

Televised Classics

The British Classic Serial as a Distinctive Form
of Literary Adaptation

Elżbieta Rokosz-Piejko

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E. R-P.

Introduction

“[...] adaptation is theoretically impossible yet culturally ubiquitous.”

Kamilla Elliott (2003:6)

“In the working of the human imagination, adaptation is the norm, not the exception.”

Linda Hutcheon (2006:177)

“Adaptation is creativity’s stepchild, always vying for validation, never catching up to its originating source.”

John Bryant (2013:47)

The following study, as the title suggests, is devoted to the British classic serial, i.e. the serialised television adaptations of literary texts of recognised quality.¹ When entering this area of research we find ourselves simultaneously in three partly overlapping disciplines: literary studies, film studies and television and media studies. However, there is one more discipline, a direct offshoot of the former three, in the realm of which this study also falls, the youngest of the group and still evolving, namely adaptation studies, which focuses – as the name indicates – on various forms of intermedial transposition.

The term “adaptation” can refer both to the process of the transposition of a literary text (or any other work) into another medium, or/and to the final result of that process. Ira Konigsberg in *The Complete Film Dictionary* defines the latter as “a work in one medium that derives its impulse as well as a varying number of its elements from a work in a different medium” (1987:6). This definition goes beyond the relationship between a literary text and a film/television production, and it can be observed that in the first decades of the 21st century adaptation studies scholars have turned their attention with growing frequency to diverse intermedial transpositions (see e.g. Hutcheon 2006, Leitch 2007, Hopfinger 2010). Thomas Leitch (2007) also notes, that an increasing number of Academy Award nominations for best adapted screenplay go to those based on non-literary sources. Nevertheless, my focus here will be, rather traditionally, on the adaptation of

¹ Although a more comprehensive definition of the classic serial, as well as considerations over its characteristic features, will be provided in the pages which follow, it has to be clarified at this point that the adjective “**classic**” in the case of the classic serial **refers to the status of the source text of which the serial is an adaptation**, not to the fact that the serials in question are regarded as classic. Some scholars consider the term “classic serial” as less accurate than the preferred by them “classic-novel adaptations” (see Cardwell 2007:183).

literary texts into audio-visual productions, and the majority of the considerations will apply to such.

Before discussing adaptations of literary texts into the specific audio-visual form the television serial is, I find it crucial to devote some space to the relationship between literature and film, which has existed since the beginning of the cinema. This was due to the fact that the adaptation of literary texts, with ready-made stories, quickly became a common practice in the film industry. This relationship has been a troubled one since its inception, as numerous accusations have been levelled at adaptations, especially during the early stages of the development of the cinema, because the way in which film adaptations dealt with literary texts back then was in most cases perceived as abominable. Virginia Woolf, in her 1926 essay “The Movies and Reality,” calls a literary work adapted for the cinema a “prey” and an “unfortunate victim,” admitting, however, that the cinema most certainly will eventually find and develop its own language so that “[t]he most fantastic contrasts could be flashed before us with a speed which the writer can only toil in vain [...]” (Woolf 1926/1972:91). That language developed three decades later, with the French New Wave which redefined the relationship between literature and film, stressing the latter’s independence from the former. The 1950s also witnessed the beginning of what Timothy Corrigan calls the “academization of movie culture” (2012:36), because from that moment, over the subsequent two decades, film studies gradually developed into a scholarly discipline. Inevitably, publications in this field concerned adaptations of literary works as well, especially so as most of the film studies scholars came from literature departments. It is worth remembering that it was during this decade that television became commonplace, and both films and serials being adaptations of literary texts could be found among the programmes broadcast.²

The reasons for the frequently disdainful attitude towards adaptations, expressed by both the critics and part of the audience, are many and varied, with the assumed superiority of the literary text over the visual (or any other) representation being the most frequently stressed objection. Robert Stam (2000:77) derives that assumed superiority of literature from a number of what he calls superimposed prejudices: *seniority* – older arts are better arts; *iconophobia* – the conviction that visual arts are necessarily inferior to the verbal arts; and, connected with this second point, *logophilia*. Although film could be accused of “devouring” literature for its own development as an art form, it is worth remembering that the content of any medium has always been another medium, as Marshal McLuhan stressed back in 1964.³ Robert B. Ray concludes similarly, stating that: “written narratives appropriate oral tales just as the movies borrow from books and television from film” (2000:42). In other words, the assimilation of earlier forms of artistic

² The history of literary adaptations on British television will be discussed in detail in Chapter 1.

³ See McLuhan’s *Understanding Media* (1964/2002) p.8.

expression by those which follow them can be perceived as a natural and inevitable process into which film and television adaptations naturally fit.

In the 21st century adaptation is no longer perceived as an example of mechanical reproduction;⁴ it is assumed that it always involves some creative process. Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation* calls the process of adaptation “a creative *and* interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging; an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work” (2006:8). However, unlike in other types of creative works, it is the *similarity* with the source text that is vital, and on such grounds an adaptation is commonly evaluated. Nevertheless, as Marek Hendrykowski (2014:66) stresses, it is the *difference* that gives an adaptation sense as a new cultural text. Adaptation is a unique form of artistic activity in which replication is permanently intertwined with innovation, and as Hutcheon stresses, it is “[...] not slavish copying; it is a process of making the adapted material one’s own [...]” (2006:18). As this innovation is a creative element particularly worth critical attention, I would like to argue further in this study that the classic-novel adaptations, respecting and revering the source texts, can include inspiring innovations contributing to a new richness of the narrative and resulting in an appeal to the audience contemporary with the adaptation.

