they just represent 9 per cent of releases and 16 per cent of total grosses (British Film Institute, 2013: 69). These figures will be discussed in the following section; at this moment, suffice it to say that these observations bring to light the difficulties and challenges of distributing independent and specialized films. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that in 2012 some independent UK films worked successfully at the box office, as *The Woman in Black* (£21.3 million) and *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* (£20.4 million). With £2.3 million, *Great Expectations* ranked 11<sup>th</sup> within the top 20 UK independent films released in the UK and the Republic of Ireland for that year (British Film Institute, 2013: 26). Consequently, the likely considerable obstacles for independent films in comparison to *mainstream* films do not explain by themselves the rather modest performance of 2012's *Great Expectations* at the box office. It is time to consider whatever other elements may explain this result.

## Cinema audience

2012 marked two important milestones for British culture: the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bond franchise and, as stated above, the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens. The 23<sup>rd</sup> official 007 venture, *Skyfall*, became the highest earning film in UK box office history (with ticket sales of over £100 million) and the first Bond title to gross

over \$1 billion at the worldwide box office (British Film Institute, 2013: 8). *Great Expectations*, the film produced for the Dickens celebration, earned over £258 thousands at the domestic box office and less than £1 million worldwide (The numbers, 2017). Being said that, it must be observed that the year 2012 was a positive one for exhibitors. Admissions were the third highest in the past 40 years with over 172 million cinema tickets sold. As it happened with other film industries, the introduction of multiplexes in the mid-1980s revitalized the experience of cinema-going and led to a period of growth which saw admissions returning to levels last seen in the early 1970s (British Film Institute, 2013: 11-2). This increase contributed to the openness of new cinema sites and multiplex screens, in a proportion that exceeded the number of closures. Despite the invigorating figures, the fact must be not overlooked that USA-only pictures accounted for more than half of the total revenues in 2012, showing the audience's preference for those films over domestic or other foreign productions. The American dominance of the British cinema has been accepted for years by the British press, which claims the superiority of Hollywood and its dominance of the national market as a natural consequence. James (2002: 302) notices how British journalists often attack domestic films with a chorus of disapproval, which may be merely overcome if the picture wins an Oscar (and this is not always the case). Negative domestic press has further consequences, especially for distributors of British films, "who already contend with an exhibition sector whose antipathy to British films seems to have intensified since the rise of the multiplexes".

Instead of taking advantage of the multiplex era to attract different audience niches, British producers have been clung to the young male audience who mostly attended the movies in the 1960s and the 1970s. However, by the year 2012, statistics show that people aged 45 or above represented the highest proportion of cinemagoers, while the proportion of people aged 15-24 and 25-34 had gone in decline (British Film Institute, 2013: 166). Interestingly enough, Monk (2011: 440-1) has proved that the adult audience who attended heritage films "expressed rigid attitudes to the primacy of the original" (in the case of literary adaptations). They were concerned with questions of authenticity and period correctness, finding pleasure in dissecting areas as the speech and the deportment of actors, and in detecting possible errors. On the contrary, their engagement was dissociated from emotional, personal or political affect, while expressing little interest in the narrative of the film. By contrast, younger audiences (aged under 45) enjoyed visual

pleasure rather than scrutinising period details and fidelity to the source text. Their preoccupation were associated with quality of script, dialogue and acting. Besides, they were more open to understand the literary adaptation as a creative process in which authenticity was not a requirement any longer. In the case of 2012's *Great Expectations*, it seems reasonable to argue that this adaptation attempts to address a wide range of audiences. This fact makes that, ultimately, it does not succeed in pleasing any particular target. This assumption, notwithstanding, deserves further consideration. The director of the film, Mike Newell, became well-known with the success of the commercial urban fairy-tale *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994). After 10 years in Hollywood, he returned to the UK film industry to become the first British filmmaker of the *Harry Potter* film series. The making of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2005) provided Newell with certain experience in adapting *mainstream* novels. An international successful saga like that one, with millions of readers all over the world, had a potential risk of disappointing the audience in the book-to-film movement. But the movie marked a turning point in the saga. It will always be well remembered, not only due to the discovery of Robert Pattinson (who subsequently played the role of Edward Cullen in the also worldwide successful *Twilight* saga), but mainly because the Potter series turned PG-13 with this instalment. The setting for the film became dark and gloomy, and the formerly nice and funny school of Hogwarts arose as a dangerous and frightening place.

Adapting one book from a saga means a great responsibility, for the result might be compared not only with the source text, but also with the films made by previous directors. Newell came out well from this adventure, the film being acclaimed by both the audience and the critics. Similarly, scriptwriter David Nicholls had adapted some novels for both cinema and television, and was working on *Bridget Jones's Baby* by the time *Great Expectations* was released. However, one cannot help wondering whether that experience in adaptation provided them with sufficient credentials to make the 9<sup>th</sup> screen version of a literary classic as *Great Expectations*. With regard to this question, Smith (2013: 22) drew attention to the fact that they had “no vital tradition of Dickensian adaptation to work within”. Albeit he recognized their skills, the author argued that they were not “of a kind to produce great art”, what made him to feel “a certain degree of irritation at the notion Newell and Nicholls tampering” with the book. It is remarkable that Nicholls had worked on the script long before the film was planned to be made. In 2009, the proposal appeared on the *Brit list*, an annual poll of the best unproduced movie

screenplays on the British market, which are voted by British industry insiders (Dawtre, 2009). However, the script still remained in the production limbo for another two years. When the film was finally released, Nicholls himself (2012) explained how he had approached the process of adapting *Great Expectations*. He claimed that “there is no such thing as a completely faithful adaptation, but there are degrees of infidelity”. That assumption seems to suggest that Nicholls either attempted to *defend himself against any attack* for what he considered his very *personal reading* of the book, or rather that he was trying to justify himself to any likely failure. Anyhow, he was aware that “loving a book is not necessarily the best qualification for adapting it”, which seems to be an honest and a reasonable thought. What Nicholls fails to capture is the essence of the universal themes present in *Great Expectations*, which is likely explained by the fact that he focuses very much on the action rather than exploring the psychological and moral growth of the characters. Curiously enough, in an interview given to the UK’s largest Movie YouTuber, The Flicks and the City (2012), the scriptwriter confessed that the hardest thing was “to cut things that you really love in the book”. The key problem with this explanation is that it is in contradiction with the general tone of the film. It is noticeable that the film comprises in two hours most of the events taking place in the novel; such an ambitious purpose turns into the main weakness of this version. As discussed with regard to 1974’s *Great Expectations*, this observation makes one to evoke David Lean’s complaint about the script written by Clemence Dane for the 1946’s adaptation (see chapter 8). Moreover, it can be argued that the 2012 version treats its potential moviegoers as *minors*, either ignorant or with little knowledge of the source text. To give an illustration in favour of this statement, it is of interest to examine the first encounter between Pip and Magwitch. As in the novel, the convict asks the boy for some *wittles*. However, subsequently, it is made clear that *wittles* means ‘food’. Another example can be found after Pip returns home from the churchyard. Joe tells him that her sister has been looking for him for hours. At the same time, off-the-screen, it is possible to hear Mrs Joe’s shouts. “Are you ready?”, asks Joe. The rhetorical question appears to be addressed both to Pip and to the audience, and anticipates Mrs Gargery’s reprimand. Later on, Pip’s sister shows up a bottle with a label informing us that it contains tar water. To make it clear that the liquid is hazardous for people, she warns Joe and Pip “to be careful”.

Additionally, 2012’s *Great Expectations* capitalizes mostly on dialogues (often taken directly from the novel) while it shows little interest in exploring the possibilities offered

by cinematic storytelling techniques. In other words, it can be argued that the film pays much attention to the letter, and it gives up searching for or appealing to the *Dickensian spirit*. The decision to avoid the adult narrator's voice to drive the narration, and to open the narrative to multiple points of view instead, breaks away from one of the novel's hallmarks: Pip's double nature as hero and narrator. There are reasons to believe that this departure from the source text entails, at least, two further consequences. On the one hand, it *dehumanizes* both the narration and the assemblage of the film, which become rather *mechanized*. On the other hand, it prevents Pip from expressing true self-repentance for his growing snobbery. Another aspect to be considered relates to the way in which the film approaches Estella's character. She looks colder, more proud, gorgeous and unattainable than ever. She is treated as a simple commodity, changing hands like an object of pleasure, *une œuvre d'art*, Estella never expresses her own thoughts or desires, but she acts following others' wishes. "We have no choice, you and I, but to obey instructions", she states to Pip. However, while Pip follows instructions because he believes that, by doing so, he will gain Estella's love (his object of desire), she does it due to her incapability to take any decision. Even Jaggers, who is given in this film a more decisive role in the fate of Pip and Estella, controls her: "Estella, Drummle requires your presence urgently", he says at the Assembly Ball. Later on, when Pip is informed that she is going to marry Drummle, he tries to convince her to not do it by claiming: "I know that I'll never call you *mine*, Estella, but still I love you" (our emphasis). Miss Havisham answers that it is "too late" and, curiously enough, there is a certain inquiring tone in Estella's response "it's too late", even though there is no question mark appearing in the script. Despite her attempt to convince Pip that "it is my own act", there is no pleasure in her voice, but weariness and agony. In claiming "*This* is what you (Miss Havisham) have made me!" (our emphasis), she recognizes herself as an *object* for which everybody bids. Estella is dehumanized, for her heart has been stolen "to put ice in its place". She is "the Spider's reward", Mr Jaggers' "fee", and it is not by chance that the last meeting between Pip and Estella takes place in a sort of art gallery. Pip's exquisite suffering at her hands becomes the sorrow of someone who cannot *possess* the thing he wants. He realizes that he has been "just a mechanical heart to practice on", but, still, he has friends who helps him to recover and "pay in full" all his debts. On the contrary, Estella's fantasy of autonomy is inevitably connected to a repetition of pain, for she gets married to the villain, Bentley Drummle. Her "own act" is just a delusion, for "my husband and I made



each other perfectly miserable, *just as intended?* (our emphasis). Miss Havisham's perverse fancy merely condemns her to be a paralyzed witness of her own destiny. In the context of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century, it would have been worth, at least, to consider a deeper understanding and a further development of the complexity of this character rather than a mere *reification*.

Besides this, it is also noticeable the influence of Newell's previous involvement in the *Harry Potter* franchise. This assumption is supported by the participation of Helena Bonham Carter, Ralph Fiennes and Robbie Coltrane in his Dickens' adaptation. The three of them had played unforgettable characters in the *Harry Potter* series film (Bellatrix Lestrange, Lord Voldemort and Rubeus Hagrid, respectively), and were now to perform the memorable roles of Miss Havisham, Magwitch and Mr Jaggers. Since the *Harry Potter* series had culminated just one year before the release of *Great Expectations*, it is to be expected that the audience identified the actors and connect them with the memories that the story of the sorcerer's apprentice awoke in them. In addition, 2012's *Great Expectations* is characterized with a darker and more frightening atmosphere than previous versions, being its flavour pretty similar to Newell's *Harry Potter*. Considering the popularity of *Harry Potter*, it seems reasonable that *Great Expectations*' production company established a link between both films in order to attract a wide audience, instead to appealing to the *Dickensian status*. Especially if one bears in mind that, according to a survey carried out in 2013, a third of British people were unable to identify Charles Dickens as the author of *Great Expectations* (Wyatt, 2013). That said, neither the celebration of the bicentenary of the writer's birth, nor the cast of famous actors grabbed attention of moviegoers. Curiously enough, two less-known actors were chosen for the leading roles. Jeremy Irvine, who had made his film debut in Steven Spielberg's epic war film *War Horse* (2011), was casted as Pip. Holliday Grainger was chosen to play Estella's role. She had appeared in the 2011 version of *Jane Eyre* and had participated in other two film adaptations from 2012: *Anna Karenina* y *Bel Ami*.

Before moving to the next section, some final remarks. It is at least arguable that, for those who expected a canonical, faithful adaptation, the film lacks much of the book's humour (early scenes as the Christmas Eve dinner fall notably flat) and most of the cliff-hangers have not been retained. There is no dramatic *momentum*, while it seems that characters act, and actions take place, just because this is how it is in the novel. For younger generations, interested in the visual aesthetic and the script rather than in

questions of authenticity, it is likely that a story settled in the Victorian period is old-fashioned.

## Film forms and genres

Writing about British film strands, McFarlane (2002: 274) notices “the persistence of the literary and the realist as (its) identifying otherness”. Despite changes both at technological and narratological levels, the same *beat* prevails in most pictures. Familiar themes, genres and cycles were resuscitated in the 1990s and has been exploited up to the present (Sargeant, 2005: 326). Generally speaking, movies returned to those trends that had proved to receive critical prestige or gain commercial success in the past. Costume dramas and films focusing on social and political problems have been recurring for the last 30 years. According to James (2002: 307), “history and heritage (continued) to provide most of Britain’s exportable film stories, and nostalgia (remained) a better bet than any aspect of today’s Britain”. Since the 1980s, British cinema tried to respond to swings in societal thinking, thus comprising representations of interracial relationships and ethnic mix that emphasized the heterogeneity of the population. Right enough, many British films engaged with the multifarious aspects of the local culture to probe national questions. This assumption mirrors the range of representations that characterizes contemporary British cinema according to complex themes as nostalgia, heritage past and present, youth culture, matters of life and death, experiences of ethnicity and asylum, and place, space and identity (Street, 2009: 127). Films dealing with this sort of representations hardly bear reductive or generalised categorisation. Rather, they become hybrids of different genres, thus functioning as “a palimpsest upon which narratives about aspects of British life —past and present— can be inscribed” (Street, 2009: 129).

Despite the increasing international, intertextual diversity of genres, and the generic hybridity that has dominated contemporary styles and themes, it is still possible to identify the prevalence of some genres, as the gangster cycle and the romantic comedies. In contrast to the efforts of many contemporary films to delve into the lives of the poor and the oppressed, the gangster films tended to “prioritise the concerns of young white heterosexual metropolitan Englishmen” (Chibnall, 2002: 289), while romantic comedies portrayed Britain “as exciting, glamorous and full of romantic possibilities” (Murphy,

2002: 292). In the new millennium, British cinema have broadened the range of stories being told on the big screen with the aim to reach international markets. However, it is also noticeable how the literary/theatrical British tradition have capitalized on film adaptations or TV serialization of classic novels from Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, Oscar Wilde, Henry James, George Orwell or Charles Dickens. Sargeant (2005: 327) points out how those productions awoke the interest in the books, thus entailing re-editions and reissues of the novels, touring exhibitions and other associated publications. In 2012, Guy de Maupassant's *Bel Ami*, Franz Kafka's *Die Verwandlung*, John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, Leon Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* and Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* were adapted to the big screen. Notwithstanding, UK film adaptations have not merely fed on the classics, but have included a broader catalogue of titles based on contemporary fiction. By genres, the most popular one in the year 2012 was action, very much helped by huge success of *Skyfall* at the box office. Comedy, animation, sci-fi and fantasy followed it in the list. Despite drama films had the highest proportion of releases, it reached one of the lowest percentage of the total box office, being the top performing title *Anna Karenina* (British Film Institut, 2013: 38). These findings may be explained by the fact that worldwide audiences have shown, in the last two decades, a special preference for films that capitalize on 3D technology and special effects. 2012's *Great Expectations*, as stated above, was an independent drama film, a fact that might account for its poor performing at the box office. However, this big-budgeted production does not have the flavour of *independence* that is expected in *indie* or *non-mainstream* films. To begin with, two strong institutions, the British Film Institute and the BBC, provided part of *Great Expectations*' funding. Perhaps more significant, it was distributed by Lionsgate, a US leading global entertainment company that accounted for the 5,7 per cent of the distribution market share in 2012. Additionally, the film was based upon a familiar novel. In short, taking into consideration all the elements that have been observed so far, that is: (a) the director's reputation, (b) Dickens' popularity, especially in the year of the bicentenary of his birth; (c) the choice of a well-known cast that the audience could easily connect with the successful *Harry Potter* film series, and (d) the support of a strong company that might assure a wide distribution of the film, it should have been expectable a better response from the audience.

## ***Chapter 13. Fitoor (2016): A Bollywood celebration***

### ***Fitoor: great... obsession?***

Despite adapting an internationally acclaimed and loved author as Charles Dickens, likely to appeal to a global audience, *Fitoor* remains true to the storytelling conventions upon which Hindi cinema relies. In fact, the film only keeps the bones of the novel: a poor orphan boy (Noor) is supported by a mysterious patron (Muazzam) to become a successful artist. He mistakenly believes that his benefactor is a rich lady (Hazrat), who wants him to gain wealth and fame in order to deserve the love of her daughter (Firdaus). When the young man discovers that his real supporter is the militant commander he helped in his childhood, all his expectations break up. From this synopsis, it is noticeable that *Fitoor* introduces significant variations with regard to the source text, as will be discussed.

### **Narrative discourse in *Fitoor* (A. Kapoor, 2016)**

The title of the film (which can be translated as ‘obsession’) anticipates its romantic, sentimental character. Although it is the lengthiest version (131 minutes approximately), it focuses mostly on the Noor-Firdaus romance. In contrast, it belittles or eludes to explore other key plotlines, as the relationship between Noor and militant commander Muazzam Bhatt, or the connexion between Muazzam and Begum Hazrat Jaan. Surprisingly enough, the film pays much attention to the traumatic past of Hazrat, which is shown through different flashbacks, in order to explain the reasons of her miserable life and the desire to take revenge on Noor. In fact, when the Begum comes on board at the sixteenth minute, she pulls apart all the expectations of the audience. Indian actress Tabu, in her mid-forties, appears on the screen: she lies on a divan, smokes a hookah and is beautifully dressed with a black dress, a pearl lace kerchief and luxurious jewels. There is no trace of the old grey-haired lady, stuck in her wedding dress, which has characterized

this personage in previous adaptations (with the exception of the 1998's version). Even Helena Bonham Carter, who had the same age range by the time she played Miss Havisham, was dressed up as much older than she was. The Begum we meet seems to be the shadow of the exquisite deity she used to be in her youth, but she still keeps some of her majesty and honour. Neither dust nor chaos reign at Anjuman (Satis House): if there is something that the palace might be accused of, it is its sumptuousness.

In relation to this, it is of interest to examine how *Fitoor* handles the question of Indian femininity with regard to the characters of Hazrat and Firdaus. Govindan and Dutta (2008: 185-94) have claimed that, in Hindi cinema, actresses must “locate themselves strategically within a limited rubric of sexual identities: the vamp, the virgin or some blurring of the two”. The virgin is identified with the heroine. She is represented as an idealized woman and characterized by her chastity and her inevitable marriage. On the contrary, the vamp is aware of her eroticized body. She exhibits sexual pleasure and desire, thus occupying a more complex location in the narrative discourse. However, the globalization of Indian cinema has brought up alternative representations. According to the above-mentioned authors, Indian actresses must portray a hybrid profile, which combines a fetishized and eroticized figure of heterosexual desire and a coy denial of such lust. *Fitoor* provides a good example of how these labels of sexual identification are no longer steady. It can be argued that the two female protagonists carry out opposing journeys. In her youth, Hazrat shows desire for Mufti, a man she is not allowed to love. She disobeys her parents and breaks with the arranged marriage to run away with her lover. But after being betrayed, she confines herself at Anjuman, practice chastity and does not exhibit any sexual pleasure. On the contrary, Firdaus has been educated in the values of docility, modesty and self-sacrifice. She is almost forbidden to show any feeling or emotion, and her marriage has been conveniently arranged without her permission. The city, as a place of openness and freedom where she is not under Hazrat's rules, offers her the possibility to explore new relationships and sexual practices. Notice that Firdaus is a unisex name, which has implications on the way in which the discourse of voyeuristic, heteronormative pleasure is subverted. She not only lives alone, works and attends parties, but takes the role of the *immoral seductress*. Notwithstanding, passion and sexual desire are not openly depicted. Firdaus hesitates and is reluctant to admit she is drawn to Noor, which suggests that she moves within a liminal space between what she wants to be and what she is expected to be. The differences are also noticed at the wardrobe level:

in New Delhi, she wears tight clothing that underline her female figure, whereas her dresses are long and loose-fitting when living at Anjuman. Contrary to what could be expected, the obedience towards Hazrat's rules means a punishment for Firdaus, while the breakup of this normative world gives her the wished freedom.

The location and the context in which the story is settled is far from Victorian London. Set in the contemporary era, the film moves from the militarized region of Kashmir to cosmopolitan and vibrant Delhi, and then to elegant London, just before going back again to Kashmir. The similarities between the plot of this version and 1998's *Great Expectations* supports the belief that scriptwriters Supratik Sen and Abhishek Kapoor have watched Cuarón's adaptation. In both films, the protagonists, Finn and Noor, have a special talent for drawing and are removed from their poor homes because each one receives an art scholarship. The fugitives (Lustig and Muazzam) are useful as McGuffin elements to incite the plot to advance. Apart from that, their weight in the story is rather irrelevant: they are absent for the greater part of the film and come up at the end almost out of the blue. Ultimately, neither *Great Expectations* nor *Fitoor* delve into the question of Finn/Noor's moral progress (even less in the latter), while they focus on their obsessed love for the very much eroticized Estella/Firdaus. This version also recalls 2012's *Great Expectations* in the use of black and white wardrobe. Noor wears white clothes in his childhood, but his costume turns darker when he moves to Delhi. Even though the film shows little interest in exploring Noor's ethics, this distinction anticipates his moral degradation and final collapse. In conclusion, these connections with previous adaptations appear to support the assumption that, as the latest remediation of Dickens' *Great Expectations*, *Fitoor* does not only appropriate and refashion the source text, but also subsequent rewritings.