By using the term “adaptation” to refer to any film or television production, we “openly announce its overt relationship to another work or works” (Hutcheon 2006:6). There is, however, a significant difference in the way in which both the audience and the critics evaluate adaptations of recognisable literary texts, either the classics, or best-sellers, and adaptations of source texts which are virtually unknown to the mass audience. Adaptors of well-known source texts frequently hope “[...] to win an audience by the prestige of [the] borrowed title or subject” (Andrew 1984:67). Adaptations of literary texts little known to the public are sometimes referred to as “hidden,” but there are scholars who stick to the opinion that we can talk about an adaptation only when the source text is actually known to the public.⁵ Cathrine Grant is one such critic, as she assumes that familiarity with the source text plays an essential role in the way an adaptation is evaluated by the viewers:

The most important act that films and their surrounding discourses need to perform in order to communicate unequivocally their status as adaptations is [make their audiences] recall the adapted work, or the cultural memory of it. There is no such a thing [...] as a secret adaptation. (quoted⁶ in Geraghty 2008:3)

⁴ Chapter 2 of this publication discusses in detail the evolution of the critical responses to adaptations and the evolving attitudes of adaptation studies scholars.

⁵ Here adaptation is understood as the final product, not as the process. Accepting the opinion quoted above does not exclude the possibility of carrying out a comparative analysis of a given source text and its audio-visual adaptation, or considering it within a broader intertextual context.

⁶ Grant, C. 2002. “Recognising Billy Budd in *Beau Travail*: Epistemology and Hermeneutics of Auterist ‘Free’ Adaptation,” *Screen* 43.

Hutcheon, while referring to the question of reception, divides the audience of adaptations into “knowing” and “unknowing” (2006:390); she believes that an adaptation is “successful in its own right” when it is so for both types of audiences. It seems that success is easier to achieve with an unknowing viewer, on condition the production is of high artistic value as a film or a television production. The knowing audience includes both dedicated fans, who expect absolute fidelity and forgive nothing, and people who are familiar with the source text to a varied degree, frequently evaluating a given adaptation against their memory of the source text or their own mental representation of it, rather than the source text itself. The knowing audience will evaluate adherence to or departure from the source text; the unknowing audience will either confront their knowledge of the film narrative with the source text, reading it *post factum*, or simply will assume familiarity with the plot and characters having watched the audio-visual “version.” The latter would be the case of school-age audiences, to take one example, watching adaptations of classic novels to be found on their school reading lists.

Adaptations of classic novels, which this study focuses on, are usually confronted with an audience familiar – to a greater or lesser extent – with the source texts, and the adaptors are perfectly aware of that. Andrew Davies, famous for his numerous adaptations of literary classics into television serials, has admitted in a number of interviews that while adapting a given literary work he always tries to create a text which would be understandable to those who have not read the source material, and probably never will, but constitute a significant segment of the target audience. In other words, his main objective is to create a coherent, logical and consistent film or television narrative, which he manages to achieve through modifications of the source text that remain, in most cases, acceptable to the most knowledgeable and demanding “knowing” viewers. The critical acclaim his adaptations receive proves this approach to be right.

Adaptations always evoke emotions, which must be due to the fact that every reader has his/her own understanding of a given text, which is never completely reflected in somebody else’s creative revisioning of the same source text. Amy Sargeant explains that the criticism to which adaptations in general are subject, results from the fact that: “an act of private imagining is substituted by a passive encounter with an external visualization” (1998:306). As Hutcheon notes, an adaptation makes “the move from imagination to actual ocular perception” (2006:40), and the result does not necessarily match the viewers’ imagination. In analysing an adaptation, we are not, as Joy Gould Boyum (quoted⁷ in Griffiths 1997:34) puts it, “comparing book with film, but rather one resymbolization with another – inevitably expecting the movie projected to the screen to be a shadow reflection of the movie we ourselves have imagined.” Michael Orme reflected in 1934 (as quoted⁸ in Bluestone 1957:23-24):

⁷ Griffith refers to Boyum’s *Double Exposure: Novel into Film* (1985), p. 83.

⁸ Orme, M. 1934. “The Bookshelf and the Screen,” *Illustrated London News*, p. 368.

[...] you cannot transpose any one character from page to screen and hope to present him entirely as the novelist created him or as the novelist's public knew him [...] who can really recall having seen a screen performance which really and truly portrayed his favourite character as he knew it?

A confrontation of the private image with that generated by the collaborative effort of the screenwriter, director, cameramen, actors and the editors⁹ will always bring some disappointment. Also Stam refers to the fact that when confronted with an adaptation presenting “someone else’s phantasy we feel the loss of our own phantasmatic relation to the novel” (2000:75) and such feeling of a loss makes us frequently hostile towards the production. However, as Maureen Quinn notes, an adaptation frequently inspires “a useful reconsideration of the emotional and intellectual experience of the original” and adds that “the opportunity to see how other artists capture the essence of our favourite text offers us a new perspective from which to reconsider the original” (2007:102).