### Narrative functions

The analysis of the narrative of *Fitoor* provides support for the hypothesis that it blends most of the 1998 Cuarón's postmodern rewriting with local themes, as the Indian-Pakistan conflict and the emergence of terrorist attacks. It seems rather a remake of an already free adaptation, which results in the lack of the sense of humour and the irony of the source text, as much as its psychological and social dimensions. This assumption

raises intriguing questions regarding the indebtedness of a film adaptation to the source text, as well as the extent to which the *original* keeps an *authoritarian status* after several *remediations*.

<i>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</i> (NOVEL)	<i>FITTOOR</i> (FILM)
<b>Pip meets Magwitch in village</b> churchyard	<b>Noor meets Muazzam in village</b> harbour
<b>Pip steals food and Joe's file for Magwitch</b>	<b>Noor steals food for Muazzam</b> and hides him at Junaid's workshop
Soldiers capture Magwitch and second convict, Compeyson	
<b>Pip visits Satis House, meets</b> Miss Havisham and <b>Estella</b>	<b>Noor visits Anjuman and meets Firdaus</b>
A stranger at Three Jolly Bargemen gives Pip a shilling wrapped in two pounds notes, and stirs his rum and water with Joe's file	
<b>Pip returns to Satis House,</b> meets Mr. Jagger, and fights Herbert Pocket. He kisses Estella's cheek	<b>Noor returns to Anjuman</b> and meets Begum. She hires him to work at the stables
<b>Pip visits Satis House again.</b> He walks Miss Havisham	<b>Noor's several visits Anjuman.</b> Firdaus invites him to her birthday party
Miss Havisham gives Joe £25 for Pip's indentures as blacksmith's apprentice	
Joe takes on Orlick as journeyman worker in forge	
Mrs Gargery and Orlick have a strong argument	
Pip re-visits Satis House. Estella has gone abroad	
<b>Mrs Joe is brutally attacked (apparently with convict's leg-iron)</b>	<b>Rukhsar dies in a terrorist attack</b>
Biddy comes to live at the Gargery House	Noor re-visits Anjuman. Firdaus has gone to London. Begum dismisses Noor
Pip tells Biddy he wants to become a gentleman	Begum visits Noor at the workshop and becomes his 'first patron'
<b>Mr Jagger brings news of Pip's 'great expectations'</b>	<b>A lawyer brings news of Noor's 'great expectations'</b>
Pip tells the new to Miss Havisham	
<b>Pip goes to London</b>	<b>Noor goes to Dehli</b>
<b>He sets up house with Herbert Pocket at Barnard's Inn.</b>	<b>He sets up house with Arif Peerbhof</b>
Herbert tells story of Miss Havisham's jilting	Noor re-meets Firdaus in a party

Pip goes to Hammersmith to be educated by Mr Pocket.	Noor's first public exhibition
Pip gets money from Jaggers to set himself up	Noor is selected to exhibit in London
Pip dines with Jaggers (along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle)	Noor and Firdaus have intercourse
He meets Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper (actual Estella's mother)	Firdaus leaves Delhi
Joe visits Pip at Barnard's Inn	
<b>Pip visits Miss Havisham</b> at her request (via Joe)	<b>Noor goes to Srinagar to visit Begum</b> and Firdaus
Pip re-meets Estella	<b>At Indo Pak Summit, Firdaus tells Noor she is to marry Bilal</b>
Miss Havisham asks Pip to love Estella	Noor gets drunk and yells at Firdaus and Bilal. He is jailed
Pip secures Orlick's dismissal as gate-keeper at Satis House	Junaid gets Noor out of prison
Pip and Herbert exchange their romantic secrets	
Pip meets and escorts Estella in London	Firdaus becomes officially engaged with Bilal
Pip and Herbert fall into debt	Noor and Arif move to London
<b>Mrs Joe dies</b>	
Pip returns to village for funeral	
Pip's income is fixed at £500 a year when he comes of age	
Pip takes Estella to Satis House	
She and Miss Havisham argue	
At Assembly Ball, Estella deceives Bentley Drummle	
<b>Magwitch returns to reveal himself as Pip's benefactor</b>	<b>Muazzam returns to reveal himself as Noor's benefactor</b>
Pip verifies Magwitch's story with Jaggers	<i>He tells story of his past</i>
Pip and Herbert make plans for Magwitch's escape	
Magwitch tells story of his past (involving Miss Havisham and Compeyson)	
Pip goes to farewell Miss Havisham and Estella	
Estella tells him she is to marry Drummle	
Wemmick warns Pip of being watched	



Pip, with the help of Herbert and Wemmick, makes further plans for Magwitch's escape	
Pip visits Satis House to ask Miss Havisham to finance Herbert	
Jaggers reveals Pip Estella's true story (involving Molly)	
Pip goes to deserted sluice house	
Pip is saved from death at Orlick's hand by arrival of Herbert and others at sluice house	
The scape plan for Magwitch fails	
Pip loses fortune	Noor goes to farewell Begum
Magwitch is tried	Noor sets fire to his works of art
Magwitch dies in prison	<i>Begum commits suicide</i>
Pip becomes ill	<i>At Begum's funeral, Firdaus breaks her engagement and runs away</i>
Joe looks after Pip	
Biddy and Joe get married	
Pip spends eleven years at Clarriker and Co.	<i>Firdaus goes to Srinagar to meet Noor</i>
Pip re-meets Estella in the ruins of Satis House	<i>Noor kisses Firdaus</i>

The film starts with adult Noor, which makes a difference with all the previous versions. The young man is setting fire to a sort sculpture, as the voice-over, presumably belonging to him, reflects that: "The day of reckoning is a beast of its own. It creeps up on you unawares. It arrives on a whim, with its head held high. And burns everything to ashes". Afterwards, the film moves 15 years back in time to show 8-year-old Noor at the Dal Lake in Srinagar (Kashmir). This assemblage informs the audience that the whole narrative is a memoir. The boy stops a boat and starts walking through the wharf when militant commander Muazzam Bhatt attacks him and threatens to kill him if he does not bring him some food. However, the scene seems as cold as the snow-covered landscape. The music tries to add tension by performing a quick succession of accented beats. Nevertheless, the inexpressive face and the dreary tone of voice of the young actor playing Noor act as an anaesthetic. When the child returns with the food and a coat, the sense of shock or panic is still missing. Similarly, there is a taste of revulsion in watching the fugitive beating Noor, despite the boy has obeyed him and there are no people surrounded them. Muazzam explains to Noor (and to the audience) that he belonged to a group that was attacked by the army. Considering that Srinagar is an Indian-controlled

region, it must be assumed that Muazzam belongs to a Pakistani military group fighting for getting the control of that area. The fugitive asks Noor for a place to hide and the boy takes him to the carpenter's shop where his brother-in-law, Junaid, works. Once there, Muazzam is forced to escape after the army surrounds the workshop. A voice-over from television informs the audience that he has managed to escape.

The following day there is no trace of what has happened the night before except that Noor has caught a cold. "Go carefully, dear. The situation in the city is not safe", says Junaid to Rukhsar before she leaves, as if he were anticipating her tragic death. Similarly to 1998's *Great Expectations*, Noor visits Anjuman because Junaid has been requested to repair the roof of the mansion rather than because Begum has asked for a little boy to entertain her. He meets there Firdaus and falls in love with her right away. It is of interest the way in which the film approaches this first encounter between the two protagonists. Firdaus enters from the X-axis. She wears a white jacket and rides a white horse, both elements superimposed over the snowed landscape. The camera follows her as she moves from left to right; then she turns around and gets closer to the screen. She seems imposing and even insulting in the way she looks at Noor. The contrast in wardrobe (Noor is wearing lowly clothing and a hole in one of his shoes) plus the powerful dialectic play of glances establishes the core of the conflict without requiring any dialogue. Perhaps there is no other scene where Firdaus seems so unattainable and imbued by Hazrat's teachings to take revenge on men.



**Fig. 27. Wardrobe emphasizes differences in social status**

After meeting Begum, Noor is hired to tend to the horses and to play with Firdaus. “But you don’t play loose with your heart. This is the age for you to have fun. Save all your heartbreaks for later”, says the woman. A montage of different activities reveals how the relationship between Noor and Firdaus increasingly strengthens. However, the death of Noor’s sister in an explosion temporarily keeps him away from Anjuman. When he returns to the mansion, Hazrat informs him that Firdaus has been sent to London. There is already a glimmer of insanity in Begum’s tone of voice and in her speech. Metaphorically, she establishes a comparison between Kashmir and Firdaus, and warns Noor: “You have to become someone to be deserving of [her]”. Time passes while Noor resigns himself to hopelessness. He turns into a good-looking young man, who still keeps a sense of innocence and sweetness in his look. One day, while he is working at the workshop as Junaid’s apprentice, a lawyer announces him that he has been granted with an arts scholarship. Noor moves to Delhi, where he rapidly becomes accustomed to his new life as a promising artist, while his past life simply vanishes. Surrounded by wealthy people, Noor spends the time either working on his coming exhibition or attending parties and other social events where he successively meets Firdaus. The film makes of her a beautiful and sensual young woman, an *objet d’art* that inspires all Noor’s desires. It is noticeable that the film makes an effort to give Firdaus a more prominent role than in the novel or in previous adaptations as it delves into her inner conflict: whether obeying Hazrat’s mandate (and marries Bilal, a Minister of the Pakistani Government) or follows her heart (and staying with Noor). For the first time, this character is portrayed as an economically independent woman, and it is striking that the film does not take advantage of this issue to make Firdaus more rebellious against the instructions she is supposed to follow.

*Fitoor* departs from *Great Expectations* in depicting an increasing sexual tension between Noor and Firdaus, which culminates in sexual intercourse. This deviation from the source text, nevertheless, mirrors the 1998’s film adaptation and broadly confirms the association between both screen versions. In this scene, it is also of interest to draw attention to the portrait of Firdaus placed at the background. It seems to remind that she is merely a work of art, a luxurious commodity in the contemporary era. Firdaus knows that in staying with Noor overnight, she has broken the rules, and there is something ironic in the way she smokes while the “smoking kills” message appears superimposed on the screen. Despite unleashing her passions, she finally goes back to Anjuman and

accepts the arranged marriage with Bilal. “It’s not about money. Marriage is between equals. Families are involved. You won’t understand anything besides your love”, she tells Noor, who realizes then that she is out of his reach. Interestingly enough, it is not the revelation of Muazzam as his real benefactor what makes collapse all Noor’s expectations, but the very fact that Firdaus rejects his love. The return of the fugitive takes place almost out of the blue, and it is hard to connect his polite character with the aggressive fighter that appears at the beginning of the film. The news that it has been him the one who has bought all Noor’s paintings and sculptures cannot but delve into Noor’s wound. Out of his wits, the young man exclaims: “You’ve reduced me to nothing. (...) Who told you to do all this? You can’t just play God as you please”. It is remarkable that Noor shows repulse not because the money that has been supporting him comes from a militant commander; but because that means he does not deserve Firdaus. Subsequently, Noor visits Hazrat and reproaches her for “making me feel that you (were) making me worthy of (Firdaus)”. This scene connects with a flashback showing Hazrat’s obsession with her former lover Mufti.

Whether both Delhi and London provides Noor with “an outlet or escape route”, which snares him “with its hedonistic appeal and permissiveness”, the collapse of his expectations makes almost inevitable that Noor has to go back to the village “to resolve the conflicts that led to the original flight” (Vasudevan, 2010: 366). Thus, after Begum commits suicide, Noor returns to Kashmir. Firdaus is also there to attend her mother’s funeral and gets married to Bilal. Before the wedding, she discovers that, despite all her suffering, Hazrat has never been able to forget Mufti. The fact that she keeps a picture of him in her medallion proves it. This revelation makes Firdaus to change her mind and to cancel her engagement. She runs away towards Noor’s home, where the couple finally reunite and merge into one kiss.

### The narrating instance

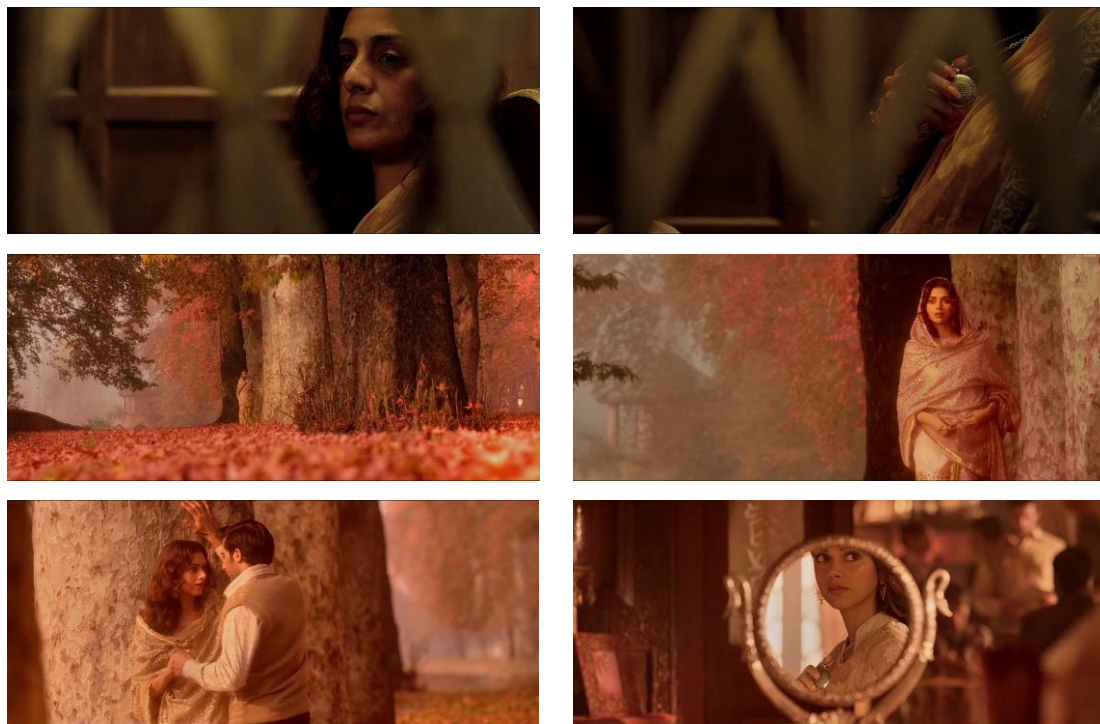
*Fitoor* relies on adult Noor’s voice-over to drive the narrative discourse, a formula that proved to be successful in previous adaptations. This storytelling tool is of special help at the beginning of the film. Contrary to the novel and previous adaptations, the film does not start with the 8-year-old protagonist (he is called here Noor). Rather, the first

shot is a close-up of adult Noor's face while his voice reflects that "The day of reckoning is a beast of its own. It creeps up on you unawares. It arrives on a whim, with its head held high, and burns everything to ashes". The film starts *in media res* and, after this preface, it moves 15 years back in time to see young Noor. The voice-over continues: "I still remember that winter of my childhood, the harshest we have seen in a while. It was as though the valley was shrouded in the sheet of death". The fact that Noor *remembers* that specific moment in time suggests that what the audience is going to watch is a *memoir*. Notwithstanding, it is remarkable that, by starting *in media res*, the distance between the *I-character* and the *I-narrator* is lower than in the novel. By the time Noor starts his account, the denouement of the story has not taken place yet; consequently, he is still part of the *diegesis*. This implies the non-existence of an *extradiegetic* level; in fact, as the film approaches the ending, character and narrator get closer until they merge into one person. At that point, it is noticeable that the voice-over uses the present tense: "If I am destined to ruin, I accept. If this is how it has to end, then I accept".

One interesting finding is that, even though it is Finn's point of view the one that prevails, the narrative is not entirely focused through Noor's consciousness. Hence, the most striking result to emerge from the analysis of this film is that the commitment as to focalization is not necessarily steady over the whole length of a narrative. In general, it is the hero's point of view that governs the narrative, meaning that the narrative mood of *Fitoor* is very often internal focalization through Noor. That choice implies the use of *paralipsis*, since the narrator, in order to limit himself to the information held by the hero at the moment of the action, must omit all the information he acquires later. Here, the hero's restriction of field is indicated by momentary ignorance or misunderstanding (for instance, by believing that Begum is her mysterious benefactress, or by wondering what is the secret past that she kept inside), or by sharing intimate feelings, hopes and disappointments ("My whole life was a lie... a conspiracy" tells the voice-over when Noor discovers that Muazzam is his donor).

Nevertheless, as noted, *focalization* through Noor does not apply to the whole narrative. Apart from *zero focalization* through the *image maker*, it is remarkable that *Fitoor* gives significant importance to Hazrat's role, who emerges as an intriguing figure, surrounded by an aura of mystery. Momentarily, Noor's focal position is transferred to Begum after the voice-over reflects: "What was I being punished for? Who had snuffed all love from this house? Whose story were we reliving?" Noor's wonderings introduce a

flash-back concerning Hazrat's past story. The camera focuses on the woman, who holds a medallion with her hands. Then the camera moves slightly towards the left to show a wall, which quickly match-cuts to the trunk of a tree. The location is immediately established (a forest) and the previous close-up of Begum informs the audience that what they will see is her *memoir*. Although the film does not use *point-of-view* shots to represent what she sees, she is constantly placed at the centre of the frame and showed in close-ups or medium shots, which makes of her the focal point.



**Fig. 28. *Fitoor* gives special relevance to Hazrat's past story**

Later in the film, just after Noor discovers that Muazzam is his real benefactor, a new flash-back of Hazrat's past story is inserted. Noor comes to visit her to ask the reason for her behaviour, but he realizes she has become completely insane. In her delusion, Hazrat first mistakes Noor with Mufti (the man who betrayed her), and subsequently with her father (who beat her until she lost the baby she was waiting for). The dramatic revelation gets Noor astonished. He takes an exhausted Hazrat from the floor and lays her down on the bed. The camera then focuses on her while we start hearing the voice of a man talking to a young girl who cries and shouts. The audio bridge connects the present with the past to find young Hazrat and her parents. Afterwards, the film jumps back and forth several times until it gets stuck into the past to show with images what

Hazrat has just accounted to Noor, as well as to reveal how Firdaus came to her. In both cases, these are external analepses, whose entire extent remain external to the extent of the first narrative. In other words, they deal with two episodes that took place earlier than the point of departure of Noor's tale. This being so, both narratives provide the spectator with Hazrat's backgrounds in order to shed light on the main storyline. They do not entail any narrative interference; however, as retrospective regressions of the Begum's life, they may entail changes at the level of *voice* and *mood*. With regard to the latter aspect, it can be argued that she becomes, again, the active gazing subject.

As previously stated, it is noticeable that much of the film presents a *non-focalized* narrative or a narrative with *zero focalization*. This is particularly true in those scenes where Noor is not present, mainly related to the Begum-Firdaus relationship and the preparations of Firdaus' engagement with Bilal. In all these cases, an impersonal, floating observer (the *image maker*), drives the narration and provides the audience with information that Noor (the character) does not know at that moment.

## Narrator

As disclosed in the previous section, *Fitoor* introduces adult Noor as narrator of the story. What is striking is that, even though the distance (measured in time) between the *I-character* and the *I-narrator* is lesser than in the novel or in previous adaptations (as noted above, both *I's* merge at the end of the film), the narrator's role with regard to the character is that of "[reporting] past events accompanied by an over marking of his own differences from the [character]'s perspective" (Galbraith, 1994: 125). The adult narrator uses the present tense and the words he employs do not match with the vocabulary of a child: "The day of reckoning is a beast of its own. It creeps up on you unawares. It arrives on a whim, with its head held high, and burns everything to ashes. I still remember that winter of my childhood, the harshest we have seen in a while. It was as though the valley was shrouded in the sheet of death". Therefore, even though the narrator reports his past beliefs and perceptions, the expressive elements belong to adult Noor and the character's experiences are subordinated to the narrator's commentary. In fact, it is noticeable that young Noor's insight is largely overshadowed by the heartbroken narrator. To give an illustration, after Begum informs the child that Firdaus has left Kashmir, adult Noor

reflects that her words “kept swirling around my head. As though a chasm opened up inside of me. And I kept falling, deep down. A deep black chasm. So dark that even my screams were dying inside”. Feelings, therefore, cannot be attributed to the character’s own consciousness, but to the narrator. The evaluative adjectives and adverbs draw a clear line between the narrator’s and the character’s experience, and provides the narrative with a dark and gloomy flavour that steers clear of the irony and sense of humour present in the novel.