John Ellis, in his article on literary adaptation published in *Screen* in 1982, refers to the way in which adaptations relate to the memory of the source text:

The adaptation trades upon the memory of the novel, a memory that can derive from actual reading, or, as is more likely with a classic of literature, a generally circulated cultural memory. The adaptation consumes this memory, aiming to efface it with the presence of its own images. (1982:3)

Examples of such a “circulated cultural memory” being “consumed” by an adaptation can be found in any country’s cinematography or television history, and as this study will show the classic serial has frequently done so for the British literary classics.

At this juncture in my considerations on the nature of literary adaptation, the necessity arises to define and characterise a specific type of literary adaptation and the narrow television genre which the classic serial is. The term “British classic serial” is widely applied with reference to serialised classic-novel adaptations, produced by British broadcasting companies. The productions which can be labelled as such are sometimes also categorised as “period” or “costume” drama, which is a category wider than classic serial itself, and includes film productions not necessarily based on a literary text. Another wider genre we could also talk about in the case of the classic serial are “classic-novel adaptations,” which include not only serialised television narratives, but also adaptations of literary classics into film and one-part television productions. In classic-novel adaptations there is “explicit referencing of the original,” as Geraghty (2008:15) puts it, because they are strongly linked to the source text the title of which they bear. This is the primary

⁹ The diagram in Appendix 1 shows major contributors to the process of adaptation of a literary text into a film or television production. It is also worth remembering that what the literary text is initially transformed into is the script including the dialogue and stage directions to be transformed into a scene or action.

characteristics which distinguishes them from other forms of costume drama. There are, for example, several British television serials which are categorised together with the classic serials as “British period drama,” or “costume drama” (e.g. *Upstairs, Downstairs* or *Downton Abbey*), but which cannot be labelled as “the classic serial” due to the fact that they are not adaptations. The classic serial, then, is a narrow category which includes only those productions which were made for television and rely directly on a literary text labelled as classic (or “a modern classic”): classic-novel adaptation produced and broadcast in a serialised form. The interrelations between the classic serial and other television and film genres have been illustrated graphically in Figure 1 below:

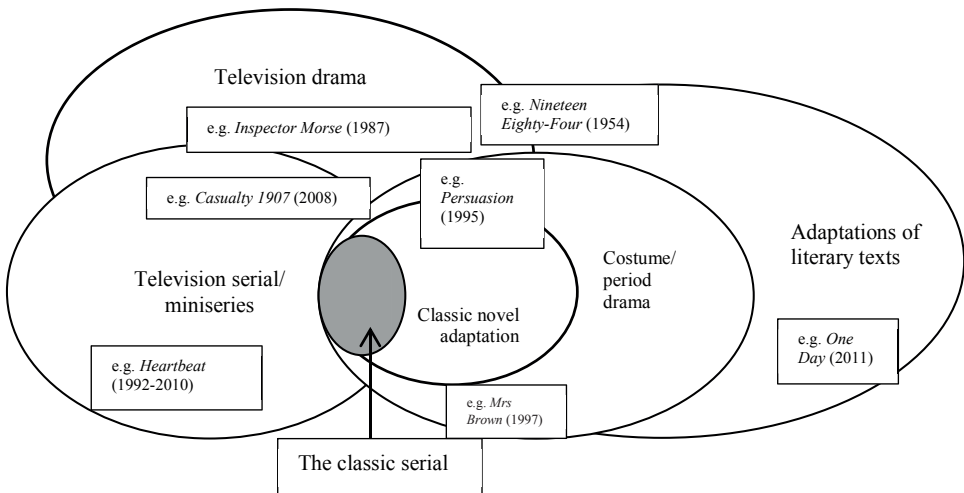


Figure 1. The classic serial and related film and television genres

In 1974 the classic serial was defined by Raymond Williams as “dramatizations of well-known works” (quoted in Kerr 1982:6) and that definition raises the question whether the term “dramatisation” and “adaptation” can be used interchangeably, as they sometimes tend to be.¹⁰ The two terms are related – the former is usually part of the latter, as certain parts of a text in prose have to be rendered into a dramatic form to make the source text performative. In the process of dramatisation the source text is rendered into its performative version with as little alteration made to it as possible, and with the preservation of all the original dialogues. Adaptation is understood as more complex and it refers the process in which the source text is reshaped and modified, and certain structural changes are introduced to it. As Hutcheon notices, dramatisation as part of the adaptation the process involves “description, narration, and represented thoughts

¹⁰ That tendency will be illustrated by some of the quotations from a number of critical sources I will be referring to further on in the present study.

which must be transcoded into speech, action and sounds, and visual images” (2013:39-40). The term “dramatisation” has been traditionally used in the case of the classic serial on the radio, but it also frequently appears in the context of older BBC television productions, which mention the screenwriter as the person the source text was “dramatised by,” implying the screenwriter’s function as that of a craftsman rather than a creative artist. As the analyses included in Part 2 of this publication will prove, the classic serials harking from 1967 onward have been by no means dramatizations only, therefore I will be referring to those productions as “adaptations.”

One more term requires clarification before we proceed to further considerations, and that is “the classic novel” which the classic serial is by definition an adaptation of. Sarah Cardwell (2002:2) starts her discussion of the classic serial with a simple statement, that classic novels are those which are commonly held by television viewers to be classic. As she notes, the number of writers categorised as classic by British television producers and texts considered to be so is rather limited and includes writers who are taught within English literature classes, especially at the secondary school level, and are included in catalogues of literary classics (e.g. Penguin Classics).¹¹ Sargeant (2000:305) defines the classics as “the sorts of texts that are traditionally adopted by school and university examination boards.” Christine Geraghty, in her 2008 study devoted to film adaptations of literature and drama, uses the term “classic adaptation” and refers the adjective in the following way: “The term classic indicated the nature of the source in the canon of English literature as defined in the twentieth century [...]” (2008:15). It is quite clear when we look at the history of the classic serial¹² that the classics – in the BBC’s understanding of the term – are mostly nineteenth-century novels and/or their authors. There are, however, examples of television serials classified as “classic serials” based on texts written by so-called “modern classics,” coming from the first half of the 20th century. Those, however, as the history of the genre indicates, would rather be by produced by Granada, not the BBC, as the latter remains faithful to nineteenth-century prose, occasionally reaching for selected eighteenth-century texts, like Daniel Defoe’s *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders* or Henry Fielding’s *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*.¹³ The texts which have been repeatedly adapted for British television include all six of Jane Austen’s novels, most of Charles Dickens’ novels (some more popular among

¹¹ Out of the five productions selected for analysis here four literary works meet that criterion of being classic enough to be published as Penguin Classics: Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House*, George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*, Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*, and John Galsworthy’s *The Forsyte Saga* can still be found in Penguin Classics 2014 Catalogue. In what way the fifth serial, i.e. *The Jewel in the Crown*, can fall into the category, will be elaborated on further here.

¹² See Chapter 1.

¹³ The former text was adapted for the BBC in 1975 and for ITV in 1996, and the latter for the BBC in 1997.

the adaptors than others), as well as novels of Thomas Hardy, George Eliot, the Brontë sisters, Anthony Trollope and Elizabeth Gaskell. It is worth stressing that the writers commonly acknowledged as “classic” share one more characteristic – they are no longer alive, hence cannot express their opinion about and interfere in the way their texts are classified and interpreted in the process of their adaptation into a new medium.

As it will be argued later on in this study, the classic serial demonstrates certain generic features,¹⁴ and there have been some cases in its history when we can observe “upgrading” of a literary text adapted into a serial which shows such generic features. As Giddings and Selby note: “The broadcast classic serial becomes a means by which past literature is identified as being worthy of classical status and this contributes to the construction and maintenance of literary canon” (2001:ix). In other words, if a major television company decides to adapt a given literary work into a classic serial, it becomes a significant step towards the canonization of that work.

British television is famous for high-quality history programmes, exploring and exploiting the rich history and heritage to tell engaging stories about the past, and classic-novel adaptations match this profile. The classic serial has been present in British television broadcast for over sixty years, being extremely popular in Britain and also successfully marketed abroad as a quality product, associated through the literary source text with high culture; it is a speciality of British television. Over the decades of its existence it has, however, undergone considerable evolution as a television genre, due to the fact that, as Geraghty puts it: “... the classic serial has always reflected the time of its making... opening the source up to say different things and to attract new audiences at home and abroad” (2012:1). However, the unquestionable popularity of the classic serial with the audience has been disproportional to the academic interest in the genre and the consideration given to it. Being a television product, the classic serial undoubtedly belongs to the area of interest of television and media studies. However, as Jonathan Bignell notes in *An Introduction to Television Studies* (2007), there has been a tendency in television and media studies to refrain from analysing “quality television” programs, of which the classic serial is an epitome, and to concentrate more on those genres which are characteristic for television only. So, the classic serial is too literary for the television studies, and too much shaped by television conventions and mass audience addressees’ expectations to be of much interest to film studies specialists. James Caughie (2012:63) refers to the reasons why television adaptations are not highly regarded among both literary and film studies scholars and claims that there is:

¹⁴ The classic serial has been classified as a genre by the scholars exploring the subject, i.e. Cardwell, Giddings and Selby, Geraghty, or Butt. It has to be stressed, however, that opinions about its actual generic qualities are divided.

[...] prejudice against television adaptation [...] often shared, on one side by literary scholars who believe television debases literature, and, on the other, by television scholars who believe that literature “elevates” television to an elite culture which betrays its popular roots. What both sides seem to miss is the extent to which serial adaptation allows us to delineate more clearly the contours of the popular and “popularisation,” and determinate specificities of the literary and the televisual.

Cardwell accounts for the reasons why television adaptations are of little interest to film studies scholars in her article “Literature on the small screen: television adaptations” in the following way:

One of the most commonly held prejudices against these television adaptations is that they reflect television’s tendency towards conservative, staid, and unimaginative programming in contrast with cinema’s more vibrant, eclectic, and innovative offerings [...] television adaptations are often regarded as dull, formulaic products [...]. (2007:181-182)

There exists, however, a group of scholars, coming from departments of Film and Television Studies, Communication and Culture, or English, who have devoted their research to television adaptations and their place among other kinds of television drama,¹⁵ and to whose findings I will be referring throughout this study. Those authors include the above-mentioned James Caughie, who devoted a number of his publications to television drama, and Sarah Cardwell, whose *Adaptation Revisited: Television and the Classic Novel* (2002) is an invaluable source of information on the subject. Another comprehensive publication on the classic serial is Robert Giddings and Keith Selby’s *The Classic Serial on Television and Radio* (2001), while three out of eleven chapters of Giddings’ earlier publication, *The Classic Novel: From Page to Screen* (2000), edited by him together with Erica Sheen, are devoted to classic serials. Two more studies worth mentioning here are Monica Lauritzen’s *Jane Austen’s Emma on Television: a Study of a BBC Classic Serial* (1981) and Christine Geraghty’s *Bleak House* (2012), both focusing on individual productions, but presenting the genre in a wider perspective as well. A recent electronic publication on the subject which deserves attention is *The Classic Novel Adaptation from 1995-2009* (2010), Rebecca Arwen White’s PhD thesis, accessible as Durham E-Thesis, a study of fifteen adaptations, both feature films and television productions.