Another important aspect has to do with the use of flashbacks to introduce Begum’s past story. As previously discussed, those episodes introduce a change in focalization, and it is at least arguable that they also affect the narrative in terms of *voice*. The story of Begum’s jilting deals with an episode that takes place earlier than the point of departure of Noor’s narrative. He does not know her story and, therefore, cannot *narrate* it. The question remains whether it is an omniscient narrator (the *image maker*) or it is Begum herself the one who narrates those episodes. Even though the film does not introduce her voice-over, and despite the fact that she is neither reporting her memories to other characters, the editing of the film suggests that these flashbacks are the product of Begum’s mind. Hence, it can be argued that she arranges the events included in these *analepses*, thus becoming a *visual narrator* of her own *memoir*.

## Temporality and order

In this film, most of the temporal sections are arranged in chronological order, although, as already noted, *analepses* or flashbacks are used at certain points of the story. For instance, after Noor and Firdaus reencounter in Delhi, he recalls the time they spent together in their childhood. Those memories helps Noor to get fresh inspiration in order to create new works of art. Later in the film, when he discovers that Muazzam is his real benefactor, a set of scenes from his childhood and his youth alternate while he realizes that his whole life has been a lie. Both are examples of internal *analepses*, for they refer to episodes included in the first narrative. The film, nevertheless, also uses two external *analepses* in order to explain Begum’s past story. The first one is introduced by Noor’s voice-over, who wonders “Whose story were we reliving?” before the film moves back in time to show young Begum as she is betrayed by Mufti, the man she was in love with.



The second flashback occurs when Begum suffers an episode of delirium in which she mistakes Noor with Mufti.

Additionally, the past is also evoked through the repetition of motifs. For example, when Noor and Firdaus meet for the first time, she looks at his worn shoes, which makes him feel embarrassed. Years later, when they reunite in Delhi, she realizes, with amusement, that Noor still wears worn trainers, even when his social position has improved. However, this time the young man decides to buy a pair of elegant and luxurious shoes.



**Fig. 29. Shoes become a recurrent motif to evoke the past**

Noor's portrayals of young Firdaus, which can be observed in several scenes, also act as an echo of the past. Besides, they emphasize Noor's obsession with her. He remains stuck in the past, as it shows the fact that he still keeps, after many years, a scarf that used to belong to her. "It's my prized possession", Noor confesses. Similarly, Muazzam utilizes this resource to remind Noor of their first encounter. The fugitive gets close to

the young man, looks at him severely and pronounces the same words he told Noor many years ago: “I swear to God. I will tear you apart”. Noor recognizes him right away and Muazzam (now Mirza Baig) smiles.

On another level, it is noticeable that any comparison between the arrangement of temporal sections in the film and the chronological order in which these events are arranged in the Dickens’ novel proves to be irrelevant. In line with 1998’s *Great Expectations*, much of the plotlines have been eluded or transformed in such a way that any attempt to contrast them is problematic. Notwithstanding, considering only the cardinal functions in *Fitoor* that have survived the process of re-enactment to which the film has been subjected, it can be noted an almost full correspondence between the arrangement of the temporal sequences in the novel and in the motion picture.

## Narrative rhythm

It is time to consider the main differences between the narrative speed in *Fitoor* and in Dickens’ *Great Expectations*. The analysis of the differences in duration and length proves that the Hindi film disrupts the balance that the novel presents in the three stages of Pip’s expectations. At minute 36, Noor receives the news of his great expectations and moves to Delhi. From then on, the rest the film, except for the last 8 minutes, are dedicated to the second stage of Noor’s expectations: his new life as an artist in Delhi and the collapse of his hopes after Firdaus gets officially engaged with Bilal, and after Muazzam reveals himself as his mysterious benefactor. That means 84 minutes, that is, more than 66 per cent of the running time of the film. In contrast, the first stage takes up over 28 per cent, while the film dedicates barely over 5 per cent of the running time to the last stage. In short, *Fitoor* belittles the episodes concerning Noor’s childhood while disdaining the denouement of the plot. This aspect makes this adaptation unique, for the previous versions pays attention mostly to the first and, to a lesser extent, to the third stage of Pip’s expectations. The exception is 1998’s *Great Expectations*, although, as previously discussed, this film keeps a balance between the first and the second stages.

Here again, *Fitoor* focuses on the relationship between Noor and Firdaus. At first glance, the second part boils down merely to an endless succession of parties and exhibitions where the young couple happen to meet while the sexual tension between

them increase. However, further implications, related to the Indo-Pakistani conflict, might be assumed from the subtext. They will be analysed in the third section of this chapter.

<p><i>Noor and the fugitive (00:00 – 14:57)</i>. First encounter between Noor and the militant commander Muazzam Bhatt. Noor steals some food and a coat for Muazzam. The militant commander manages to escape from the army. Noor meets Firdaus at <i>Anjuman</i>.</p>	<p><i>Pip and the convict (Chapters I to VI, pp. 3 – 42)</i>. First encounter between Pip and the convict. Pip steals some food and a file for the convict. The convict is arrested.</p>
<p><i>At Anjuman (14:58 – 24:59)</i>. Noor regularly visits Begum at <i>Anjuman</i>, where he starts working at the stable.</p>	<p><i>At Satis House (Chapters VII to XII, pp. 43 – 99)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's visits to Miss Havisham at Satis House.</p>
<p><i>Firdaus' departure (25:00 – 31:00)</i>. Rukhsar dies in an explosion. Noor visits <i>Anjuman</i> to discover that Firdaus has moved to London.</p>	
<p><i>Begum's patronage (31:01 – 33:57)</i>. Temporal break (fifteen years). Begum visits Noor at the workshop. She becomes his first patron.</p>	<p><i>The blacksmith boy (Chapters XIII to XVII, pp. 99 – 133)</i>. Temporal break (undetermined). Pip's new life as a blacksmith apprentice.</p>
<p><i>Great Expectations (33:58 – 36:10)</i>. Noor receives the news of his great expectations.</p>	<p><i>Great expectations (Chapters XVIII to XIX, pp. 133 – 160)</i>. Temporal break (four years). Pip receives the news of his great expectations.</p>
<p><i>The Delhi artist (43:34 – 1:22:44)</i>. Spatial break (move to Delhi). Noor's new life as an artist.</p>	<p><i>The Londoner gentleman (Chapters XX to XXXIV, pp. 161 – 277)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). Pip's new life as a gentleman.</p>
<p><i>End of great expectations (1:23:20 – 1:41:32)</i>. Noor is jailed and Jun-jiju comes to free him from prison. Firdaus is officially engaged with Bilal.</p>	<p><i>Mrs Gargery's funeral</i>. Temporal (undetermined) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks.</p>
<p><i>Second end of great expectations (1:41:33 – 2:00:32)</i>. Spatial break (move to London). At the</p>	<p><i>End of great expectations (Chapters XXXVI to LII, pp. 285 – 421)</i>. Temporal (several years) and</p>

<p>Hayworth Art Gallery exhibition, Noor discovers that Muazzam (the militant commander) is his real benefactor.</p>	<p>spatial (move to London) breaks. Pip discovers that Magwitch (the convict) is his real benefactor. Pip, Herbert and Wemmick conceive a plan for Magwitch's escape.</p>
	<p><i>Attempt of murder</i> (Chapter LIII, pp. 421 – 433). Temporal (a couple of months) and spatial (move to the marshes) breaks. Orlick attempts to kill Pip. Herbert saves him.</p>
	<p><i>Magwitch's decease</i> (Chapters LIV to LVII, pp. 434 – 460). Spatial break (move to London). Pip, Herbert and Magwitch accomplish the plan. Magwitch is discovered and arrested. He dies in prison.</p>
	<p><i>Return to the marshes</i> (Chapters LVII to LVIII, pp. 461 – 480). As Pip falls ill, Joe takes care of him. After recovering, Pip returns to the marshes (spatial break). Joe and Biddy inform him that they are going to get married.</p>
	<p><i>Clarriker and Co.</i> (Chapter LVIII, p. 480). Pip joins Herbert at Clarriker and Co. (spatial break).</p>
<p><i>Return to Srinagar</i> (2:00:33 – 2:07:46). Spatial break (move to Srinagar). At Begum's funeral, Firdaus decides to break her engagement and to return to Noor.</p>	<p><i>Second return to the marshes</i> (Chapter LIX, pp. 481 – 484). Temporal break (eleven years). Pip goes back to the marshes (spatial break) and meets Estella.</p>

According to this chronology, the main variations of speed in the narrative of *Fitoor* with regard to the novel work out approximately like this:

<p>Noor and the fugitive: around 15 minutes for two days.</p>	<p>Pip and the convict: 39 pages for about one and a half day.</p>
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At Anjuman: 10 minutes for several months.	At Satis House: 56 pages for some months.
Firdaus's departure: 6 minutes for a few days.	
Begum's patronage: around 2 minutes for fifteen years.	The blacksmith boy: 34 pages for four years
Great Expectations: around 2 minutes for a few days.	Great expectations: 27 pages for an hour.
The Dehli artist: around 40 minutes for several months.	The Londoner gentleman: 116 pages for some months.
	Mrs Gargery's funeral: 7 pages for some hours.
End of great expectations: around 18 minutes for some days.	End of great expectations: 136 pages for around five to seven years.
	Attempt of murder: 12 pages for some hours.
Second end of great expectations: around 20 minutes for one day.	Magwitch's decease: 26 pages for some days.
	Return to the marshes: 19 pages for some days.
	At Clarriker and Co.: 2 paragraphs for eleven years.
Return to Srinagar: 7 minutes for a few hours.	Second return to the marshes: 3 pages for some hours.

### *Ellipsis*

It is presumed that a story covering a long period of time must include some leaps at the level of the temporal space. In this film, the clearest example takes place after little Firdaus is taken to London and Noor becomes Junaid's assistant at the family business. The passage from childhood to adulthood is metaphorically suggested by the opposition between drawing and working. By the use of dissolves and by match-cutting on colour, shots portraying different drawings blend one into another until they fade into the light

emanating from a blowtorch. To complete this temporal transition, Noor's voice-over reflects that "Days turned to months and months, to years".

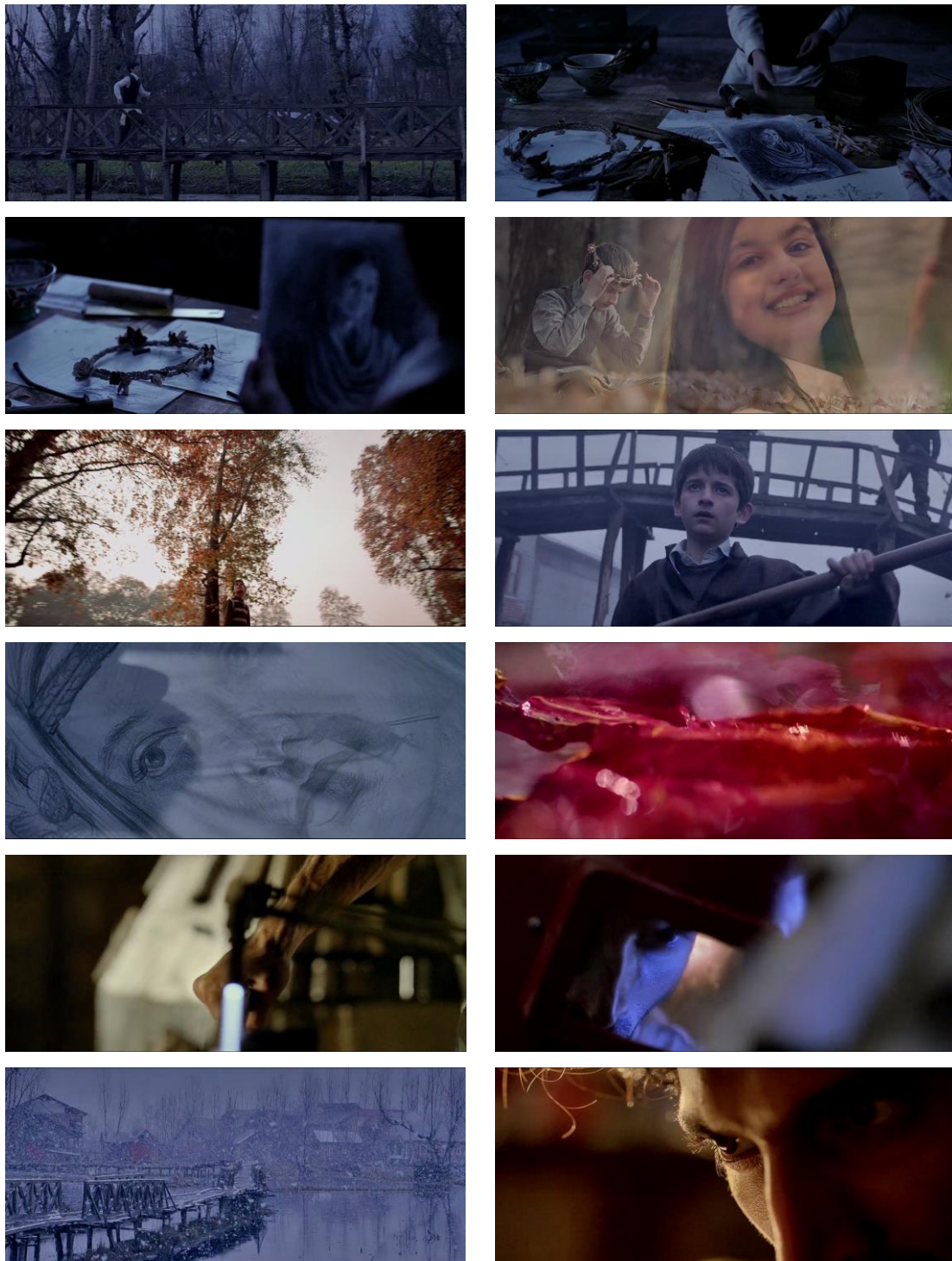


Fig. 30. Example of temporal transition by using dissolve and match-cut

Subsequently, Noor's movements from Delhi to Kashmir, and then from Kashmir to London also suggest the existence of temporal ellipsis, even though not clearly

specified. Similarly, after Hazrat's suicide, the fade-in-white, which blends into the scene of her funeral, entails a new gap.

### *Pause*

There is an overall impression in *Fitoor* that time passes slowly. There is no rush in the camera movements or in the movements of the actors. The camera seems to take delight in making the shots to endure as much as to depict the characters' reactions to the different events. Shots last 10 to 20 seconds on average, meaning that their duration is longer than in most Hollywood films. Additionally, prominent examples of the use of pause can be found at the beginning of the film, where three extreme long shots of the Kashmir Valley follow one another on the screen to establish the location. This resource is used again in the middle of the film, when Noor receives Firdaus' farewell letter. The extreme long shots of Kashmir inform us that both characters have returned there.

The sense of pause leads the narrative when the film aims to add tension to some climactic scenes. In the scene where Rukhsar dies in an explosion, the narrative rhythm slows down to show Noor and Junaid's traumatic shock. The shot is filmed in slow motion while the sound effects simulate the temporal hearing loss that one person may experience in these situations. Similarly, the slow motion technique is used in one of the dance sequence between Noor and Firdaus, just before they have sexual intercourse.

The sequence where a parallel montage portrays the final collapse of Begum and Noor also offers another example of pause. Hazrat has gone completely insane and wanders along the hotel as a lost soul. At the same time, Noor sets fire to his sculptures in the garden. The flames and the moonlight augur a bad omen as Hazrat walks slowly towards a balcony. In parallel, we observe a similar scene, this time with young Hazrat as she runs also towards a terrace. There is a big contrast between both scenes: the first one takes place during a stormy night; the latter, during a sunny day. Both Hazrat finally open the door and get access to the balcony. A fade-to-white suggests Begum's suicide.

Finally, it can be observed another illustration of pause after Noor receives the news of his great expectations. He packages all his belongings swiftly and says goodbye to Junaid. The camera focuses then on the future artist, thus showing a close-up of his face, of around 10 seconds, while his voice-over reflects "Jun-jiju's prayers worked for me,



whether it was God's mercy or Begum's largesse. But I'd found my purpose, as though the world was calling out of me. It was extending its arms. I was going to embrace them".

### *Summary*

This resource is used in the episode named *At Anjuman* to encapsulate the time that Noor and Firdaus spend together in their childhoods, and the different experiences they share. Later on, during the episode *The Delhi artist*, a montage with music and no dialogues portrays Noor's creative process, which is inspired by the different social occasions where he meets Firdaus. In all these examples, the lyrics of a song acts as the voice of the characters. In the first case, the song *Pashmina* reveals how the young Noor and Firdaus forge a close relationship, for "the blossoms have just altered their moods" and "the eyes have revealed new secrets and emotions". The lyrics immediate sets the tone for the audience and establishes the romantic flavour of the film. In the second instance, the song *Yeh Fitoor Mera* becomes Noor's voice, which states that "my obsession has brought me close to (Firdaus)", meaning that his "heart's desires have become fulfilled now". The lyrics adds new thematic information and it anchors the main conflict of the story: whether love will win over social status or not.

### *Scene*

As previously discussed, an overall sense of slowness pervades the film. This aspect makes *Fitoor* unique in comparison with previous versions, perhaps with the exception of the Hong Kong adaptation *Gu Xing Xue Lei*. Even in those scenes where the narrative time matches the story time, the utilization of certain film elements, together with the long duration of the shots get the impression that the speed of the narrative has been reduced. The film shows its preference for long and full shots where characters move and act throughout the frame, either in the X-axis, the Y-axis or the Z-axis. Another recurrent strategy is to follow characters as they walk or run through long paths or stairs. The sequence in which Junaid and Noor visit Anjuman for the first time provides a suitable example. The camera follows them on their way to the Begum's house. They walk along the quay and then travel by motorbike, crossing a bridge and a long road that gets into the forest. Most films would have summarized this sequence by using some



scene transition of by means of specific editing choices. By devoting much attention to this event, the film emphasizes the great importance of this visit for Noor. The same can be applied to other examples.

## **Political, economic and sociocultural background**

The last case study is a contemporary Hindi version of *Great Expectations*. Most of the films analysed so far have been produced either in the United Kingdom or in the United States. In terms of production, distribution and exhibition, as well as of cinematic and storytelling techniques, both film industries have developed in parallel. Therefore, despite the intrinsic characteristics of each country at a specific moment in time, the differences between their film productions are less evident than if one compares them with a film produced in the Asian or the African market, so to speak. As in the case of the 1922 Danish film *Store Forvetninger* and the 1955 Hong Kong version *Gu Xing Xue Lei*, *Fitoor* is both a gift and a challenge, as much as an excellent way to close this journey throughout the history of film adaptation.

### **Production, distribution and exhibition systems**

As claimed by Partha Sarathy (2006: 3), “it is not an exaggeration to say that India lives on movies”. The Indian film industry is the largest in the world in terms of number of films produced. Between 1.500 and 2.000 motion pictures are released every year in more than 20 languages. The number of spectators exceeded 2.1 billion in 2015, the second highest record after China (over 2.2 billion). Nevertheless, it remains small with respect to other film industries in terms of revenues. While Hollywood grosses reach \$11 billion with approximately 700 films produced per year, profits of the Indian film industry stand at \$2.1 billion. Several reasons can be adduced to explain this paradox. Notable among these are low admission prices, attendance rates, as well as high levels of piracy (Deloitte, 2016: 9). Specifically, with regard to ticket prices, Bose (2006: 58) has noted that they are ten times lower than in English-speaking countries and cheaper than in Africa, Latin

America, the Middle East, or the Asian-Pacific area. Besides, a KMPG-CII report (2007: 108) draws attention to the fact that the Indian film industry “comprises a cluster of regional film industries, like Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Bengali, etc.”; however, “the most popular one is the Hindi film industry located in Mumbai”, better known as Bollywood. This chapter focuses on it.

Since its inception, the Indian film industry has lacked organization and cohesion. Production, distribution and exhibition branches have remained fragmented, tending “to transfer the risk to the next link in the value chain rather than to manage the overall risk effectively” (KMPG-CII, 2007: 127). Ganti (2004: 54), in addition to Prasuna and Sughandi (2007: 27), has pointed out that only a few family firms have run the business. For many decades, a large capital and the right contacts have seemed to be enough to make a film. In fact, private investment and black economy have characterized the finance of filmmaking. However, on May 10, 1998, the Indian government declared the “industry status” of the Indian cinema (Partha Sarathy, 2006: 3; *see also* Prasuna & Sugandhi, 2007: 28; Rajadhyaksha, 2008: 27; Kishan Thussu, 2008: 100; Gopal, 2007: 53; Gomes, 2006: 73; Chandrasekar, 2006; 145). This decision came together with a general liberalization of the Indian economy and placed Hindi cinema in the global market. Furthermore, since the beginning of the new millennium, the Indian film industry has been reoriented towards a new vision of the country defined as *India Shining*. This mantra, defended by political parties by the mid-2010s, has become the epitome of the country’s economic transition into “capitalism, inclusive development and neoliberalism” (Chakrabarti, Dhar & Dasgupta, 2015: x) started in the early 1990s. In 2003, non-governmental organization Bombay First and consultancy firm McKinsey & Co. published the “Vision Mumbai” document, whose aim was “transforming Mumbai into a world class city” by 2013. This initiative was endorsed by the government of the state of Maharashtra, of which Mumbai is the capital, and by Indian Prime Minister at that time, Manmohan Singh (Cities Alliance, 2010). Since then, it has taken place a process towards corporatization, characterized by the development of economies of scale and value chain integration. Many producers have adopted a more organized approach to film production, including practices as shooting schedules, scriptwriting or the use of better technology (Partha Sarathy, 2006: 12). Taking one step further, the emerged companies not only have involved in production, but also in distribution and exhibition practices. Eventually, the restructuration of the business has allowed the financing from organized

funding as banks, financial institutions, corporates or venture funds (KMPG-CII, 2007: 106). Thereby, the process of corporatization has driven the Indian film industry towards an increased level of professionalism, transparency and accounting practices (Rajadhyaksha, 2008: 28). The deregularization of the Indian media and communication sector has placed local cinema in a global arena, thus enabling filmmakers to promote their films beyond the national and diasporic geocultural territories in order to reach an international audience. In following sections, it will be discussed to what extent the globalization of the Indian cinema has involved the development of a new kind of film; namely, one that fuses the singular national identity with the language and the storytelling of the West.