In Poland the classic serial is practically non-existent in contemporary media studies, although there have recently been a number of publications¹⁶ concerning

¹⁵ The term “television drama” appears in this study with reference to various narrative television programs, including plays, films, serials and series.

¹⁶ Recent Polish publications devoted to television serials exclusively include *Władcy torrentów. Wokół angażującego modelu telewizji* (*The Lords of the Torrents. On the engaging model of television*) (2014) edited by Małgorzata Major and Justyna Bucknall-Hołyńska, *Post-soap. Nowa generacja seriali telewizyjnych a polska widownia* (*Post-soap. New generation television serials and the Polish audience*) (2011) edited by Mirosław Filiciak and Barbara Giza; *Seriale: przewodnik Krytyki Politycznej* (*Serials: Krytyka Polityczna guidebook*) (2011), Alicja Kisiełewska’s *Polskie tele-sagi: mitologie rodzinności* (*The Polish tele-sagas: The mythologies of family life*) (2009), or *Między powtórzeniem a innowacją: seryjność w kulturze* (*Between a repetition and an innovation: Seriality in culture*) (2004) edited by

television serials and series, which focus, however, on the most popular American productions of so-called new generation. There are numerous publications authored by Polish scholars devoted to adaptations – both in Polish¹⁷ and in English¹⁸ – but most of them concern solely film adaptations. Hendrykowski, however, in his recent book on contemporary film adaptations mentions and praises the BBC, or British television in general, for the creation of a highly attractive model of “mature” adaptation of the literary classics, applied also in the British cinema. He stresses that the respect for the source text that those British television adaptations show and the high quality of the productions is what has contributed most to their popularity (see Hendrykowski 2014:155).

I would argue that the classic serial is a distinctive form of adaptation of a literary text to an audio-visual form, first of all due to the narrative’s length and its division into episodes, but also to the assumed – and in fact expected – faithfulness to the source text, which – in most cases – is one of acknowledged artistic value and has already won its place in literary history. That faithfulness led to the serial’s being perceived as a conservative genre, inscribing itself in the British tradition of popularisation of national heritage (or “selling the past,” as some critics have called it, especially that of the privileged groups). Nevertheless, the classic serial evolves as a genre, and the most prominent productions combine tradition and innovativeness, and hence enrich and develop the television genre. This evolution results mostly from

Kisielewska. There is also an interesting 1996 Mieczysław Gałuszka’s study *Między przyjemnością a rytuałem: serial telewizyjny w kulturze popularnej* (*Between a pleasure and a ritual: Television serial in popular culture*).

¹⁷ Those include articles and book publications by Alicja Helman, Władysław Orłowski, or Wojciech Wierzewski, among others. Recently Helman has become one of the co-editors of the new series devoted to the relationship between literature and film published by either KINO or EKRAAN publishing houses, called *Literatura na ekranie* (*Literature on screen*), which consists of four volumes so far, including analyses of adaptations of British (A. Helman, B. Kazana (eds.), KINO 2011), American (R. Syska (ed.), EKRAAN 2011), Spanish and Latin American (A. Helman, K. Żyto (eds.), KINO 2011), and Italian (A. Gałkowska, A. Miller-Klejsa (eds.), KINO 2012) literature. The series is a developing project, with other national literatures (e.g. Japanese, German and French) and their film adaptations in focus, which shows one of the directions in which adaptations studies in Poland develop.

¹⁸ There are a number of publications by Polish scholars coming from English and American studies departments. Andrzej Weseliński’s *The Modern Novel and Film* (Wydawnictwo UW, 1999) is one of them, including both theoretical considerations over the approaches to adaptations and analyses of selected film productions. Adaptations remain in his area of academic research and theoretical considerations, as in 2012 his article titled “Film Adaptations: Theories, and New/Old Dilemmas”, appeared in *The Visual and the Verbal in Film, Drama, Literature and Biography* (Peter Lang Verlag, 2012), a volume edited by Mirosława Ziąja-Buchholtz and Grzegorz Koneczniak from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Ziąja-Buchholtz also edited and co-authored a collection of articles in Polish devoted to adaptations of Henry James’ works: *Filmowe gry z twórczością Henry’ego Jamesa: Transpozycje, komentarze, analogie* (*Film games with Henry James’s works: Transpositions, commentaries, analogies*, Wydawnictwo UMK, 2005). There is also one interesting study devoted to television productions, and that is Jacek Fabiszak’s *Polish Televised Shakespeare: A Study of Shakespeare Productions within the Television Theatre Format* (Motivex, 2005).

technological progress and from adjusting the productions to the expectations of the audience shaped by the contemporary television conventions and style.