Distribution and exhibition practices have also experienced some progresses over the last years. In terms of distribution, the system is characterized by a decentralized network of independent distributors. Most of them work on specific territories or sub-territories, for they cannot afford the cost of distributing throughout the whole country. Among the different distribution arrangement, the most common is the *minimum guarantee* system, in which the distributor guarantees the producer a specific amount that is delivered in several phases. Distributors pay a percentage of the total during the production stage, while the rest is provided once the film is released. After they cover their costs (rights, prints, publicity and theatre rental) and take a 25 per cent of commission, any remaining box-office revenues are shared equally with the producer. However, too very rarely there is a remainder of profits (Ganti, 2004: 58-60). On the other hand, Gopal (2007: 50) have claimed that the distribution system in India comprises 7 territories: 6 are domestic, whereas the remaining area sets aside for the rest of the world. Each territory is, in turn, divided into smaller areas (A-, B- and C- centres) depending on their revenue-earning potential. It is a system similar to the first-, second- and third-run theatres. The criterion to establish such division is the popularity of the area. Usually, cities and large towns have more cinemas and provide more profits to distributors. Hence, they are considered A-centres, meaning that new films are released there in first place. After that, the movie makes its own way to B- and C-centres, where box-office revenues are expected to be lower. There is another disadvantage for B- and C-areas. If the film is not successful in the locations in which it is firstly released, the negative publicity may enlarge the flop. Furthermore, the distributor alone must bear the losses of a failure.

With regard to the exhibition circuit, the major change in the last decade has been the movement from movie palaces (with a seating capacity between 600 and 2000 for a single screen) to multiplexes (between 150 and 300 seats). For the production companies, the multiplex revolution have reduced the possibilities to run into losses. According to Bose (2006: 40), if a film is able to outlast the first weekend (covering Friday, Saturday and Sunday) at the theatre, then it is destined to be a success. Moreover, it is no longer necessary for a film to remain 25 or 50 weeks at the theatres in order to recover costs: in most cases, 1 or 2 weeks are enough considering the increasing number of prints in circulation, the ticket rates and the tax reliefs. The spread of multi-screen theatres has allowed cinema owners to capitalize on capacity utilization for screening. Thus, they are free to schedule films depending on their duration in order to maximize the number of projections in a day. Similarly, depending on the popularity of a movie, exhibitors may decide to screen it in a hall with more or less seating capacity. Usually, new releases are shown in the largest halls, whereas they are moved to smaller ones after one or two weeks. In short, multiplexes have helped both distributors and exhibitors to obtain better returns. Additionally, it has become a new window for the distribution of independent or art films, for the increase in ticket-pricing make possible that a movie could be watched by fewer people and still be economically viable (Chandrasekar, 2006: 148; *see also* Deshpande, 2005: 198-99). Another important aspect is that moviegoers have returned to the cinemas, not only because multiplexes have increased the offer of films in terms of genres and plots, but also due to the improvements of their conditions (better sound and screen quality, cleanness, comfortable seats, air conditioner...) and a swelling variety of groceries, beverages or goodies. In fact, over the last years, the greater part of the investments into media and entertainment have been in infrastructure (Kohli-Khandekar, 2006: 28). As a result, whether there were 900 multiplex theatres in India in 2012, the number increased up to 2.500 ones by 2016 (Statista, 2018; *see also* KMGP & FICCI, 2017: 137). On the contrary, a large number of single-screen theatres have been shut down or transformed into multiplexes. This trend is expected to continue in the following years, for the Indian film industry has “a potential to have almost 7.500–10.000 multiplex screens across the nation” (Deloitte, 2016: 14).

Despite the magnitude of the Indian film industry, which “outperforms the US by over 50 percent in terms of the number of admissions” according to Bose (2006: 58-61), the fact remains that Hollywood studios are world leader at the box office. In

comparison, the author also points out that “ticket rates are at least ten times higher in the English-speaking world than they are in India”. He adduces some other reasons to explain the differences between both markets in terms of the annual turnover. Among others, the author claims that, contrary to Hollywood, the Indian film industry has avoided the production of sequels or remakes of proven successes from the past. It has neither capitalized on the worldwide premiere, that is, on releasing a film on the same day both internationally and in the domestic market. Moreover, most of the times, Bollywood films are either premiered abroad months before they are projected at local theatres or subjected to a staggered release across the globe, thus increasing the possibilities of piracy. Overall, Bollywood production companies do not take advantage of the revenues emanating from merchandising and other parallel activities. The “Indian film industry report” (Deloitte, 2016: 5) has also drawn attention to this fact. It points out low infrastructure penetration, censorship, as much as difficulties derived from the tax regime, multiple layers of bureaucracy or the lack of access to funding in order to explain why the industry gross realization is significantly lower than its global counterparts. Notwithstanding, it has to be remarked that the Indian film industry has come a long way in the last two decades. Hindi cinema has acquired an international profile. This assumption is supported by the fact that Indian films have been shown in more than 70 countries (Kishan Thussu, 2008: 98). Bollywood has become a brand name (Khilnani, 2006: 38) and it seems to be reaching the competence that is required to cater to global audiences.

## Film spectatorship

The purpose of the *India shining* campaign has been to make India emerge as a global superpower. Despite certain upgrade, the country still suffers from poor infrastructure and services, lack of urban planning, high cost of entering and doing business, while slums mushroom over the territory. These aspects affect patterns of movie attendance and film consumption. Cinema is among the most important collective experiences that Indians have (Khilnani, 2006: 39). However, Gomes (2006: 75) has stated that watching a film at a movie hall is still considered a privilege for a majority of citizens living in rural areas. In support of this statement, Deshpande (2005: 198-99) has claimed that Hindi

cinema is funded “in overwhelmingly large proportions by the rich, whether in India or abroad”. This trend has been reinforced by the spread of multiplexes, for they have become “an extension of the home theatre, where the rich can watch films in the privacy of their own class”. Ultimately, in the same way that the exhibition branch is divided in A-, B- and C-centres, the Hindi film industry produces A-, B-, C- and even D-grade movies. From the “big-budget, high-profile, large-revenue films aimed at the hyper-consumerist audience” to the “modest productions” that cater to spectatorship with limited disposable incomes, each category has its own class-defined market and aesthetic features. Notwithstanding, many consumers are willing to pay more for better ambience and good service, according to Chandrasekar (2005: 147-9). This is the reason why multiplexes attract more patronage, despite of higher ticket prices. Anyhow, some of these multiscreen theatres have introduced flexi-pricing depending on the time of the show, or even the option to watch movies some weeks after their release, with the aim to serve all consumer segments. Taher and Gopalan (2007: 5) have also drawn attention to the Indian audiences’ outlook when they attend the movies: they expect “full value for their money”, meaning a three-hours long entertainment where songs, dances, love triangles, comedy and dare-devil thrills are all mixed. For decades, such combination have allowed production companies to appeal to all segments of the audience. In fact, if they aimed to fill single-screen movie theatres, then it was necessary to produce movies with potential to attract a mass audience. However, as pointed out, globalization and corporatization have led to the advent of a new kind of cinema. This tendency has been supported by the spread of multiplexes across the country, which, in return, has made the audience to go back to the movie theatres. Ultimately, dreadful conditions of single-screen cinemas, which were usually poorly maintained, have been progressively substituted by sophisticated multi-screen theatres placed within or close to shopping malls and entertainment facilities. Thus, apart from superior viewing experience, moviegoers can benefit from other leisure activities provided by book, film and video game stores, boutiques, jewellerys, restaurants, coffee shops or drugstores.

The liberalization of the Indian economy has also driven to the rise of an urban, consumerist middle class that has facilitated the creation of New Bollywood (Gopal, 2011: 3-10). Before, cinema was regarded as a media addressed to *the people*, so producers bet on films that praised family moral values and were homogenous at the script level. For years, “the cinema echoed the messier dimensions of democracy’s bid for

inclusiveness” (Vasudevan, 2010: 341) since it provided the low classes with the right to participate in a public spectacle. This was likely an illusory democratic legitimacy, for exhibitors emphasized the heterogeneity of the audience (in terms of economic status) by cataloguing spectatorship depending on tickets pricing. Single-screen theatres promoted spatial arrangement since, generally, people who afforded expensive tickets sat at the back of the hall or in a balcony, meanwhile those who paid less were situated near to the screen. Nowadays, multiplexes have substituted the hierarchical pricing strategy for a homogenous price. However, as discussed above, improvements in movie theatres have driven to more expensive tickets, and the exhibitor system has still to face many challenges in terms of equality and quality. At least, multiscreen halls allow to cater to different audiences. As a matter of fact, the changing social logic requires pictures tackling different niches and tastes. In short, moviegoers cannot be addressed as a family audience and on the basis of family values any longer.

Another phenomenon that must be taken into account is the great number of people who have migrated from territories that are within the borders of the Republic of India. In 2016, India had the largest *diaspora* in the world (over 16 million), according to the International Migration Report (United Nations, 2017: 12). Despite the Gulf nations housed the biggest share of the Indian diaspora, the United States and the United Kingdom were the other two main destinations for the overseas Indian community. Indian producers cannot ignore this reality, and it seems reasonable to think of those countries as two main destinations for the distribution of Indian films outside the domestic market. In fact, a CII – KPMG report (2007: 110-39) highlighted the increasing number of Indian films released in mainstream international theatres, with most of the revenues deriving from US, UK and Canada. Moreover, the report identified “a growing trend among younger filmmakers to make English language films in India for the overseas viewers” due to the “international success of India themed English films made in UK and US”. Kishan Thussu (2008: 102) has also noted the key role of London as the centre of Indian media operations in the West for the global distribution of Indian cinema.

The movement towards the internationalization of Indian films entails that filmmakers have to consider the tension of negotiating the nation and the transnational. Diasporic Indians might easily fall into a liminal subjective space where they find troublesome to locate their sense of cultural identity. In writing about the reception of

Danny Boyle's Indian tale *Slumdog Millionaire* in the US by Indian emigrants, Bardhan (2011: 51-7) gathered diasporic comments about stories on this film published in three digital newspapers. Interestingly enough, most people agreed in the "opening and honesty" of *Slumdog Millionaire* in portraying the darker side of India, and praised it for "highlighting conditions that are ignored everyday in India". On the contrary, export oriented Indian films usually depict the triumphs of India. These movies fail in shaping the "microcosm of the social, political, economic, and cultural life of a nation" (Bhoopaty, 2003: 507). Rather, they emphasize the *Shining India* mantra, which has driven to "the displacement of nation as art form by nation as brand" (Vasudevan, 2010: 39). For the diasporas, these films promote a positive reimagining of the homeland. For the foreign spectatorship, they provide entertainment full of joy and colour. And for the locals, they prevent them from being forced to gaze poverty. With such a heterogeneous audience, it seems complex to please all the niche markets, but Bollywood is more and more interested in reaching a crossover global cosmopolitan audience (Bardhan, 2011: 48). Even inside India, the moviegoer profile has changed. From an all-male, working-class audience, there are nowadays students, sales men or courting couples, among many other types of visitors who attend the movies. The weekend audience, on the contrary, is still captained by families, which benefit from the new location of movie theatres, placed in malls. In short, Indian cinema is necessarily influenced by novel global configurations, while it operates in line with the development of the new urban vistas, the multiplexes, the shopping centres and new lifestyle cultures that are flourishing in certain sectors of the country. Films are niche-oriented, being many of them particularly interested in targeting urban youths and young professionals (Rampal, 2007: 196; *see also* Vasudevan, 2010: 374-87). In addition, the Indian Media and Entertainment Industry Report (KMPG and FICCI, 2017: 140) also draws attention to the fact that exhibitors are increasingly regarding children as a potential audience. Apart from that, it has been noted that a large section of the audience have become more receptive to films which tackle serious issues (Deloitte, 2017: 19). "Differentiated, strong, message-based quality content became the indispensable factor for the success of a movie in 2016" (KMPG and FICCI, 2017: 121). In short, what stands out is that "audiences have become more discerning in content consumption". To give an illustration, the two highest grossing films of the year, *Dangal* and *Sultan*, performed exceptionally well at the box office due to its quality content rather than because of the renown of its leading actors. In a key market as the UK and the



Republic of Ireland, where there is a high rate of Indian population, those movies were also at the top of the list of the highest earning Indian films (Deloitte, 2017: 67).

Kohli-Khandekar (2006: 32-4) has argued that audiences in the West and the rest of the world enjoy Indian films, which they label as *song and dance extravaganzas*. Only the length of these pictures reduce their penetration in global markets. According to this scholar, it is the Indian critics who are embarrassed about this type of movie. On the contrary, Gomes (2006: 82) claims that popular Indian films abroad “are Indian-centric and told in a style that is comfortable to the upmarket audience”. Similarly, the KMPG-CII report (2008: 139) states that penetrating foreign markets requires, among other things, universality of content and a different style of storytelling. This suggests that the former successful formula of the sappy romance mixed with song-and-dance sequences and improbable turning points is likely worn out. This assumption forces filmmakers to explore new plots and stylistic norms, as well as different modes of film practice. *Fitoor*'s low box office earnings prove to be a suitable illustration of the new scenario. As shown, the in-depth study of the film's narrative discourse reveals its commitment with Noor's obsession for Firdaus, as well as their passionate, but banned love story. Whereas *Fitoor* concentrates all its efforts in exploring this plot, it sets aside other key storylines, as the relationship between Muazzam and Noor, or the process of moral degradation that the protagonist experiences in the novel. The fact that the film aligns with traditional notions of Hindi cinema might explain its poor reception. *Fitoor* is not within the top 10 of the highest grossing films, neither at the Indian nor at the UK and Republic of Ireland box offices. Whether *Dangal* raised 3.745 million rupees, *Fitoor* barely gathered 64 million rupees. Furthermore, the film has mostly received negative criticism from film reviewer. Sastry (2016) claims that the film “neither elevates the material upon which it is based nor is it able to breathe new life into the novel”. According to her, *Fitoor* avoids the ups-and-downs that characterizes Dickens' story, meaning that the plot is too flat to make the audience feel satisfied of seeing Noon and Firdaus reunited. For Kaushal (2016), *Fitoor* “suffers a loosely-written script that lacks the passion we saw in Dickens' characters”. Langer (2016) shares the same view and calls attention to the swiftness and resoluteness with which Noor helps Muazzam considering that this episode sets one chapter in Dickens' *Great Expectations*. In fact, a serious weakness of the film is that many key episodes are abridged. Consequently, it fails to construct a coherent and cohesive narrative discourse. Langer adds that, it is in the second stage of Noor's expectations

when the film “enters from the epoch of belief to the epoch of incredulity”. Such incredulity comes from the fact that

Everything in the film is about artificial whispers and cultivated conceits. (...) Every frame is calculated to impress. Every face is masked in a made-up magnificence. (...) There is something unreal even about the dialogues that the characters speak to one another. Every line strains for effect. (...) *Fitoor* is one of the most disappointing literary adaptations ever attempted in Indian cinema (Jha, 2016).

Most of the film critics agree that the characters’ motivations “remain utterly unconvincing”; explanations are offered, but they seem clumsy and stretch credibility (Joshi, 2016). One of the limitations of 2016’s *Great Expectations* is that it barely tackles the rises and falls of the characters. The film is not very much interested in exploring social climbing, snobbery, criminality and justice, or shame. It marginalizes supporting characters to capitalize on the Noor-Firdaus love story. The romance, although could be potentially appealing, lacks enough lust and heat to register much, partly because of the limitations of the actors, partly because dialogues are so theatrical (Mitra Das, 2016; *see also* Guha, 2016). Despite this, it is reasonable to presume that the logic behind the decision to adapt *Great Expectations* is to attract a cross-over audience, for the popularity of Charles Dickens, especially in the Western world, is out of doubt. Furthermore, the British novelist has had a long relationship with India, full of ups and downs. Truly enough, the British author did never make it to the country, according to his great-great great granddaughter Lucinda Hawksley (Rickard Strauss, 2011). However, one of his sons, Walter Dickens, lived in Calcutta for six years, where he became a lieutenant in the East India Company (afterwards, the British Indian Army) until he died at the age of 22. His untimely death caught his younger brother, Frank, by surprise. He expected to join Walter in India in order to live together; but he was informed only on landing about the terrible news. It is not possible to determine how deep Walter’s death affected Charles Dickens’ vision of India. At least, by the time the Indian Mutiny<sup>24</sup> took place, he showed an attitude of extreme racial bigotry, thus approving imperial domination. In a private letter to the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Dickens wrote that:

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<sup>24</sup> Widespread, but unsuccessful rebellion against the British rule in India in 1857-58.

I wish I were the Commander in Chief of India. The first thing I would do to strike that Oriental race with amazement (...) should be to proclaim to them in their language, that I considered my Holding that appointment by the leave of God, to mean that I should do my utmost to exterminate the Race upon whom the stain of the late cruelties rested (...) (quoted in Scheckner, 1989: 53; *see also* Van der Beer, 2001: 48; Willey, 2006: 227; Tomaiuolo, 2013:113)<sup>25</sup>.

Despite how much Dickens seemed to be touched by the Indian Mutiny and the death of his son, or perhaps as a consequence of that, there are barely some minor explicit references to India in his novels. In *Great Expectations*, there is one mention after Magwitch's return. As his abhorrence towards the convict increases, Pip thinks about running away and "[enlisting] for India as a private soldier" (Dickens, 2005: 338). India, as much as other colonial territories in Africa, Australia or the Caribbean, emerges in the novel as a space for escapism, where characters can make a future. The extent to which Pip feels aversion for Magwitch is metaphorically illustrated by his preference to enrol in the military army.

Besides this, it is conceivable that Dickens' view on the mutiny might have caused certain unease among the Indian population. However, there are testimonies proving that the British writer has been largely loved generation after generation. To celebrate the bicentenary of Dickens' birth, the BBC World Service (2012) aired a documentary that explored India's bond with the British novelist. The voice of the Indian born writer Ayesha Menon drove the narration. She started by recalling some memories from her childhood, when, according to her, Dickens was likely even more popular than he was in the United Kingdom. As a matter of fact, British authors as Dickens himself or Austen were studied and read before in India than in Britain. The reason why Dickens is, even today, a relevant writer for the Indian population has to do with how the setting of his stories makes sense in the contemporary scenario. Taking *Great Expectations* as an

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<sup>25</sup> Debates concerning the existence, extent and depth of Dickens' racism are beyond the scope of this research (for more on that, see Brantlinger, P. (1988). *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914*. Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press; and Moore, G. (2004). *Dickens and Empire: Discourses of Class, Race and Colonialism in the Works of Charles Dickens*. Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate).

example, Indian people feel identified with Pip's fantasy of becoming a gentleman. Child labour is still common in the country, and many people is moving from rural to urban areas to make a living. Bombay emerges as a land of opportunities as much as London seems to join all Pip's expectations. For the documentary, another Indian writer, Amitava Kumar (2012), was asked to recall his experience reading Dickens in his childhood. Above all, he pointed out the close interrelationship between the environment where he lived (surrounded by poverty, convicts, violence) and what he read in the books. In words of Sandip Roy (2012),

Dickens now is more relevant than ever. In India, the gap between the haves and have-nots is gaping. We are truly living a tale of two cities, one of great expectations and the other with row upon row of bleak houses. Dickens was writing about the rat race and the teeming masses left at the bottom of the ladder, about slumdogs and millionaires, about corruption, class and the crushing weight of enormous social change. He could have chronicling our age.

It is true that, in the last years, Indians' preference have tended towards contemporary novels while the volume on Dickens research has declined. Nevertheless, the demand for Dickens' books has not disappeared. They are still part of compulsory courses both at school and university. Just the high number of programmes and activities carried out to celebrate the bicentenary of the writer's birth proves how important he still remains for the country. Considering the high degree of recognition of the Dickens' works, and how Indian people regard his stories as relevant today, the decision to adapt *Great Expectations* seems wise. However, the analysis of the narrative discourse raises the possibility that the film fails in its approach to the novel. By belittling social and moral themes for the sake of a bland romance, it does not only move away from the source text, but, most of all, it gets away from the audience's concerns and tastes, both in India and in possible target countries as the United Kingdom and the United States.