The classic serials frequently fall into the category which Hendrykowski calls multiadaptations (2014:131), as most of them become adaptations of texts which have already been adapted, sometimes more than once. The question why it is so can be answered in a similar way we can respond to the question why in general there are there so many adaptations among film and television productions. One of the reasons is the fact that their audience has been already “pre-sold,’ having read or heaving heard of the original” (Newcomb 2004:23), and the title is recognisable, which greatly simplifies the marketing procedures. As Hutcheon suggests, the pleasures we derive from watching adaptations come from the fact that they represent a “mixture of repetition and difference, of familiarity and novelty” (2006:386). A similar repetition is enjoyed by children, who find pleasure in hearing or watching the same stories over and over again, because it brings comfort and the confidence that comes with the sense of knowing what is about to happen next and how the story ends. Hutcheon, trying to provide some explanation for the reasons why adaptations have been so popular and where their appeal comes from, quotes George Kubler’s 1962 *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things*: “[h]uman desires in every present instance are torn between the replica and the invention, between the desire to return to the known pattern, and the desire to escape it by a new variation. Adaptations fulfil both desires at once” (quoted in Hutcheon 2006:173). The classic serial as an adaptation is an excellent example of such “fulfilling both desires,” because besides re-introduction of the source text we also have the familiar form of the television serial, which, nevertheless, has also undergone some modifications over decades. Hence, the “repetition with a difference” can work here at three levels – that of the adaptation of a source text, that of re-adaptation, and that of the recognisable television genre. Umberto Eco, in his 1985 article “Innovation and repetition: between modern and postmodern aesthetics,” refers to the pleasure derived from watching television series and explains it as follows:

[...] one is enjoying the novelty of the story (which is always the same) while in fact one is enjoying it because of the recurrence of a narrative scheme that remains constant. The series in this sense responds to the infantile need of hearing again always the same story, of being consoled by the “return of the Identical,” superficially disguised. (1985:196)

What Eco is referring to here, however, is the television series rather than serials,¹⁹ in other words productions in which we have the same characters and the same

¹⁹ Serials, as understood here, are productions with a limited number of episodes within which one main plot develops and closes. Williams in *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (1974) distinguishes the serial, with “dramatized action divided into episodes” from the series, which “employs continuity of character or format but not of action” (quoted in Kerr 1982:7). Uszyński (2004:65) divides serials into continuing ones (those, in which the plot is characterised by an open dramatic structure and continues thorough the subsequent episodes); series (in which we have the

setting but each episode tells a different (superficially, as it has been suggested above) story. Nevertheless, the source of pleasure seems to be the same – i.e. a combination of “something old” and “something new” resulting in our feeling of remaining comfortably knowledgeable, while being slightly surprised.²⁰

What the classic serial shares with other television serials is the division of the plot into episodes,²¹ but being based on a literary text which it is supposed to adhere closely to, it has a known ending and its form is closed in a defined number of episodes. Hence, there is no chance of a continuation or the production of another season. However, the construction of individual episodes of the classic serial is consistent with the conventions of the television genre the serial as such is, which imposes some restraints upon the producers. William Slater, the Head of Serials Department of the BBC in the 1970s, in an interview included in Lauritzen’s 1981 study, talks about the dramatic potential of a given source text and makes an interesting point about the structure of episodes: “In order to make a serial, you really require, if it is a six part serial, ideally six points of conflict that one can write about. Otherwise you are meandering and not getting anywhere” (quoted in Lauritzen 1981:52). In other words, the serial structure requires three major technical manipulations: division of the plot of the source text into a number of episodes, usually of even length,²² structuring each episode around a “conflict” and ending it in a way that encourages further viewing. Newcomb in *Encyclopedia of Television* (2004) explains what happens in the intervals between the episodes:

The time lapse between episodes allows occasion for the audience to assimilate, discuss and come to terms with the difficulties of the narrative. The extended narrative time offered by serialisation makes possible the in-depth exploration of characters, their motivations and development, the analysis of situations and events. (“Miniseries” in Newcomb 2004:1520)

Gałaszka (1996), in his study devoted to television serials and their audience, specifies among the rules guiding the serial also that of presenting everyday

same setting and the same main characters, but each episode has its own independent plot) and miniseries (the plot closes in a limited number of episodes; those include adaptations of literary texts). It is interesting that in Polish the term used for the last type is “traditional serial” (“*serial tradycyjny*”), which gives the product some historical context and suggests a conservative aura. Uszyński also stresses that such production are close to what a feature film is. He observes that miniseries are more realistic, because they tend to be set in a historical context, or at least a specific moment in time. They tend to be broadcast in prime time, once a week, and are more prominently scheduled than sitcoms and soap operas. Uszyński does not refer to the British classic serial, but in his classification it would fall into the category of “*serial tradycyjny*.”

²⁰ It has to be admitted, though, that the classic serial’s viewers can be certain of the moderate character of the surprise: the classic serial is *not* aimed to shock its audience.

²¹ There are cases of adaptations in which the screenwriters manage to close some of the episodes the way the chapters of the source text do, but it is not a rule and it is virtually impossible to adjust the length of individual episodes to the length of the chapters.

²² There are a number of instances in which the first episode, or occasionally the last one as well, are twice as long as the remaining episodes, to engage the audience. It is, among other, the case with *Brideshead Revisited* (1981), *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) and *Bleak House* (2005).

reality. This does not really apply to the classic serial, but it has to be admitted that its audience expects realistic historical setting, costumes and props, which the productions traditionally present. Another element which the classic serial has in common with other television series and serials is the use of the main music theme, especially that played during the opening credits, but also repeated during the episodes (there might be also some themes associated with a given character's appearance). The general idea is that of making the viewer recognise the theme and build the system of meaning that would support and intensify his reception of image (see Gałuszka 1996:215). It also works for those viewers who are not trained enough to await a new episode arranging daily routines around television programs. A characteristic and original score appearing during the opening titles is used to catch the attention of the audience the way a bugle call would.