## Film forms and genres

As already discussed, before the movement towards *India Shining* and the conception of the Indian cinema as an industry, most Bollywood films were characterized for being melodramatic stories enhancing family and moral values, based on simple plots with happy endings, full of colours and sprinkled by song-and-dance burlesques. They addressed a mass audience, and their content made them suitable for the whole family. For several decades, those traditional pictures have enjoyed great success among the Indian population. In this regard, Gopal and Sen (2008: 147) have defined Bollywood as “a sensationalist and escapist art form which is driven solely by the dictates of the marketplace and is incapable of playing any progressive role whatsoever”. It is noticeable that popular Hindi cinema have generally fallen into sentimental dialogues and melodramatic plotlines where a villain prevents the hero and the heroine from consummating their love; it highlights social and moral clichés, as well as it represses sexuality, which contrasts with the inclusion of song and dance sequences where the protagonists are portrait as wealthy, successful and eroticized figures. On the contrary, it has ignored social inequalities and poverty. At this point, it might be of interest to retrieve two statements that enhance the escapist nature encapsulated in these pictures. The first one belongs to successful filmmaker Manmohan Desai, who declared “I want people to forget their misery. I want to take them into a dream world where there is no poverty, where there are no beggars, where fate is kind and God is busy looking after his flock” (quoted in Manuel, 1993: 45). Cinema, therefore, has been understood as a “dream machine” that offers “alternative realities, foreign locales, alien cultures, unfamiliar aesthetics of self and unaccustomed social arrangements, pleasurable disorientations of everyday life” (Dayal, 2015: 1). It is conceived as a *narcotic* that: (a) provides a means of escapism for the poorest; (b) shies away middle and upper classes from reality; (c) appeal to international audiences as it markets Indian culture as exotic.

The second statement that deserves consideration was affirmed by producer and actor Raj Kapoor: “The best entertaining film is a film that does not raise any controversy. In a democracy of ours... one has to be very careful as to what kind of fare to present and how much of truth you can present along with that” (quoted in Manuel, 1993: 45). Whether Kapoor meant that the Indian masses are still minor and, therefore, unable to deal with accurate portrayals of India; or whether he claimed the need for censorship to

maintain the established social order and to sell a homogenized image of India to the outside, what it is inferred from his words is the great influence of political, economic and sociocultural factors on cinema. It is also remarkable that popular Hindi films have turned into an emblem of what Indian cinema means for the Western microcosms. In fact, Bollywood has been used as an instrument to market the country as a brand (Vasudevan, 2008), thus becoming “both mirror and lamp —reflecting ‘Indianness’ back to Indians at home and abroad, but also shaping Indianness” (Dayal 2015: 1). Nevertheless, over the last decades, the process of globalization has encouraged Indian filmmakers to promote their films not only in the national and the diasporic territories, but they have also tried to cater for the global audience. Distribution and release in mainstream international theatres has become a key area of expansion. Penetrating foreign markets and appealing to their audiences have demanded, besides upgrading aspects as dubbing or subtitles, a new way to tell stories, as much as universally-oriented plots. At this point, it is worth quoting Khilnani (2006: 38), who wonders about the meanings of Bollywood. He offers three answers: “cheap fluffy escapism; a canvas on which the profound psychic and political conflicts of a new post-colonial nation are screened; or highly stylised renditions of universal predicaments”. This question needs to be addressed with caution. The new trends in the Indian film industry suggests that there is no one single response. Many aspects of the Indian cinema has changed, even if most of them are still based on the struggle of good versus evil, include songs and dances or portray archetypical characters (Deshpande, 2005: 186). According to Partha Sarathy (2006: 6), “niche topics, originality in content and creativity in presentation are all being explored”. The current Bollywood formula requires the industry to be open-handed with regard to the content of the films, meaning that it needs to give visibility to formerly taboos as violence, sexual innuendo, terrorism or homosexuality. Ultimately, it can be stated that New Bollywood embraces typical Hollywood style genres and is marketed as mere entertainment. Hence, current movies provide many of the impulses that define the present. This is true for *Fitoor*, which includes female professional mobility (Firdaus is an independent, working woman settled in Delhi), sexual intercourse between the protagonists, a portrayal of the city as a land of flows and opportunities, several shots of women smoking, or the invocation of militarised Kashmir. The last theme might be the thorniest question of the film. Vasudevan (2010: 345) draws attention to the crucial role that censorship has still today in India. While concerns with the representation of

sexuality have relaxed, now its application appear to focus more on political issues. Notwithstanding, it does not seem to have affected *Fitoor*, despite the political implications that might be assumed from the subtext. In fact, the film is not indifferent to the Indo-Pakistani conflict, and it is of no coincidence that both Noor and Firdaus' roots settle down in the Kashmir Valley. Since its independence from the British rule, Kashmir has been the object of a territorial conflict between India and Pakistan. According to the plan of partition, the princely states were free to choose which one of those countries they aimed to join. At that time, the number of Muslim population in Kashmir was higher, but the region was governed by a Hindu ruler (Ankit, 2016; *see also* Schofield, 2000). Both countries have fought three major wars and one minor war: the Indo-Pakistani Wars of 1947, 1965 and 1971, as well as the Kargil War of 1999. After 70 years, the dispute is far from being resolved. In *Fitoor*, echoes from the Indo-Pakistan conflict are continually recalled as an allegory of the different stages in the Noor-Firdaus stormy romance.

Part of the essence of *Great Expectations* stems from the first episode, in which Pip meets the convict. There, the boy shapes a standard of morality where crime must be properly punished. This fact makes him to live with a constant fear of being punished for having helped Magwitch. This standard is subverted at the end of the novel, when Pip learns that the legal system is not always fair, especially for those who belong to the lowest classes. Being said that, it is striking that *Fitoor* reveals so little interest in the encounter between little Noor and militant commander Muazzam Bhatt, or in to what extent this traumatic experience affects the boy. The Noor-Muazzam encounter is barely explained or contextualized; it rather works as a McGuffin that makes the plot advance. In fact, the film quickly moves the focus of interest towards Anjuman, Hazrat Begum's house. Anjuman conveys a sense of security that contrasts with the degree of hazard provided by the living area where Noor's family is settled down. The Indo-Pakistan conflict shakes Noor again, but this time with more serious consequences: her sister dies in a terrorist attack, and this tragedy prevents him from attending Firdaus' birthday. In losing her, Noor becomes aware of the "cruel times" where "bombs go off everywhere", thus endangering that "heaven on earth" (meaning Firdaus/Kashmir), of which "everyone wants a piece". In *Fitoor*, Firdaus and the Valley of Kashmir become synonyms. They are the object of desire of two antagonist forces represented by Indian artist Noor and Minister of the Pakistan government Bilal Latif. "We'll have to wage war. They already lost the '65 and '71 wars. Even the one in '99", declares Noor, whose only weapon to fight against the political and economic forces involved in the

Firdaus-Bilal engagement is love. One possible implication of this is that the film suggests a more honourable motivation in India's claim to possess Kashmir. And perhaps because this feeling is purer, Indians (and Noor) believe they have more right than the adversary. The cold war between Noor and Bilal reaches its climax when the first one shouts during a party that "Doodh maangoge to kheer denge, Kashmir maangoge to cheer denge" ("If you ask for milk, we'll give you pudding. But if you ask for Kashmir, we will give you a thrashing"). This Indian slogan is the ultimate expression of patriotism, which suggests that the scene should have meant a deep turning point in the story. However, since the preceding events are excessively rushed for motivation to emerge in detail, the shot is too powerless to make any impression. Eventually, Noor desists from winning Firdaus' heart. On the contrary, it is her the one who goes in search of him, as if she realizes, suddenly, that she (Kashmir) belongs to Noor (India). This conclusion might easily please the board of censorship, as well as the audience. However, since the second stage of Noor's expectations boils down to a series of exhibitions and parties where the sexual tension between the protagonists increasingly grows, the film fails to make anything impressive of this powerful matter, which might have been rewarded to follow.

Furthermore, the film fails to fully approach other possible connections between *Great Expectations* and India. According to Fiske (2007), albeit the immediate reason of the Mutiny was Indian soldiers' (*sepoys*) objection to the introduction of the new Enfield rifles<sup>26</sup>, the Indian population increasingly regarded the British dominance in their political, economic and cultural life as a threat. The introduction of Western ideas, the punitive tax collection system, a succession of British territorial seizures and, above all, a widespread perception that the British government was planning to convert the population of India at Christianity were breeding grounds for revolution. One of the native tradition that England abolished was the practice of *sati*, a ritual by which a recently widowed woman committed suicide after her husband's death. Usually, it involved burning or burying a woman alive. Women who refused to practice this ritual were condemned to chastity since remarriage was considered evil (Fiske, 2007: 31). However, the British administration declared *sati* to be illegal in 1829, although the abolition was not accepted equally in all the domains. Besides, Hindu women were allowed to remarriage

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<sup>26</sup> The rifles' cartridges were greased with pig and cow fat, and sepoys were supposed to bite the greased end of the cartridge to load ammunition. Consumption of pork is prohibited for Muslims while the cow is sacred to Hindus.



in 1856. Being said that, it is remarkable that Miss Havisham lives in a place named Satis House and that she is engulfed by the flames while wearing her bridal dress. Reading *Great Expectations* from this perspective, Mrs Gargery's home emerges as a Christian and moral place, where law and religion govern. By helping the convict, Pip disobeys the household rules, thus breaking the fake harmony of the family, which is based upon Mrs Joe's abuse of power. Pip's constant fear of being killed (either at the hands of Magwitch or by being sentenced to death by the legal system) connects to a portrayal of the marshes as a dangerous place, where moral scrutiny and hypocrisy dominate life. It is also from Mrs Gargery's house that officers obtain the handcuffs to capture Magwitch and to re-establish the sense of justice that had been pervaded. In contrast, the exotic Satis House provides Pip with a new vision of the world surrounded him. This place, where time stands still, emerges as a refuge where the young boy can contrast his domestic situation with an alternative perspective. It is there where Pip gains self-confidence enough to resist her sister's manipulation and separates from her authority, just to start being manipulated by Miss Havisham. By fooling himself, Pip makes of Satis House the object of his fantasies about wealth and social status, which, eventually, should result in his marriage to Estella. In this sense, the collapse of his expectations might be read as a metaphor of England's disillusioning power struggles over India. Pip's attempt to save Miss Havisham from the flames seems to support the *anti-sati* legislation, to which the woman opposes by trying to free herself from his help. However, Pip realizes that, albeit with no purpose, he is also a participant in her *sati*. In short, "The enactment of a *sati*'s rescue here entertains the myth of salvation only to expose the self-defeating potential of a coercive campaign likely to lose sight of its best intentions in the heat of combat" (Fiske, 2007: 45). Moreover, it is likely to argue that the myth of the *sati* fits into Dickens' original ending, where Pip and Estella do not end up a marriage couple (since widows cannot remarry). Although he was advised to revise the ending in order to please his readers, it is of interest that Dickens did not write a clear conventional marriage resolution, but an ambiguous ending where the two protagonists remain friends apart.

Being *Fitoor* the first Indian screen adaptation of *Great Expectations*, it is significant to examine the way in which it handles this issue. Surprisingly enough, the film ignores it. In this version, Hazrat is not surrounded by flames; instead, she throws herself over the balcony. Fire is present, but its aim is to reduce Noor's sculptures to ashes. The myth of the *sati* is eluded, likely on purpose, for it is at least arguable if it makes sense in the

contemporary scenario. The question that remains is: why does *Fitoor* update some themes while it remains conventional in other aspects? What is the objective of keeping the balance between the fashionable and the tradition? Much of the film relies on the ethics of moral order and social regulation. Sharp questions as snobbery, ungratefulness and shame are concealed in an attempt to save the kind-hearted nature of the protagonist. This aseptic account aims, recalling Desai's words, to make people to believe in that dream land where there is no misery, no poverty; where, despite all the difficulties, fate always fulfil our deepest desires.

*Fitoor* has convinced neither the film critics nor the spectatorship. On this basis, it may be concluded that its poor reception provides important insights into the audience's preference towards certain film forms. According Vasudevan (2010: 346), "The transformation of the cinema, and its location within an entertainment and image business spectrum (...) is not clearly yoked to one narrative or institutional architecture". Genre structures are varied, with an increasing interest in the so-called parallel cinema and new forms of independent art films. By trying to cater to all tastes, the Indian film industry is creating differentiated products. However, the value that moviegoers are giving to the content of the film provides further support for the hypothesis that their concern relates to the complexity and seriousness of the plot rather than to its genre. Hence, it is likely that *Fitoor* may have gained success if it had explored in depth the novel's potential for social and moral criticism, and had connected it with the current scenario of India.

## **Chapter 14. Conclusion**

Writing about 1946's *Great Expectations*, Barreca (2003: 39) claimed that "David Lean didn't film Dickens' novel. He remade the novel into David Lean's film". Her statement reveals what film theorist André Bazin (1967: 53) understood so clearly: film adaptations may "enjoy, in some measure, an autonomous existence of which the original works are no longer anything more than an accidental and almost superfluous manifestation". Most of the case studies analysed in this thesis make in their title an explicit reference to the source text, which allow them to enjoy the "reassuring durability of a classic" whose "story is already known and has been proved to work" (Geraghty, 2008: 15). However, it has been one of this research's findings that all the films based on *Great Expectations* offer, to a greater or lesser degree, multiple variations with regard to characters or incidents. They make their own reading of the story, thus emphasizing or hushing up actions and events, adding or removing subplots, or updating and relocating the story in contemporary contexts. Inevitably, the literature-to-film adaptation implies changes and involves new meanings. It is not only a matter of *adjusting* a plot to the specific characteristics of another media, and it definitely goes beyond the filmmaker's personal viewpoint. It has to do with taking decisions that concern, but are not limited to, the particular moment chosen to retell the story, the kind of audience to which it is intended, the perspective with which it is addressed... It is related to a certain sense of *momentum*: the feeling that it is just the right moment to make a new adaptation.

Still today, many commentators on film adaptations fall into

an almost unconscious prioritizing of the fictional origin over the resulting film, and so the main purpose of the comparison becomes the measurement of the success of the film in its capacity to realize what are held to be the core meanings and values of the originary text (Cartmell, 1999: 3).

It is believed that adaptation studies should not remain stagnant in sterile debates around notions of *fidelity*, *originality* or *authorship*. Demands of *authenticity* and *faithfulness* are subjective criteria, which ignore the potential possibilities that cinema offers to provide a story with a new dimension. That does not mean that those questions must not be discussed and, in a certain way, it is something that follows almost inevitably when a work of art builds an intertextual relationship with a previous work. As noted by McFarlane (1996: 3), “everyone who sees films based on novels feels able to comment, at levels ranging from the gossipy to the erudite, on the nature and success of the adaptation involved”. This is especially true with classic novels, whose canonical status and unparalleled prestige make them to be regarded by the most puritans as *untouchables*. In spite of this, or perhaps because of this, they are also the most adapted literary works. Novels as *Oliver Twist*, *The Miserable*, *Anna Karenina*, *Pride and Prejudice* or *Wuthering Heights* account for 8 or more films wholly or loosely based on them, to which it has to be added, additionally, countless other ways of *remediations*. It is also the case of *Great Expectations*, whose 10 film adaptations makes of this novel one of the most adapted of all times. This fact is of high relevance, since each new version is engaged not only with its source text, but also with previous adaptations, thus establishing a dialogic process that echoes multiple voices from the past.

For this reason, this thesis has started from the assumption that academics must focus on adaptations more widely, considering them as *rhizomes* that engage in conversation with other *rhizomes* (whether works of art, cultural movements, moral and ethical values, policies or historic events) that precede or follow them. With this purpose, this study has modestly endeavoured to reflect on adaptation studies’ past, scanning its present and proposing a methodology in order to move forward to a new, broad and practical direction. The chapter on Literature Review has conducted an in-depth analysis of the history of literature-to-cinema adaptations and literature-to-cinema adaptation studies. In doing so, it has attempted to offer an overview of the different positions and theoretical approaches that literary/film theorists have taken to deal with this area of research. The closer it has got to the present, it has been made clear that adaptation studies have gained an increasing attention over the last decades, claiming a space as a field of study in its own right. However, it has been made also noticeable that many of the debates that have oriented the literature-

to-cinema movement have not been resolved yet. This means that much remains to be done from a theoretical and a practical perspective.

The present study, therefore, has aimed to combine both theory and practice, and to unite the study of written and visual narratives out of the question of fidelity. The fundamental question has not been whether they are different or not (for they are), or in what way they differ from each other. The critical point at issue has been *why* such differences exist. In other words, reflections have been committed to thinking of the reasons behind changes in the narrative discourse of a film adaptation with regard to its source text. This orientation has started from the hypothesis that most of them responds to the political, economic and sociocultural aspects prevailing at the time the film is produced rather than to the scriptwriter's or the filmmaker's viewpoints. In analysing the 10 film adaptations of *Great Expectations*, it has been possible to examine how the same story has been relocated in different political, economic and cultural backgrounds.

It is a fact repeated in all the case studies that Dickens was chosen for his respectability, popularity and canonical status, as well as because his novels deal with universal themes that *touch* the audience and can be easily transferred and applied to different contexts. Albeit *Great Expectations* received little attention in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, adaptations and other forms of *remediations* have increasingly arisen over the years, as Hammond (2015) has demonstrated. Ultimately, its *capsular* character, which makes it to be regarded as a *puzzle* where some pieces may be removed or displaced without losing the meaning of the plot, has given *Great Expectations* a high degree of *adaptability*. In fact, the first attempt to adapt this novel, 1909's *The Boy and the Convict*, chose to focus on the Pip-Magwitch subplot, obviously because technical limitations forced to selectivity in plot and characters. Far beyond that, what stands out is that the acting and the aesthetics of this film were strongly criticized in the United States, while a very similar movie from the same year, *Oliver Twist*, was broadly praised. As this research has shown, the fact that Williamson (the production company of *The Boy and the Convict*) was not a member of the MPPC (an American trust in control of the production, distribution and exhibition branches) may have played a fundamental role.

A new attempt was made in 1917, although, unfortunately, the film is lost. Anyhow, it seems of no coincidence that Jack Pickford was cast for the leading role

considering the popularity of her sister, Mary Pickford, nicknamed *Queen of the Movies*. Available sources from that time suggest that the film was oriented towards a more romantic plot, likely an unwise decision bearing in mind that the United States was about entering into the First World War and the American audience favoured war movies. The international conflict had, indeed, a major impact over the film industry: by the end of the war, Hollywood emerged as the leading market while most of the European companies were seriously affected. That was the case of the Danish company Nordisk, which went from a prominent position over the 1910s to an almost non-existence by the early 1920s. As shown along these pages, the Nordisk's decision to produce 5 films based on Dickens' novels (among them, *Store Fortventninger*) was an attempt to regain both the American and the British markets. However, this version has proven, as 2012's *Great Expectations* has done, that keeping most of the cardinal functions present in the source text does not guarantee success.

Since the early days of cinema, literary classics have been regarded as *lifeboats*: they provided cinema with plots that had already proved successful. By the 1930s, what became more important is that those novels enjoyed great prestige and had gained a certain *moral status*, which made them suitable to comply with the Production Code. Despite this, the 1934 Universal version of *Great Expectations* was forced to introduce some variations. Pip's moral progress towards snobbism or Miss Havisham's insanity were conveniently concealed while the film emphasizes the kind side of Magwitch (although making clear that crime must be punished) or prevents Estella for marrying Drummle.

Political concerns are also behind the subsequent two adaptations of *Great Expectations*: the British version of 1946 and the Hong Kong version of 1955. Much has been written about David Lean's adaptation, perhaps the only one which has gained the favour of audience, critics and scholars. It is said to be the most *faithful* to the *spirit* of the source text, the most *Dickensian*, even though many cardinal functions have been eluded in the page-to-screen transference. Lean, who had not had previous contact with the Dickens' world, confessed that he had been inspired by Alec Guinness 1939's theatrical version rather than by the novel itself. This implies a double process of *remediation* (from page to stage, from stage to screen). There is also the fact that, after the devastation left by the Second World War, appealing to Dickens seemed to reinforce the sense of national identity, whereas John Mills had

to play, undoubtedly, the leading role as the epitome of the *Britishness*. Similarly, 1955's *Gu Xing Xue Lei* takes *Great Expectations* to establish a good-and-evil opposition between the countryside and the city, which might be seen today as a division between two political and economic forces: Communism and Capitalism. The analysis of *Gu Xing Xue Lei* has also evidenced how *Great Expectations'* main themes can fit into very different cultural backgrounds. It is also the case of the latest case study, that 2016 Bollywood version called *Fitoor*. Although at first glance the film seems to make of *Great Expectations* nothing more than an impossible love story, a deep look into it reveals its political connotations in depicting, if just subtly, the Indo-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir.

The economic stagnation and the cultural crisis that the United Kingdom experienced over the 1970s made production companies to look at the *heritage* films and adaptations from literary classics. This fact might explain why the British film industry engaged in a new adaptation *Great Expectations* in 1974. Economy is also at the core of 1998's *Great Expectations* in its condemnation of the capitalism system. The film is grotesque, conceived as "hideous progeny" to provoke the reanimation of its source text (Grossman, 2015: 2). Finn's dream is not an artistic, but a financial one, what "reveals the extent to which marketplace success has become a source from where individual identity may be constructed". Cuarón's version explores the delusion of the *American dream* promoted by the Capitalist system, according to which any individual is supposed to have the power to improve his/her social order despite the workings of the economic or cultural structures. It is through his financial success that Finn construct his identity. This construction of the self, however, "is not presented as solid, unique and coherent, but as multiple, fragile and inconsistent, ready to be re-defined once the appropriate change of location has taken place" (Moya & López, 2008: 179). This assumption properly defines as well the different process of *remediations* that *Great Expectations* has experienced in the page-to-screen movement, being *coupled* and *decoupled*, *remodelled* and *refashioned* in different ways, for different purposes. As in 2012, when Mike Newell was in charge of a new adaptation of the classic novel to celebrate the bicentenary of Charles Dickens' birth.

All these observations suggest that there is no one model that could be applied to all film adaptations. This thesis has focused on a particular approach that examines the film's narrative discourse and raises questions about its relationship with the

historical context in which it is produced. Over these pages, it has been made clear that in order to understand a film, it is necessary to understand the political, economic and sociocultural factors that are at stake. Although it is believed that it drives to a more open approach of adaptation studies, this work is only a starting point for discussion that warrants further investigation. Each case study that has been examined here could be subjected to a deeper analysis. As the introduction indicated, the broad spectrum of aspects that are covered by this research limits the in-depth study of film elements of cinematic storytelling in order to avoid encyclopaedic gloss. It is likely that by digging into each adaptation, more connections between narrative discourse and historical background can be outlined. In spite of it, the present study should be still useful to offer a clear overview of the influence of the ever-changing environment over the years.

Similarly, further research should look for those links between text and context in adaptations of contemporary novels. It seems clear that these adaptations are less under the yoke of *fidelity* and *auterism*, partly because contemporary novels fall outside the status of *canonical texts* acquired by the literary classics, but also because, in many occasions, the public does not know the source text, thus preventing them for establishing any connection between both works. Still, it is necessary to delimit a framework within which the study of this adaptations is possible. The methodology suggested in this thesis may fill this gap.

Looking forward, a natural progression of this work might be to analyse how political, economic and sociocultural aspects relates to and, ultimately, affect adaptations/hybridizations made for other formats and media, as television. Many classics novels are, year by year, *refashioned* as one-off miniseries. Only *Great Expectations* accounts for 4 made-for-TV adaptations. There is also an increasing volume of contemporary novels that are serialized for the *small screen*. It is not a new phenomenon, but the international success of *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Game of Thrones* or *Orange Is The New Black*, to name a few, suggests that this field deserves further attention.

In short, new approaches of adaptation studies must not avoid the evaluation of how changing social attitudes, perceptions and policies are handled and understood in a particular time, and how this affects the page-to-screen transference and the way the public responds to this process. In spite of the limitations of the one-volume



format to address several interdisciplinary discourses, it is the hope that this thesis will clear the ground for other scholars to explore in depth the areas proposed here.

***TRADUCCIÓN AL ESPAÑOL DE INTRODUCCIÓN Y  
CONCLUSIONES***

## **Introducción**

*Great Expectations on Screen. A Critical Study of Film Adaptation* explora la influencia de los factores político, económico y sociocultural en el proceso de adaptación cinematográfica de una novela. El principal objetivo es proponer un método de análisis que vaya más allá de las nociones y criterios que, tradicionalmente, se han aplicado a este campo de la investigación, tales como la *originalidad* o la *fidelidad a la letra* o el *espíritu* del texto fuente.

La adaptación, entendida como un proceso que se produce dentro del área de las Humanidades, data de la antigüedad clásica. Este fenómeno de lo cambiante se ha extendido a lo largo de los siglos y al albor del surgimiento de nuevas formas y géneros artísticos. Sin embargo, este proceso de transformación se basa en un principio que permanece impertérrito, según el cual algo siempre es inspirado por algo. Con la llegada del cine, la adaptación adquirió una nueva dimensión: los cineastas consideraron la literatura como un material apropiado para ser traspasado al nuevo medio. Así, la adaptación cinematográfica de novelas ha devenido en una práctica común durante más de un siglo. Más tiempo, sin embargo, fue necesario para que aparecieran los primeros trabajos teóricos y se considerara un área de investigación. No fue hasta 1957 cuando el estudio pionero de George Bluestone, *Novels into Film*, se adentró en este campo en profundidad. A pesar de la proliferación de nuevas investigaciones, las teorías de adaptación cinematográfica han experimentado graves dificultades para erigirse como una disciplina y encontrar una voz propia. Como Leitch (2009) ha señalado, su influencia en los estudios de cine, a los que siempre han estado supeditados, ha sido escasa. Los teóricos de la literatura han abordado esta cuestión, pero muchos de ellos han tendido a privilegiar el texto fuente sobre la adaptación, de manera que asumían una calidad superior de la novela con respecto a la película.

Durante décadas, los estudios de adaptación han girado en torno a cuestiones de *fidelidad* y *autoría*, y se ha considerado a la novela como piedra angular a partir de la cual valorar la adaptación. Esto es especialmente cierto en lo que respecta a los clásicos literarios, lo cuales, tradicionalmente, han sido calificados como *padres controladores*. La insistencia en tratar al texto fuente como una autoridad que solo puede ser leída rechaza el aforismo según el cual los textos son constantemente reescritos, aunque solo sea en la imaginación del lector. En última instancia, la experiencia de leer un texto y el significado

que su lectura sugiere varían no solo de un período histórico a otro, sino también de una sociedad a otra, incluso aunque compartan el mismo marco temporal. Por tanto, utilizar la noción de *fidelidad* para valorar la calidad de una adaptación cinematográfica solamente tiene sentido si se antepone la novela a la película en términos de *original vs. copia*, *alta cultura vs. baja cultura*. Lo mismo sucede con el término *autoría*. La publicación reciente de títulos como *In/fidelity: Essays on Film Adaptation* (Kranz & Mellerski, 2008), *Authorship in Film Adaptation* (Boozer, 2009), *Screen Adaptation: Impure Cinema* (Cartmell & Whelehan, 2010), o *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity* (MacCabe, Warner & Murray, 2011), sugiere que estas son cuestiones delicadas que continúan despertando controversia. No obstante, especialmente en lo que va de siglo, esa área de estudio se ha expandido hacia nuevas formas de transmedialidad e hibridación, mientras que las valiosas contribuciones realizadas por académicos como Brian McFarlane, Deborah Cartmell, Imelda Whelehan, James Naremore, Robert Stam, Sarah Cardwell, Kamilla Elliott, Dudley Andrews, Thomas Leitch o Linda Hutcheon han ayudado a pasar de un debate centrado en la *fidelidad* a un enfoque que no juzga ni establece jerarquías en relación con el texto fuente y su adaptación.

A pesar del amplio rango de posibilidades que ofrecen los estudios de adaptación, se observa un cierto estancamiento en el intento por superar el debate que superpone la literatura al cine. Es necesario establecer nuevos enfoques teóricos y prácticos, que puedan ser útiles tanto para los teóricos de esta materia, como para estudiantes y público en general. Por ello, esta tesis pretende profundizar en los estudios de adaptación desde una perspectiva histórica, con la esperanza de contribuir a que estos sean considerados, al fin, como un área de investigación por derecho propio. Y lo hará preguntándose cómo las diferentes adaptaciones cinematográficas de la novela de Charles Dickens *Great Expectations* han sido recibidas, interpretadas y transferidas a la pantalla dependiendo del contexto político, económico y cultural en el que eran producidas. Ha de admitirse que tal aproximación al análisis del trasvase libro-película no es completamente original. Algunos de los aspectos aquí analizados han sido abordados con anterioridad y, ciertamente, han existido algunos intentos por conectar las adaptaciones cinematográficas con su contexto histórico. Sin embargo, llama la atención cómo, hasta ahora, este enfoque ha recibido muy poca atención. Como mucho, algunos académicos han afrontado esta cuestión ciñendo su análisis a una adaptación cinematográfica concreta. Sin negar la relevancia de estos trabajos, parece que la limitación a un único caso de estudio constriñe

la investigación en esta área e impide obtener conclusiones concretas. No se debe olvidar que la adaptación, dado que se trata de una nueva versión, es una promesa de cambios y transformaciones, no solo con respecto al texto fuente, sino también en relación con las adaptaciones que la preceden (Geraghty, 2008: 15). De ahí que este estudio resulte más afín al pluralismo que al individualismo: lo que hay de original en este trabajo en el amplio arco temporal que cubre y el número de filmes basados en una misma novela que examina. Al examinar la manera en que una misma historia ha sido releída, reescrita y remodelada por diferentes cineastas y productoras cinematográficas, en distintas industrias fílmicas, y en momentos históricos diversos, este trabajo ofrece una importante oportunidad para avanzar en la comprensión del trasvase libro-película.

Tal y como MacCabe (2011: 8) ha señalado, el número de variables que entran en juego en el proceso de adaptar la forma lingüística de una novela o relato a las formas de expresión de una película es infinito. Cualquier obra de arte se compone de sistemas, códigos y tradiciones establecidos por culturas y obras previas. Los *fantasmas*, los *ecos* de las culturas ancestrales están presentes en cualquier proceso de adaptación, mientras que el propósito intertextual es variable. Este puede o no conllevar un trasvase temporal o cultural, la influencia del punto de vista personal del director o guionista, o estar constreñido por limitaciones de carácter tecnológico, político o económico. Esa es la razón por la que cualquier intento por establecer una tipología de adaptaciones resulta tan poco satisfactorio. No obstante, a pesar de tratarse de un proceso algo nebuloso y heterogéneo, es necesario que los estudios de adaptación se aborden desde un enfoque práctico, desde el análisis aspectos concretos que permitan el tránsito de lo particular hacia una visión global de esta disciplina (Wells-Lassagne & Hudelet, 2013: 2). Se espera, de este modo, que el presente trabajo de investigación, que examina cada una de las 10 adaptaciones de *Great Expectations* y su contexto particular, permitan al lector obtener una mayor comprensión de la complejidad y dimensión del trasvase libro-película.

La mayoría de las adaptaciones analizadas aquí se enmarcan dentro de la cultura literaria establecida por el texto fuente, aunque hay algunos casos en los que estos filmes se erigen como un asalto a dicha cultura, de manera que su traducción a la gran pantalla se realiza desde una perspectiva que claramente desafía la noción de *fidelidad*. De hecho, es importante reseñar que en esta tesis no se plantean cuestiones de *in/fidelidad* o *autoría*. Muy al contrario, se parte de considerar literatura y cine como dos iguales, de formas artísticas con valor estético y calidad similares, y con sus propias especificaciones y

limitaciones. Resulta, por ello, inevitable una comparación entre la novela y sus diferentes adaptaciones con el fin de explorar la naturaleza propia de cada obra y plantear hipótesis sobre los elementos que pueden ser transferidos o aquellos que, siendo propios de cada medio, tendrían potencial para producir efectos similares. Sin embargo, esto no debe considerarse como un intento por construir una barrera insuperable entre los dos medios. Se trata únicamente de un paso necesario para determinar las innovaciones y los nuevos significados que incorpora la adaptación cinematográfica, así como en qué medida estos pueden estar relacionados con el contexto en el que la película es producida.

A pesar de que este estudio persigue asentar una metodología que combine un enfoque teórico y práctico, debe señalarse la dificultad para tender un puente definitivo entre la palabra y la imagen. Una limitación de este trabajo concierne el desequilibrio que se infiere de la comparación del discurso narrativo en la novela y en la película. El cine va más allá de la convergencia entre palabras e imágenes en movimiento. A lo largo de esta investigación, queda patente que los recursos cinematográficos añaden nuevas dimensiones y proporcionan una lectura diferente a nivel argumental, pero dichos recursos y el uso que cada caso de estudio hace de ellos no han sido abordados en profundidad en este trabajo. Además, es notable la preponderancia de películas y de un corpus Anglo-Americanos, aunque se incluyen también adaptaciones de muy diferentes contextos como son Dinamarca, Hong Kong e India. En última instancia, el hecho de que la mayoría de las adaptaciones han sido producidas en Reino Unido o en Estados Unidos no cambia o desautoriza el núcleo central de esta tesis. Aunque existan dos o más adaptaciones del mismo país, el hecho de que hayan sido realizadas en diferentes épocas supone que están condicionadas por aspectos políticos, económicos y socioculturales diferentes y, de resultas de ello, la perspectiva con la que son abordadas difiere una de otra.

Otra limitación viene determinada por la elección de un único caso de estudio. Sin embargo, parece razonable pensar que un clásico literario como *Great Expectations* y sus múltiples adaptaciones a la gran pantalla deben servir para definir la problemática y arrojar luz sobre la influencia de un contexto particular en el trasvase libro-película. Dado que este proyecto cubre un período histórico muy amplio y entra en contacto con diferentes discursos interdisciplinarios, el uso de un elevado número de novelas y películas podría conducir a la dispersión y un análisis excesivamente extenso. Por el contrario, analizar con detalle la novela *Great Expectations* y sus 10 versiones fílmicas, producidas a lo largo

de más de un siglo, aporta mayor claridad y una argumentación más sólida, además de posibilitar un estudio crítico e interpretativo de mayor profundidad. Es evidente que cada obra aquí analizada responde a dinámicas específicas y contiene sus propios elementos idiosincráticos. A pesar de que otras novelas clásicas abordan otras temáticas y cuestiones, esto no debe afectar a los argumentos y conclusiones de este trabajo. En cualquier caso, el académico siempre está obligado a tomar decisiones para evitar sumirse en el infinito. Esta tesis no pretende establecer una teoría final y definitiva sobre los estudios de adaptación, algo que, siendo realistas, resulta bastante improbable de conseguir. Su propósito, en último término, es abrir nuevas vías de entendimiento y análisis de ese mosaico denominado adaptación cinematográfica.

## **Conclusiones**

Al referirse a la adaptación de *Great Expectations* realizada en el año 1946, Barreca (2003: 39) sostenía que David Lean no filmó la novela de Dickens, sino que la transformó en algo propio. Esta afirmación revela aquello que el teórico André Bazin (1967: 53) había comprendido de manera tan clara: las adaptaciones cinematográficas pueden gozar, en cierta medida, de una existencia autónoma en la que el original queda relegado a un papel meramente testimonial. En la práctica totalidad de los casos de estudio analizados en esta tesis, el título hace una referencia explícita al texto fuente, lo que les permite aprovechar ese carácter de durabilidad en el tiempo de que gozan los clásicos, cuyas historias son ampliamente conocidas por el gran público y cuyo éxito ya ha sido cerciorado (Geraghty, 2008: 15). Sin embargo, uno de los hallazgos de esta investigación sugiere que todas las películas basadas en *Great Expectations* ofrecen, en mayor o menor medida, múltiples variaciones en relación con los personajes o la línea argumental. Cada adaptación realiza su propia lectura de la historia, por lo que enfatiza o acalla ciertas acciones o eventos, añade o elimina tramas secundarias, o bien actualiza o reubica la historia en un contexto actual. Es inevitable que en todo proceso de adaptación se produzcan cambios y se generen nuevos significados. Adaptar no es simplemente *ajustar* un argumento a las características intrínsecas de otro medio, y va también más allá del punto de vista del director. Se trata de tomar decisiones que conciernen, pero no se limitan a, la elección de un momento particular para contar de nuevo la historia, el tipo de audiencia a la que se pretende llegar, la perspectiva con la que abordar el proyecto... En definitiva, está relacionado con un cierto sentido del *momentum*: el sentimiento de que ha llegado el momento adecuado para realizar una nueva adaptación.

Todavía hoy es común que muchos teóricos de los estudios de adaptación tiendan, casi de manera inconsciente, a priorizar la novela sobre el filme, por lo que el principal propósito de sus análisis deviene en medir el éxito de una película según su capacidad para discernir cuál es el significado central y los valores del texto originario (Cartmell, 1999: 3). Sin embargo, los estudios de adaptación no deberían permanecer anclados en debates estériles en torno a nociones de *fidelidad*, *originalidad* o *autoría*. Las demandas de *autenticidad* y de *fidelidad* son criterios subjetivos, que



corren el peligro de ignorar el potencial del cine para proveer una historia con un nuevo prisma. Eso no significa que dichas cuestiones no deban ser discutidas y, en cierto modo, resulta inevitable hacerlo cuando una obra de arte establece una relación intertextual con una obra anterior. Como ha señalado McFarlane (1996: 3), todo aquel que ve una película basada en una novela se siente con potestad para opinar, desde un punto de vista trivial hasta lo erudito, sobre la naturaleza y el nivel de éxito de la adaptación. Esto resulta especialmente patente en el caso de la literatura clásica, cuyo estatus canónico y prestigio hacen que muchos la consideren como *intocable*. A pesar de ello o, quizás, como consecuencia de ello, también son las obras más adaptadas. Novelas como *Oliver Twist*, *Los Miserables*, *Anna Karenina*, *Orgullo y Prejuicio* o *Cumbres Borrascosas* cuentan con 8 o más adaptaciones, a las que hay que añadir, además, innumerables formas de *remediación*. Esto ocurre también con *Great Expectations*, que, con 10 versiones cinematográficas, es una de las novelas más adaptadas de todos los tiempos. Este es un dato de gran relevancia puesto que cada nueva película establece un diálogo no solo con su texto fuente, sino también con todas las adaptaciones previas, con lo que se genera un proceso dialógico en el que resuenan múltiples voces del pasado.

Esta es la razón por la que el presente trabajo de investigación parte de la premisa de que los académicos deberían examinar las adaptaciones cinematográficas desde un prisma más amplio, considerándolas como *rizomas* en constante diálogo con otros *rizomas* (bien sean obras de arte, movimientos culturales, valores éticos y morales, normativas o hechos históricos) que las preceden o les siguen en el tiempo. Con este propósito, este estudio se ha construido sobre la base de una mirada al pasado de los estudios de adaptación, desde una perspectiva reflexiva, examinando su situación presente y proponiendo una metodología dirigida hacia una nueva dirección más amplia y práctica. En el capítulo dedicado al Estado de la Cuestión, se ha llevado a cabo un análisis en profundidad de la historia de las adaptaciones cinematográficas de novelas, así como de lo que teóricos y pensadores han escrito sobre ello. El propósito ha sido ofrecer una panorámica de las diferentes posiciones y aproximaciones teóricas que los académicos del campo de la literatura y el cine han tomado a la hora de abordar esta cuestión. De esta manera, se ha hecho patente cómo el interés en los estudios de adaptación ha cobrado fuerza en las últimas décadas, lo que ha conducido a que reclamen un espacio propio como área de estudio. Sin

embargo, es asimismo reseñable que muchos de los debates que se han generado en torno a este campo están todavía por resolver. Esto sugiere que es mucho el trabajo que queda aún por hacer, tanto desde una perspectiva teórica como práctica.

Por ello, el presente trabajo se ha concebido como una combinación teórica y práctica, en el que se ha unido el estudio de las narrativas escrita y visual al margen de la cuestión de la fidelidad. No se ha tratado de dilucidar si son diferentes o no (sin duda, lo son), o de qué forma difiere una de la otra. La cuestión fundamental ha sido determinar *por qué* tales diferencias existen. En otras palabras, esclarecer las razones que se esconden detrás de los cambios que se producen en el trasvase libro-pantalla. Para ello, se ha partido de la hipótesis de que la mayoría de ellos responden a los factores políticos, económicos y socioculturales que prevalecen en el momento histórico en el que la película es producida más que al punto de vista del director o del guionista. Al analizar las 10 adaptaciones de *Great Expectations*, ha sido posible examinar cómo una misma historia se ha reubicado en diferentes contextos políticos, económicos y culturales.

Se ha constatado en todos los casos prácticos que Dickens fue escogido por su grado de respetabilidad, popularidad y estatus canónico, así como porque sus novelas abordan temas universales que conmueven a los lectores y que pueden ser fácilmente transferidos y adaptados a diferentes contextos. Aunque *Great Expectations* recibió escasa atención en los albores del siglo XX, adaptaciones y otras formas de *remediación* han proliferado de manera creciente a lo largo de los años, como Hammond (2015) ha demostrado. Su carácter *capsular*, casi como un *puzle* en el que las piezas pueden ser cambiadas de posición o eliminadas sin que se pierda el sentido completo de la obra, ha dotado a *Great Expectations* con un alto grado de *adaptabilidad*. De hecho, el primer intento por llevarla al cine, *The Boy and the Convict* (1909), se centró únicamente en la relación entre Pip y Magwitch, lógicamente porque las limitaciones tecnológicas forzaban a la selección de líneas argumentales y personajes. Más allá de eso, llama la atención que el trabajo de los actores y la estética del filme fueron muy criticados en Estados Unidos, mientras que otra cinta muy similar, *Oliver Twist* (1909), era aclamada. Como este trabajo ha demostrado, el hecho de que Williamson (la compañía productora de *The Boy and the Convict*) no fuera miembro del monopolio MPPC pudo haber jugado un papel fundamental.