Unquestionably, serialized adaptations differ significantly from productions designed for cinema screening. Cardwell (2002:194) states firmly: "Television adaptations are not a branch of film adaptations but are a distinct medium-specific form." David Self in *Television Drama: An Introduction* suggests that:

The classic serial or serial adaptation is not planned to be "original drama" nor is it intended to be a reproduction of the novel. Of course it has a loyalty to its inspiration but it should be judged for being itself, another and distinctive form of television drama. (1984:31)

It is worth noting, however, that the differences in the reception of a film and a television production, resulting from the size of the screen and the domestic environment in which television is viewed, have recently become more ambiguous. In analysing television serials, then, we can take into consideration the way they were originally viewed, as that had a great impact on both the episode structure and their reception, but it is interesting as well to see how those serials function as works of art consumed outside the original program scheduling. Nowadays – i.e. in the so-called post-broadcast era – television programs (series and serials included) are released as DVD editions or are available on-line, and can be watched at any time convenient, without the viewers' being bound to the broadcast time. As Geraghty (2009:5) notes, at present: "The very notion of an 'appointment to view' is distinctly old-fashioned given that it is now possible to take programmes out of their time."

Having access to the whole series at once makes the viewing experience different, because a number of episodes can be watched in a row, and the viewers, not the broadcaster, decide about the viewing extent and range. Robin Nelson in his chapter "Studying Television Drama" in *The Television Genre Book* (2008b:14) notes:

One reason why the study of drama on television has lagged behind film (in spite of television's relative predominance in our everyday lives) is that television programmes are short-lived. [...] In the academic world, the content of television was for some time considered unworthy as an object of study. Whereas films might be viewed several times and have had some pretensions to art, TV dramas were dismissed as ephemeral diversions.

This "ephemeral" character has been altered by the fact that in the 1980s VCRs made home recording possible and reduced the danger of missing an episode of

one's favourite serial. Today's wide accessibility to past and current television drama makes such programs far more attractive as an area of research. Television programs of various kinds, for a long time perceived as local and adjusted to the tastes of national audiences, have become internationally accessible, being widely offered in the form of DVD editions as well as on-line. It is precisely this accessibility that has made the analyses included in Part 2 of this study possible.

This study is – inevitably – of an interdisciplinary nature, referring to the classic serial first of all as *an adaptation* of a literary work, but also as a television product, for years enjoying its “event status,”²³ with some cultural significance of its own. It is Part 2 of this monograph, the five case studies, that constitute its main body. However, prior to the analyses of individual serials and their relations with the source texts, it is essential to present the historical context within which the classic serial as a genre developed, because the way the adaptors' have approached the classics has been conditioned by numerous circumstances and conventions which require clarification. Hence, Part 1 opens with Chapter One devoted to the history of the classic serial, the tradition from which it grows, the development it underwent through the decades, and the present condition of the genre. Chapter Two is aimed at outlining the development of the co-existing theoretical approaches to adaptations, beginning with the fidelity approach, through media-specific, comparative, and intertextual ones, to the sociology of adaptations and an interdisciplinary approach. The chronological presentation of the methodologies is not aimed at their hierarchisation or indication that those earlier ones have been abandoned irretrievably. The methodologies coexist and co-function, while their applicability depends largely on the identity of the scholar, since adaptation studies specialists can be found in film studies, media studies and literary studies departments. The outline is presented to create a background and reference for the analyses which can be found further on in this study.

As Elliott, notes, some “theoretical and critical nostalgia” (2013:31) can be observed recently among some of the adaptation scholars, who return to adaptations of classic literary texts and a similar tendency has been noted by Hendrykowski in the 2014 publication devoted to film adaptation. This lends me encouragement to pursue with my present study of the television serial as a form of literary adaptation, and its Part 2 includes case studies being, to a large extent, comparative analyses of selected novels and the classic television serials based on them.

Each chapter devoted to a given serial is structured in the same way. It begins with the role of the source text in its author's literary biography and the historical context in which the novel or novels were published. Next, it refers to their original format and reception, to contrast them eventually with that of the serial. Reference

²³ The term “event-status programming” was used by John Coldwell (quoted in Fabiszak 2005:16) with reference to the fact that some programs, e.g. “television epic mini-series” are “given a special status and marked off from the other programmes” – in other words from what Raymond Williams called “the flow” – and it seems applicable to the classic serial.

is made to the adaptation history of a given source text, with special attention drawn to the original broadcast of the serial subject to analysis. The main body of the analysis is the discussion of the adaptative modifications introduced in the process of transposition, aimed at demonstrating how the literary text is reconstructed in the new medium, with special attention drawn to the modifications made to the plot and the characters, but also referring to the visual sphere, new to the narrative. The visuals (the construction of mise-en-scene, costumes, props, editing, imagery, etc.) are discussed and interpreted as certain compositional solutions applied to reconstruct the represented world, but also as an illustration of the technological possibilities and aesthetic expectations of the times of production.