En 1917 se llevó a cabo una nueva adaptación de la que, por desgracia, no se conserva copia. En cualquier caso, no parece casualidad que Jack Pickford fuera elegido para el papel protagonista teniendo en cuenta la popularidad de su hermana, Mary Pickford, la reina del cine mudo. Fuentes de la época sugieren que esta nueva versión explotó el potencial romántico de la novela y dejó de lado otras temáticas, una decisión quizá poco acertada si se considera que Estados Unidos estaba a punto de entrar en la Primera Guerra Mundial y que el público estadounidense mostraba una mayor inclinación hacia los filmes bélicos. Este conflicto internacional, de hecho, tuvo un gran impacto sobre la industria fílmica: hacia el final de la guerra, Hollywood alcanzó una posición hegemónica mientras que la mayoría de las productoras europeas se vieron seriamente afectadas. Ese fue el caso de la compañía danesa Nordisk, que pasó de una posición preeminente en los años 10 a la casi desaparición hacia el inicio de los años 20. De hecho, como este estudio ha demostrado, la decisión de la Nordisk de producir 5 películas basadas en novelas de Dickens (entre ellas, *Store Forventninger*) fue un intento por recuperar presencia en los mercados británico y estadounidense. Sin embargo, su adaptación de *Great Expectations*, así como la realizada en el año 2012, son una muestra de cómo mantener el grueso de las funciones cardinales presentes en el texto fuente no garantiza el éxito de la película.

Ya desde sus inicios, el cine ha considerado los clásicos literarios como *salvavidas*, pues proveían historias que resultaban del agrado del público. Hacia los años 30, lo que resultó más relevante para las productoras era que, además, estos clásicos gozaban de un gran prestigio y eran considerados *moralmente* adecuados, lo que convertía a sus argumentos en propicios para cumplir con los estándares del Código de Producción. A pesar de ello, la versión de *Great Expectations* de 1934 hubo de introducir algunas variaciones. Aspectos como la transformación que experimenta Pip hacia el esnobismo o la demencia que padece Miss Havisham fueron suavizados, mientras que se hacía hincapié en la cara más amable de Magwitch (dejando claro, eso sí, que cualquier delito debe ser castigado) y se obviaba que, en el texto fuente, Estella contraía matrimonio con Drummle.

Factores políticos son los que están detrás también de las adaptaciones de 1946 y 1955. Mucho se ha escrito sobre la versión de David Lean, tal vez la única que se ha ganado el favor de público, crítica y académicos. De ella se ha dicho que es la más *fiel al espíritu* del texto fuente, la más *Dickensiana*, incluso aunque deja fuera muchas

funciones cardinales presentes en la novela. Lean, que apenas había tenido contacto previo con Dickens, confesó que su principal inspiración vino de la versión teatral dirigida por Alec Guinness en 1939 más que por la novela en sí. Esto sugiere un doble proceso de *remediación*: de la página al escenario, del escenario a la pantalla. A esto ha de unirse que, acabada la Segunda Guerra Mundial, apelar a Dickens parecía una buena estrategia para reforzar el sentido de identidad nacional, mientras que el papel principal no podía ser interpretado por otro que no fuera John Mills, el perfecto ejemplo de lo *Britishness*. De forma similar, *Gu Xing Xue Lei* se inspira en *Grandes Esperanzas* para establecer una oposición entre el bien (representado por la vida rural) y el mal (representado por la metrópolis). Dicha oposición puede interpretarse como una división entre dos posiciones políticas y económicas antagónicas: Comunismo y Capitalismo. El análisis de esta novela también ha evidenciado como los temas presentes en *Great Expectations* pueden encajar en contextos culturales muy diversos. Esto ocurre también en *Fitoor*, la versión de Bollywood de 2016. Aunque, a primera vista, la película no parece ser más que una historia de amor imposible, su estudio pormenorizado revela las connotaciones políticas que se esconden tras el retrato metafórico que realiza, aunque sea de forma superficial, sobre el conflicto entre India y Pakistán por conquistar Cachemira.

El estancamiento económico y la crisis cultural que Reino Unido experimentó en la década de los 70 hicieron que las productoras se decantaran por películas sobre temas ligados al patrimonio cultural, así como por las adaptaciones de clásicos literarios. Este hecho podría estar detrás de la nueva adaptación de *Great Expectations* realizada en 1974. Aspectos económicos parecen estar también detrás de la versión de 1998 y su crítica al sistema capitalista. La película es grotesca, concebida como una especie de *engendro monstruoso* para provocar la resucitación del texto fuente (Grossman, 2015: 2). El sueño de Finn no tiene una naturaleza artística, sino económica, lo que revela cómo, en la era posmoderna, la construcción de la identidad depende del éxito individual en el mercado financiero. La película de Cuarón explora la falsa ilusión del *sueño americano* promovido por el sistema capitalista, según el cual toda persona tiene la capacidad para mejorar su condición social a pesar de las estructuras económicas y culturales imperantes. Finn construye su identidad a través de su éxito financiero. No obstante, dicha construcción no es sólida, única y coherente, sino múltiple, frágil e inconsistente, abocada a ser redefinida toda vez que

se produce un cambio de localización (Moya & López, 2008: 179). Dicho aforismo sirve también para definir los diferentes procesos de *remediación* que *Grandes Esperanzas* ha experimentado en el trasvase libro-película, en el que sus diferentes tramas han sido *enlazadas* y *desenlazadas*, *remodeladas* y *reformadas* de diferentes maneras, con distintos propósitos. Tal es el caso de la adaptación de 2012, dirigida por Mike Newell para celebrar el bicentenario del nacimiento de Charles Dickens.

Todos estos comentarios sugieren que no existe un modelo único de estudio que pueda ser aplicado a todas las adaptaciones cinematográficas. Esta tesis se ha centrado en un enfoque particular, el cual examina el discurso narrativo de la película y cuestiona cuál es su relación con el contexto histórico en el que es producida. A lo largo de estas páginas, se ha puesto de manifiesto que para comprender un filme, es necesario entender los factores políticos, económicos y socioculturales en juego. A pesar de que esta aproximación debería conducir a una concepción más amplia de los estudios de adaptación, se trata solo de un punto de partida que requiere de mayor investigación, profundidad y reflexión. A buen seguro, cada caso práctico aquí examinado podría ser sometido a un estudio crítico más extenso. Como se indicaba en la introducción a este trabajo, el amplio espectro de aspectos tratados limita, por ejemplo, la profundización en los elementos cinematográficos utilizados por cada adaptación. Así, es probable que un análisis pormenorizado de estos aspectos permita establecer más conexiones entre el discurso narrativo y el contexto histórico. A pesar de ello, el presente estudio debería servir como *radiografía panorámica* en la que observar la influencia del siempre cambiante entorno a lo largo de los años.

Para continuar esta senda, futuras investigaciones deberían centrarse en la búsqueda de conexiones entre texto y contexto en adaptaciones de novelas contemporáneas. Parece evidente que dichas adaptaciones están menos sometidas al yugo de la *fidelidad* y la *autoría*, en parte porque estas novelas no han alcanzado el estatus de *texto canónico* de que goza la literatura clásica, pero también porque, en muchas ocasiones, el público no conoce el texto fuente, lo que impide que puedan establecer comparación alguna. Aun con todo, es necesario establecer un marco teórico dentro del cual sea posible realizar el estudio de estas adaptaciones. La metodología sugerida en esta tesis podría cubrir este vacío.

De cara al futuro, una progresión natural de este trabajo sería el análisis de la influencia de los aspectos políticos, económicos y socioculturales en

adaptaciones/hibridaciones realizadas para otros formatos y medios, como la televisión. Cada año, muchas de las novelas clásicas son transformadas en miniseries. Tan solo *Great Expectations* cuenta con 4 adaptaciones realizadas para televisión. Existe también un creciente volumen de novelas contemporáneas que son serializadas para la pequeña pantalla. No es un fenómeno nuevo, pero el éxito internacional de *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Games of Thrones* o *Orange is the New Black*, por nombrar algunos títulos, sugiere que esta área de estudio merece especial atención.

En definitiva, los nuevos enfoques de los estudios de adaptación no deben obviar cómo los cambios en las políticas, en la percepción social y en la opinión pública son comprendidos en un momento específico en el tiempo, y cómo ello afecta en la transferencia libro-película y en la manera en que el público responde a este proceso. A pesar de las limitaciones de esta investigación para abordar múltiples discursos interdisciplinarios, es de esperar que allane el terreno para otros académicos que pretendan explorar con mayor profundidad las áreas aquí propuestas.

## ***Annex I. Intertitles from Store Forventninger***

Below, the reader will find a transcription of the original title cards appearing on the film, together with an English translation<sup>27</sup>:

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Det var en raakold Efteraardsdag henimod Aften. En fugtig Vind blæste ude fra Havet ind over den øde Kirkegaard og fo'r videre hen over den vidtstrakte Mose, som omgav de overgroede Grave.

It was a tough and cold Christmas day, in the evening. The damp wind from the sea blew over the empty cemetery and rushed in the vast marshes surrounding the overgrown graves.

En lille Dreng havde søgt Tilflugt paa sine Forældres Grav. Han hed Philip Pirrip, men kaldtes Pip af de faa Mennesker, some interesserede sig for hans forladte lille Tilværelse.

A little boy had sought refuge in his parents' grave. His name was Philip Pirrip, but he was called Pip by the few people interested in his insignificant existence.

Hold op med den Flæben! Vær stille eller jeg skærer Halsen over paa dig.

Be quiet or I'll cut off your throat!

Hos hvem lever du – hvis jeg giver dig Lov til at leve!

With whom do you live? If I allow you to live...

Hos... hos min Søster, Mrs. Joe Gargery, Grovsmeden Joe Gargerys Kone.

With... with my sister, Mrs Joe Gargery, the wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith.

Hvis du ikke kommen herud i Morgen tidlig med en Fil og med noget, som jeg kan spise – saa river jeg hjertet ud af dig!

If you don't come here early in the morning with a file and something to eat, I will tear your heart out!

... og hvis du fortæller til nogen, at du har truffet saadan et Menneske som mig, saa river jeg Leveren ud af dig og spiser den, naan jeg har spist dit Hjerte!

...and if you tell anyone that you have seen me, I will tear your liver out and will eat it, after eating your heart!

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<sup>27</sup> This is only an approximate translation that I have made myself in order to help to understand the film.

Sig, at Gud maa straffe dig, hvis du ikke gør det. Sværg!	Say Lord strike you dead if you don't! Swear!
Grovsmeden Joe Gargery, som var gift med Pips Søster, var en brav og skikkelig Mand, af hvilken Grund han var under Tøffelen.	The blacksmith Joe Gargery, married to Pip's sister, was such a kind and naïve man, that he was dominated by his wife.
Hun en stormet ud en for at se efter dig, Pip, - og hvad værre er, hun har taget Ryg varmeren med.	She has stormed out to look for you, Pip. And what is worse, she's got Tickler with her.
Der kommer hun! Gem dig bag Døren.	Here she comes! Hide behind the door.
Hvem har flasket dig op, din unge Abekat?	Well, look who's there, you little fool!
Hvor har du været henne? Sig mig, hvor du har været!	Where have you been? Tell me where you've been!
Jeg har bare været henne hos Far og Mog paa Kirkegaarden.	I've been with dad and mum at the churchyard.
Kirkegaarden, ja I maa nok sige Kirkegaarden. Det driver I snart mig ud, I to – og I vil blive et kønt Par uden mig!	Churchyard. You may well say churchyard, you two. You'll drive me to the churchyard betwixt you, one of these days, and O, a precious pair you'd be without me!
Mørket havde lagt sig over Smedien, over Mosen, over den øde Kirkegaard nede ved Havet, over de to Fangeskibe, der altid laa forankrede uden for Kysten. Mørket havde sænket sig over stønnende Stakler og raslende Lænker da...	Darkness had fallen over the forge and the marshes; across the deserted churchyard down by the sea; over the two ships with captives that stayed always anchored outside the coast. Darkness had descended on the wretches' groan and the rattling chains...
I Aftes skød de ogsaa Alarmskud efter en Fange, der flygtede, det lader til, at der iger er flygtet en!	There was a convict off last night after sunset-gun. And they fired warning of him. And now it appears they're firing warning of another...
Oppe i sit lille Tagkammer sov Pip en urolig Søvn. Han drømte, at Uhyret fra Kirkegaarden spiste hans Hjerter...	Up in his little garret, Pip had a nightmare. He dreamed that a monster from the cemetery ate his heart...



Og da Dagen gryede...	And when the day dawned...
Du er vel ikke en troløs lille Satan? Du har vel ikke sladret til nogen?	You are not a deceiving imp, aren't you? You have not told anyone, don't you?
Samme Aften var Mr. Pumblechook paa Besøg i Smedien. Han var Joes Onkel – og Kornhandler – og det eneste Menneske, som Pip Søster var imponeret af.	That same evening, Mr Pumblechook visited the Gargerys. He was Joe's uncle - and a grain trader - and the only man who impressed Pip's sister.
Smedesvenden Dolge Orlick, den eneste i Huset, som ikke frygtede Mrs. Gargery.	The blacksmith's apprentice Dolge Orlick, the only man Mrs Gargery was afraid of.
Biddy, Pip bedste Kammerat, en forældreløs lille Pige, som Joes gode Hjerter havde skaffet et Fristed i Smedien.	Biddy, Pip's best friend, an orphan little girl to whom Joe's good heart had provided a refuge in the forge.
Pludselig slog det lille Pip, at han ikke vidste, hvad det var, han havde hældt paa Brændevinsdunken!	Suddenly, little Pip remembered he had poured the brandy keg!
Tjærevand	Tar water
Postejen er borte!	The pie is gone!
Jeg kommer i Kogens Navn og ønsker at tale med Smeden.	In the name of the King, I need to talk to the blacksmith.
Vi skal bruge disse Fangejern med det samme. Laasen er I Stykker. De maa reparere det straks!	The lock is broken! You must repair it immediately!
Er det Dem, som hedden Gargery?	Is that you Mr Gargery?
Jeg har stjalet fra Dem i Nat. Nogle Levninger, en Slurk Brændevin og en Postej!	I have stolen from you tonight. Some relics, one sip of brandy and a pie!
Og det sidste, lille Pip saa til sit "Plejebarn", var...	At last, Pip could feel safe...

Vi vil vende Blikket bort fra det sorte, slimede Fangeskib og lade et Aar glide forbi os. Vi træffer da Pip og Bidy i Færd med noget meget svært...	Let's turn our eyes away from the dark, slimy prisoner ship and let slip another year. We see Pip and Bidy trying to do something very difficult...
Hvordan kan du finde ud af alle de Faldera'er, Bidy. Hvordan er du blevet saa forfærdelig klog?	How do you manage it, Bidy? How have you become so terribly clever?
Det er maaske, fordi jeg er Degnens Grandtantes Barnebarn. Jeg ved det ikke. Det kommer saadan af sig selv ligesom Hoste.	Perhaps it is because I am the clerk's great-aunt's granddaughter. I do not know. It just comes by itself, like a cough.
Havgasse	Hag
Hørte du, hvad din Svend sagde, Joe? Hørte du, han kaldte mig on Havgasse. Aah – hold paa mig!	Did you hear what your apprentice said, Joe? Did you hear? He called me hag! Oh hold on me!
Ja, jeg ku' nok ha' Lyst til at holde Dem – under Vandposten - og skylle Dem godt igennem.	I would like to keep you under the water, tap and rinse you thoroughly!
Ved Hjælp af denne Spand Vand kom Orlick til sig selv igen, og Livet gik sin trælse Gang i Smedien, indtil en Dag...	With the help of a bucket of water, Orlick came to himself again, and life at the forge remained dreary, until one day ...
Hvis en Dreng ikke bliver taknemmelig i Dag, saa bliver han det aldrig!	If your boy is not grateful today, he will be never!
Onkel Pumblehooks Nyhed gik ud paa, at en delvis sindssyg og meget rig Dame, Miss Havisham, som boede oppe i Byen, ønskede, at en lille Dreng kom og legede med en lille forældreløs Pige, Estella, som boede hos hende.	Uncle Pumblehook brought the news that an insane and very rich lady, Miss Havisham, who lived up in the city, wanted a little boy to come and play with a little orphan girl, Estella, who lived with her.
En Time senere befandt Onkelen og Pip sig foran Miss Havishams Hus, det var utilnærmeligt som en Fæstning.	One hour later, Pip and his uncle were in front of Miss Havisham's house, which was unapproachable as a fortress.
Hvem er I to?	Who are you?

Vi, vi er Pumblechook.	I, I am Pumblechook
Gaa derind, Dreng.	Come in, boy.
Intet Under at lille Pips Øjne forbavsede gled rundt i dette underlige Værelse, hvis Vinduer var tilmurede, og hvor Støvet laa tommetykt.	It is no wonder that Pip's small eyes slid astonished around the strange room whose windows were bricked up, and where the dust lay several inches deep.
Hvem er det?	Who is it?
Det er Pip – kommet for at lege.	It's Pip. I came to play.
Mit Hjerte er knust! Jeg har faaet nok af Mænd og Kvinder. Jeg vil se nogen legen.	My heart is broken! I have had enough of men and women. I want to see any game.
Naa! Hvorfor leger du ikke?	Why don't you play?
Leg!	Play!
Jeg kan ikke. Alting er saa underligt – og fint – og sørgeligt!	I cannot. Everything is so strange – and fine – and sad!
Kom, saa skal jeg vise dig noget morsomt!	Come, I'll show you something funny!
Herinde skulde vi have spist, naar vi var kommet fra Kirken, min Brudgom og jeg. —Men han knuste mit Hjerte – han knuste mit Hjerte!	Here, we would have eaten all if we had come from church, my husband and me. -But he broke my heart - he broke my heart!
Mange, mange Aar er det, siden han sveg mig!	Many, many years have passed since he betrayed me!
Saa mange var Klokken, da alt gik i Staa i dette Hus!	That was the moment when everything came to a standstill in this house!
Skal jeg lege med ham? Han er jo en simpel Arbejderdreng!	Dare I play with him? He is a common labouring boy!
Han har i hvert Fald et Hjerte. Knus det!	He has a heart, in any case. Break it!

I skal spille Kort, – ligesom Mænd spiller med Kvinders Hjerter.	You must play cards, like men playing with women's hearts.
Hvad kan du spille, Pip?	What can you play, Pip?
Hanrej!	Beggar-my-neighbour!
Dag Spillet havde varet en Times Tid, og Pip var blevet gjort Hanrej ustandselig, fik han Lov til at gaa...	The game went on for an hour, and Pip played incessantly. Then, he was allowed to go...
... men nede ved Porten traf han en mærkelig Mand, som skulde komme til at betyde meget for ham.	... But down at the gate, he met a strange man who would come to mean much to him.
Synes du, at jeg er smuk?	Do you think I'm beautiful?
Vilde du gerne kysse mig?	Would you like to kiss me?
Græd paa Vejen hjem!	Cry on your way home!
Græd rigtig meget, Dreng!	Cry a lot, boy!
For første Gang randt hans Taarer – foran det kolde Gitter, der skilte ham fra den lille, skønne Bøddel, som aldrig skulde komme ud af hans Tanker.	His tears dropped of as he stood in front of the cold grille that separated him from the small, beautiful tormentor that would never come out of his thoughts.
Miss Havisham havde Glæde af sin smukke Elev. Stakkels Pip græd, som skulde hans Hjerte briste.	Miss Havisham was proud of her beautiful pupil. Poor Pip, weeping as his heart was burst.
Pip eneste Trøster i Nøden var den brave Joe, og hans fredeligste Stunder var i Skumringstimerne, da han sad med ham i Byens lille Kro. Men en Aften...	Pip's solely comforter in distress was brave Joe and his most peaceful moments were in the twilight hours, when he sat with him in the town's small inn. But one evening ...
Er De Grovsmeden Joe Gargery?	Are you Joe Gargery the blacksmith?
Han har store Forventninger!	He has great expectations!

<p>En Person, hvis Navn De aldrig maa efterforske, vil gøre noget usædvanligt for Pip. Der er deponeret en stor Sum Penge hos mig, og for disse Penge skal Pip gøres til en Gentleman!</p>	<p>A person whose name you must never check out has done something unusual for Pip. He has deposited a large sum of money with me, and with such money should Pip become a gentleman!</p>
<p>Da Joe og lille Pip, fortumlede af den Fremmedes mærkelige Oplysninger, nærmede sig Smedien, saa de, at et eller andet var hændet.</p>	<p>When Joe and little Pip approached the forge (still dazed by the stranger's strange news), they noticed that something had happened.</p>
<p>Joe bad til Gud for sin Hustrus Liv, og hun fik Lov at beholde det. Men det frygtelige Slag, der a fen ukendt Forbryder var rettet mod hendes Hoved, havde berøvet hende Forstanden.</p>	<p>Joe prayed to God for his wife's life, and she was allowed to survive. But the terrible blow that her head had received from an unknown offender had robbed her intellect.</p>
<p>Vi lader de næste 8 Aar udføre deres Arbejde i faa Sekunder...</p>	<p>Just a few seconds to explain that they spent the following 8 years carrying out their work...</p>
<p>...og genfinder vor Ven Pip i den velklædte Yngling, som er blevet Gentleman for den mystiske Velgørers eller Velgørerindes Penge.</p>	<p>... And to meet again our friend Pip as a well-dressed young man, who has become a gentleman due to the money of a misterious benefactor.</p>
<p>Jeg kommer i Morgen til London paa Gennemrejse til Richmond, hvor jeg foreløbig skal bo Miss Havisham ønspar, at De modtager mig I Diligencegaarden I Wood Street. Him sender Dem sin Hilsen. Deres Estella.</p>	<p>I'm going to London tomorrow morning on my way to Richmond, where I will stay at Miss Havisham's place for a while. You will receive me with the stagecoach in Wood Street. Greetings. Yours, Estella.</p>
<p>Pips Ven og Husfælle, Herbet Pocket, en brav ung Mand, som gerne vilde være Millionær, men som blot manglede Driftskapital.</p>	<p>Pip's friend and housemate, Herbert Pocket, a brave young man wishing to become millionaire, but lacking resources.</p>
<p>Næste Dag i Diligencegaarden i Wood Street.</p>	<p>The next day, with the stagecoach at Wood Street.</p>
<p>Barnagtige Menneske, bliver De dog aldrig klogere end De var, da De første Gang vilde kysse mig?- Kan De slet ingen Ting huske?</p>	<p>Childish man, what happened the first time you tried to kiss me? Can't you remember?</p>

<p>“Ingen Ting huske”- Jo, Pip hukede alt,- ogsaa sit sidste Besøg hos Miss Havisham...</p>	<p>"There's nothing to remember" - Yes, Pip remembered everything, even his last visit to Miss Havisham...</p>
<p>Elsk hende! - Hvis hun kommer dig I Møde, saa elsk hende. Hvis hun sønderslider dit Hjerte, saa elsk hende!</p>	<p>Love her! - If she meets other men, love her! If she tears your heart, love her!</p>
<p>Er det en Plet paa Dugen, som interesserer Dem, Pip?</p>	<p>Is it any stain on the tablecloth that interests you, Pip?</p>
<p>Først ud paa Aftenen naaede de Huset i Richmond</p>	<p>Only in the evening they reached the house in Richmond.</p>
<p>Kort Tid efter indtraf Pips 21 aarige Fødselsdag, hvilket betød, at han blev myndig. Han aflagde derfor sin Formynder, Sagfører Jagers, et Besøg.</p>	<p>Shortly after this, Pip became 21, which meant that he was of age. Then, he visited his trusteeship, lawyer Jagers.</p>
<p>Jeg fører ikke Sager for Stemmingsmennesker! Folk, der græder, kan skruppe a'!</p>	<p>I don't lead cases for people who are useful just to scrub!</p>
<p>Gaa ud og græd paa Gaden. Jeg vil ikke have det Griseri herinde!</p>	<p>Go out and weep in the street. I do not want such mess in here!</p>
<p>Faar jeg i Dag at vide, hvem min Velgører er?</p>	<p>May I know today who my benefactor is?</p>
<p>Nej!</p>	<p>No!</p>
<p>Det er jo en Banknote paa 500 Pund!</p>	<p>It's a banknote of 500 pounds!</p>
<p>Denne smukke Sum er Deres. De vil for Eftertiden faa udbetalt 500 pund om Aaret, hverken mer eller mindre, indtil Deres Velgører engang viser sig!</p>	<p>This beautiful sum is yours. From now on, you will be payed 500 pounds a year (no more, no less) until your benefactor appear!</p>
<p>Jeg har en god Ven, som jeg gerne vilde hjælpe ind i en Handelsforretning ved at laane han nogle Penge.- Vil De være mig behjælpelig?</p>	<p>I have a good friend, and I would like to help him with a commerce business by lending him some money. Will you assist me?</p>
<p>Der er 6 Broer her i London!</p>	<p>There are six bridges in London!</p>

Det er Ligegyldigt, fra hvilken Bro De kaster Pengene ud. Gør det hellere end at laane dem ud til en Ven!	It doesn't matter which one you choose to throw the money out. Do that rather than lending it to a friend!
Det er forbandet smukt af Dem og forbandet dumt! Jagers tilgav mig aldrig, hvis jeg hjalp Dem, men jeg vil hjælpe Dem!	It's damn nice of you, and damn stupid! Jagers will never forgive me if I help you, but I'll do it!
Denne Dag, der var en Glædens Dag for Pip, var en Sorgens Dag for Joe og Bidy. Da solen stod op, var Mrs.Gargerys svage Sol gaaet ned for stedse.	This was a joyous day for Pip, but a day of sorrow for both Joe and Bidy. As the sun rose, MrsGargery's faint light turned off forever.
Skriv... skriv... Kære Pip, Din Søster er død, vi... skriv, om han ikke nok vil komme herved, det vil hjælpe os...	Write ... write ... Dear Pip, your sister is dead, we ... write, though you probably will come down, it will help us ...
Og næste Dag kom Pip ud til sit gamle Barndomshjem.	And the next day, Pip returned to his old childhood home.
Det var, ligesom om hendes Forstand kom tilbage, da hun skulde dø. Hun hviskede dit Navn, kære Pip, og hun smilede saa lykkeligt. Gudskelov - hun smilede saa lykkeligt!	She recovered her consciousness for a while, and then she died. She whispered your name, dear Pip, and she smiled so happily. Thanks God - she smiled so happily!
Dagen led, og Skumringen var ved at lægge sig over den tyste Smedie, da Pip atter tog bort.	The day came to an end, and the dusk covered the silent forge as Pip parted again.
Hvad er der blevet af Orlick?	What has become of Orlick?
Han arbejder vist i Stenbruddene her i Nærheden – Jeg er bange for ham...	He works in the quarry, here in the neighbourhood. I'm afraid of him ...
...Han driver saa tidt om her, naar Mørket er faldet paa, - og han ser saa underligt paa mig!	... He lurks so often around here when darkness falls, and he looks so strange to me!
Jeg vilde betale, hvad det skulde være, for at faa den Slyngel drevet bort fra Egnen!	I will do anything to expel such scoundrel from the neighborhood!
Drive mig bort fra Egnen. Hæ! – Nej, tøsen skal blive min, og dig slaar jeg ihjel!	Drive me away from this district. Ha! No, the girl must be mine, and I will strike you to death!

Det følgende halve Aar forløb uden Sorger. Herbert var optaget i en god Forretning, uden at ane, at Pip stod bag. Men en truende Efteraarsaften, der begyndte med et Bal...	The next half a year was uneventful. Herbert was busy in a good business, without suspecting that Pip was behind. But one looming autumn evening that began with a dance...
Han hed Drummler. Han var ligesaa dum som indbildsk. Han var rig, og han gjorde aabenlyst Kur til Estella.	His name was Drummler. He was as dumb as conceited. He was rich, and he openly courted Estella.
Estella var mere imødekommende overfor ham end overfor alle andre.	Estella was closer to him than to any other man.
Startop, en af Pips gode Venner.	Startop, one of Pip's best friends.
Naa, der har vi ham Opkomlingen. – Blot han ikke stank af Smedie – og mystiske Penge!	Well, here we have the upstart. He reeks of blacksmith and mysterious money!
Han flagrer altid om Dem, denne foragtelige Drummler. Kan De dog ikke se, at han er en ondskabsfuld og simple Dumrian?	He is always fluttering about you, this terrible Drummler. Can't you see that he is just a cruel and simple blockhead?
Naa!	Well!
De skænker ham Smil og Øjekast, som De aldrig skænker mig!	I have seen you give him looks and smiles this very night, such as you never give to me.
Herregud, kan De da ikke forstaa, at jeg holder ham for Nar, at jeg holder alle for Nar- undtagen Dem. Skal jeg ogsaa holde Dem for Nar, Pip?	Can't you see that I take him for a fool, that I deceive and entramp all of them but you? Should I also take you for a fool, Pip?
Hvor tidt skal jeg advare Dem, Pip. - Jeg har intet Hjerte!	How many times I've told you, Pip! I have no heart!
Jeg elsker Dem,- jeg elsker Dem, Estella!	I love you, I love you, Estella!
Det var Uvej, da han gik hjem.	There was a storm in the way home.
Tænk!- Er det virkelig lille Pip, som hjalp mig ude i Mosen!	It's really little Pip, who helped me out in the marshes!



Tænk! Er det virkelig lille Pip, som jeg har gjort til Gentleman!	My little Pip... I have done a gentleman of you!
Da brast hans store Forventninger.- En Tugthus - fange var hans Velgører.	This announcement burst his great expectations. His benefactor was a convict.
Og jeg som troede, at De vilde blive glad, naar De fik at vide, at det var mig, der havde gjort Dem til Gentleman!	I thought that you would be happy when you were told that it was me the one who have made of you a gentleman!
Laas Døren!	The door!
Sæt Skodderne for Vinduerne.	Close shutters!
Jeg bliver hængt, hvis man finder mig. Jeg blev deporteret paa Livstid, og der er Dødsstraf for at vende tilbage!	I will be hanged if somenone finds me. I was sent for life and it's death to come back!
Jeg er rejst mange tusind Mil stormfuldt Hav - for at se Pip,- min Gentleman!	I have traveled many thousands of miles through the stormy sea to see you, Pip. My gentleman!
Det er Deres, det er alt, hvad jeg ejer. Jeg har samlet det til Pip, som gav en sølle Djaevil no'en Skorper og holdt med ham!	It's yours, that's all I possess. I have collected it to Pip, who gave a poor devil a crust and remained with him!
I 10 lange Aar har jeg arbejdet strength i øde Egne, - jeg glemte, hvordan Mennesker saa ud, men jeg havde jo min Gentleman - jeg havde jo noget at leve for- Herregud!	For 10 long years, I have worked so hard in remote regions. I forgot how people looked, but I did well with my gentleman. I had definitely something to live for. Heavens!
Han er min Gæst, Herbet. Han gør dir ikke Fortræd,-men du maa - være tavs!	He is my guest, Herbert. He will not harm you, but you must be silent!
Tavs, ja- Sværg, at De vil være tavs!	Silent, yes, you will be silent!
En Tid forløb i Angst og Spænding. Pip troede, at hans Hemmelighed var bevaret, indtil...	A period of time of anxiety and tension. Pip thought his secret was kept until...
Hvis det ikke skal gaa ud over Straffefangem, som De holder gemt, maa De komme alene i Huset ved kalkovnen I Aften kl. 9	If you don't want that anybody knows about the convict you keep hidden, you must come alone to the house at the limekiln tonight 9 pm.

Inden Pip gik til sit ensomme Møde med den truende Brevskriver, besøgte han Miss Havisham for endnu engang at se den Kvinde, han elskede til Afsind.	Before going to his solitary looming meeting, Pip visited Miss Havisham to see once again the woman he loved to madness.
Altid denne Drummler	Always this Drummler...
Jeg er kommet for at sige, at jeg nu er saa ulykkelig, som De begge har ønsket, jeg skulde blive!	I have come to say that I am now as unhappy as you both want me to be!
Miss Havisham, De har ladet mig gaa I den lykkelige Vildfarelse, at De var min Velgører-Var det smukt?	Miss Havisham, you have kept me in the happy delusion that you were my benefactor. Did you enjoy?
Hvem I Guds Navn er jeg, at jeg skulde bære mig smukt ad!	For God's sake, why should I be kind to you?
Estella, De ved, at jeg har elsket Dem fra den første Dag, jeg saa Dem i dette Hus!	Estella, you know that I have loved you from the first day that I saw you in this house!
Jeg forstaar Dem ikke - De taler ikke til noget I mit Bryst!	I am not able to comprehend. You address nothing in my breast.
Men Drummler?-Taler han til noget I Deres Bryst?	And Drummler? Does he address something in your breast?
Jeg skal giftes med Drummler, - men vær ikke bange for, at han skal faa Glæde af mig!	I am getting married with Drummler. But don't be afraid of my being a blessing to him. I shall not be that.
Skal vi virkelig skilles saaledes, De drømmeriske Dreng!	We shall really separate, you dreamy boy!
Aah, Gud velsigne Dem - Gud tilgive Dem!	Oh, God bless you - God forgive you!
Han nedbad Guds Velsignelse over hende, som havde søndertraadt hans Hjerte. Ordenes sørgmodige Klang ramte som en spinkel Solstraale Isen i Estellas Hjerte.	The last sentence crashed into Estella and torn her heart. The mournful tone of Pip's voice struck the ice in Estella's heart as a slender sunbeam.

Ved Kalkovnen I Mosen – lidt før 9.	At the limekiln in the marshes - a little before 9 pm.
Hans Skrig døde i Kalkovnens Buldren.	The rumble of the limekiln stifled his shouts.
Du vilde drive mig bort fra Egnen, men nu har jeg dig. Jeg fik ikke Biddey, men jeg fik dig!	You aimed to drive me away from here, but now I have you. I did not get Biddey, but I got you!
Før jeg slaar dig ihjel, vil jeg rigtig gotte mig og tirre dig, - din Djævell!	Before I kill you, I will gloat and tease you, devil!
Skal jeg fortælle dig noget? – Det var mig, der gjorde det af med din Søster, den Havgasse!	Shall I tell you something? It was me who attacked your sister, the hag!
Og naar jeg har gjort det af med dig, saa bærer jeg dig over i kalkovnen, og saa bliver der ikke en Trævl tilbage af dig!	And when I've done with you, I will carry your corpse over the limekiln, and then there will be no trace of you.
Straffefangen har jeg ordnet med mine egne Næver. Hvis han ikke allerede er død, saa bliver han hængt. Politiet har ham!	I will take on the criminal prisoner with my own fists. If he is not already dead, he shall be hunged up. The police has him!
Jeg tror forresten hellere, jeg vil slaa dig ihjel med en Hammer!	On second thoughts, I will kill you with a hammer.
Hvorledes fandt I herud?	How did you get here?
Da vi kom hjem, saa vi dit Brev, og...	When we got home, we saw your letter, and...
Er taget ud til Miss Havisham i vigtigt Oruide. Hilsen, Pip.	Gone to Miss Havisham for important reasons. Regards, Pip.
Straffefangen levede, men Døden stod ved den jagede Mands Hovedgærde, da Pip fandt ham i Fænglets Sygehus.	The criminal prisoner lived, but the man was hunted. Pip found him at the prison's hospital and stayed beside the headboard.
Du svigtede aldrig. Du vil heller ikke svigte, naar jeg er død. Bed Gud være en stakkels Synder naadig!	You never let me down. You will never let me down, when I die. Ask God to have mercy for this poor sinner!
Han er fri for Lænkerne – han er fri!	He is free from chains! He is free!

Pip besluttede sig til at bryde den Lænke af Sorger og Skuffelser, som bandt ham til hans Hjemstavn, men forinden sin Afrejse aflagde han Miss Havisham et sidste Besøg.	Pip decided to break the chains of sorrows and disappointments that tied him to that place, but before his departure, he visited Miss Havisham for the last time.
Var det Estellas Bredejdelser og hendes Flugt fra det øde Hus, eller var det en barmhjertig Skæbne, der havde kastet et Forsoningens Lys ind i Miss Havishams formørkede Sjæl? Hun var forvandlet.	Was it Estella's reproach and her escape from Satis House, or was it a merciful fate that had put an atonement light into Miss Havisham's darkened soul? She was transformed.
Jeg rejser nu bort og vender aldrig tilbage til denne Egn, hvor jeg føler mig som en Ud - stødt, hvor Deres Forbandelse hviler over mig, Miss Havisham!	Now I'm travelling away and I will never return to this place where I have felt like an outcast with your curse hanging over me, Miss Havisham!
Kan jeg intet gøre for dig, kære Pip?	Can I do anything for you, dear Pip?
Kunde De blot give mig Smedien igen - og min Barnesjæl!	Can you take me back to the old days at the forge? Can you restore my child soul?
Jeg er rig! – Jeg vil gøre alt for dig!	I am rich! I will do anything for you!
De kan intet give mig. Ikke een af mine Taarer kan De give mig tilbage!	You can't restore me. None of your tears can restore me!
Min Gud, min Gud,- hvad har jeg gjort. Tilgiv mig!	My God, my God! What have I done! Forgive me!
Jeg tilgiver Dem, stakkels Miss Havisham. Jeg tilviger alt!	I forgive you, poor Miss Havisham. I forgive you for everything!
Efter Miss Havishams Død brød Pips Nerver sammen, og hvem andre skulde vel pleje ham, nu da Herbert var rejst bort, end den trofaste Joe...	After Miss Havisham's death, Pip's nerves suffered a breakdown. Who else might take care of him, now that Herbert had gone away, than the faithful Joe...
som Pip ikke kunde se fra den sælsomme Verden, hvortil hans Feber havde flyttet ham.	But Pip could not see anything apart from the strange world to which his fever had taken him.
Er det Joe?	Is that you, Joe?

Ja vel er det Joe, gamle Kammerat. Nu skal du snart blive rask.	Yes, sir, it is Joe, dear old chap. You'll get well soon.
– Hvorlænge har jeg været syg, kære Joe?	How long have I been sick, dear Joe?
Meget, meget længe!	Very, very long!
Nogle Dage senere var Pip saa rask, at han kunde staa op.	A few days later, Pip recovered so fast that he could stand up.
Da jeg igg evil vare til Ulleghed er jeg rejst nu da du er Rask og vil have det bedre uden mig, Joe.	Since I don't want to disturb you, now that you are healthy, you will be better without me. Joe.
P.D.: Jeg de beste venner, igge.	P.D.: Ever the best of friends.
Herregud, Herbert, kommer du og ser til mig ensomme Mand?	Oh, Herbert, you have come to see this lonely man?
– Ja? Og jeg kommer for at fortælle dig, at du ikke skal være ensom mere!	Yes, and I have come to tell you that you shouldn't continue being lonely.
Jeg ved alt, hvad du har gjort for mig, og dine Velgerninger har baaret saa rige Frugter, at du selv...	I know everything you have done for me, and your good deeds have turned into such rich fruits...
og inden Herbert gik, var Pip optaget i det Firma, hans gode Hjerte havde ladet ham støtte, da han var i sin Velmagt!	and before Herbert went, Pip signed up for the company, as his kind heart had given to him a new power!
Da Pip nogle Dage senere kon til Smedien, ventede der han en Overraskelse.	A few days later, Pip went to the forge, where there was a surprise waiting for him.
Det er min Bryllupsdag kære Pip,- og det er ogsaa Joes Bryllupsdag - for vi er blevet gift i Dag!	It's my wedding day, dear Pip, which is also Joe's wedding day. We get married today!
Biddy, du har den bedste Mand i Verden!	Biddy, you have the best man in the world!

Og Kære Joe, du har fortjent den sødeste og bedste Pige paa Jorden, - og du har fundet hende!	And dear Joe, you've earned the sweetest and best girl on earth. And you have found her!
Venter I en Gæst?	Waiting for a guest?
Ja, kære Pip. Vi havde paa Følelsen, at du vilde komme!	Yes, dear Pip. We had the feeling that you would come!
Bordet var ikke overdaadigt men det var Appetitten. Stuen var lille, men deres Hjerter var store. Pip følte det, og han følte sig fattig...	The banquet was not sumptuous, but it was appetizing. The living room was small, but their hearts were big. Pip felt it, and he felt poor ...
Er det Estella, du tænker paa? Kan du aldrig glemme hende?	Are you still thinking of Estella? Can't you forget her?
Jeg er en daarlig Kammerat. Jeg bedrøver Jer paa Jeres gladeste Dag!	I am a bad companion. I sadden you in your happiest day!
Han gik op til Miss Havishams Hus, der var paa Vej mod Udslettelsen. Han søgte den forladte Tomt, der var som et Billede af hans eget Hjerter.	He walked up to Miss Havisham's house, which was almost ruined. He searched the abandoned garden, which was like a picture of his own heart.
Og han mindedes...	And he remembered...
Han kendte hende ikke, men en indre Stemme sagde ham, hvem hun var...	He didn't recognize her, but an inner voice told him who she was...
Jeg vilde tage Afsked med Resterne af min graa Barndom. Hvor underligt, at jeg skal træffe Dem netop nu!	I have come to say goodbye to the remains of my dark childhood. How strange is to meet you right now!
Mindet om vor sidste Skilsmisse har altid været søgeligt og uforglemmeligt!	The memory of our last separation has always been sad and unforgettable!
De er forandret, Estella, hvad er der hædet Dem?	You have changed, Estella. What's happened to you?
– Jeg lærte at foragte mit Liv, men Livet har hævnnet sig!	I learned to despise my life, but life has taken revenge on me!

Længe talte de sammen, og da de atter stod ved Gitterporten, hvor de som Børn for første Gang havde set hinanden...	They talked for a long time, and then they stood again at the grille gate, where they had seen each other for the first time when they were children...
Husker du den første Gang du gik herfra...	Do you remember the first time you were here...
Græd paa Vejen hjem. Græd rigtig meget, Dreng!	Cry on your way home! Cry a lot, boy!
Inden du for sidste Gang gaar herfra, vil jeg sige til dig du, der ejer Godhedens Gave og Evnen til at glemme: Tilgiv mig!	Before you part from here for the last time, I want to beg you, you who are gifted with goodness and ability to forget: Forgive me!
Forstaar jeg dig, Estella? Skal vi lade Minderne om Fortiden blive bag denne Port og gaa ud til vort Liv med nye - <u>store Forventninger!</u>	You know what, Estella? We shall leave the memories of the past behind this gate and go out to live our lives with new great expectations!

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