From the immense catalogue of the classic serials five productions have been selected: *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) (based on John Galsworthy's novels), *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) (based on Evelyn Waugh's novel), *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) (based on Paul Scott's *The Raj Quartet*), *Middlemarch* (1994) (based on George Eliot's novel) and *Bleak House* (2005) (based on Charles Dickens' novel).²⁴ All the serials remain in circulation, as the DVD editions of the older productions appeared at the beginning of the 21st century. What they share is the fact that in each case the serial marked a breakthrough and its broadcast was, in one way or another, a turning point in British television history. Although each of the five productions can be perceived as "the literal-minded visualization of the original," to use Brian McFarlane's words (1996:22), i.e. relying strongly on the novels' dialogue and sticking closely to the source texts' plots, in all of them some formal innovativeness can be observed, which makes them outstanding and provides rich material for analysis, especially as all the texts selected offer much more than a typical marriage plot, and have rather complex narrative structures.

Due to the fact that the classic status of the abovementioned novels is not in all the five cases unquestionable, I would like to refer to one of the most frequently quoted definitions of what a classic is, coming from Italo Calvino's 1986 essay "Why Read the Classics." Calvino formulates there a number of points, one of which is simply that "A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say," hence it can be reread and each time brings up new layers of understanding; which is – despite having being written and published in a clear historical and social context – universal in its message and appeal. The question which arises in the context of classic-novel adaptations is whether those qualities can be found in the adaptation. Foregrounding in the adaptation those elements of the source text, that remain universal and can be understood and internalised by the audience contemporary with the adaptation can be one of the adaptation's major assets.

Discussing the adaptations diachronically makes it possible to present how, on the one hand, British television remained faithful to its generic product, and

²⁴ Appendix 2 presents in tabular form the chronology of the novels' publications, the timeframe within which their plots are set, and the dates of the original broadcast of the serialised television adaptations to date.

on the other what evolution the genre went through, losing, however, in the changing media landscape, its earlier cultural impact on the international arena. The approach applied here can be classified as interdisciplinary, as besides carrying out a detailed comparative analysis of the relationship between an adaptation and its source text, I examine also the cultural, historical and social context in which the adaptations originally functioned, and refer to the television conventions which shaped them. If the aim of this monograph was to show the evolution of the genre only, the selection should have been different – a reasonable choice would be an analysis of a number of adaptations of the same text. My starting point was, however, different. Although I have selected serials, which do reflect the technological, social, economic changes which influenced the form and the approach to adaptations during the forty years which separate the first and the last of the serials discussed, what the selected productions have in common is the achieved balance between modification and faithfulness, sufficient to satisfy both the “knowing” and “unknowing” audience. As the analysis will show, in the productions the plot, the characters, the dialogues underwent modification in the process of transposition from the written to the audio-visual form, while photography, acting and music provided new stimuli. Selecting and analysing adaptations which have been highly evaluated by both the critics and the audience, I can demonstrate the extent to which, during the process of adaptation to the form of the classic serial, the source text can undergo modification and still retain its status as a “faithful” adaptation. I have excluded from the analysis *The Forsyte Saga* made for ITV in 2002, because it departs significantly from Galsworthy’s text, provoking hostility among part of the audience. The 1985 *Bleak House* could have constituted interesting material for analysis, but having already selected two ITV serials from the 1980s, which at the time of their original broadcast caught plenty of critical attention, I have decided to discuss the 2005 *Bleak House* only, a production in which a new approach to the classics was taken. The comparative analysis of the serials selected shows the compromise achieved between the modification and faithfulness, literariness and technology, the literary tradition and the conventions binding on television.

PART I

**The Classic Serial in Its Historical
and Theoretical Contexts**

The Classic Serial – A Historical Overview

“Critics said: ‘Brilliant, obviously.’”²⁵

The roots of the British television classic serial, or in fact of any serial, can be found in the tradition of publishing long nineteenth-century novels in weekly instalments. Such practice was aimed at a reduction of the purchase price and expanding the market, because serialised and simplified versions of literary works were addressed to working-class readers and made literature accessible to the mass audience. As Robert C. Allen claims, in Britain as early as in the 18th century publishers offered non-fiction works to subscribers in low-cost instalments, but it is the 1836 publication of Charles Dickens’ *Pickwick Papers* that marks the beginning of part-issue publication of “original fiction” (Allen 1995:29). Caughie (2012:59) quotes Dr Thomas Arnold, Headmaster of Rugby School, expressing in his 1839 sermon his discontent with the publication of cheap, popular novels in instalments. Arnold complained that periodical publication made the readers’ minds occupied for a long time, kept alive “so constant an expectation,” made the novels “dwell upon the mind” and became a frequent matter of conversation, which he considered “injurious.” Undoubtedly, the same “accusations” can be posed against television serial productions, as serialised drama has a similar impact upon the viewers’ imagination, which most likely contributes to its popularity.

In the early 20th century it was the radio, which Caughie (2000:18) calls “television’s immediate ancestor,” that became the medium through which the classic novels were popularised in their dramatized form. The BBC Radio presented dramatized readings of classic novels, eventually serialized, e.g. in 1938 Trollope’s *Barchester Towers* underwent a serial reading process. John Reith, the Managing Director of the BBC (1923-1927) and later its Director General (1927-1938), formulated the mission of the corporation as one to inform, educate and entertain. By conducting that mission the BBC was to make the English better citizens. Reith believed that knowledge of the country’s cultural heritage was essential in the process, and that conviction led him to the interest he took in

²⁵ The quotation comes from Andrew Johnson’s 2008 article on costume drama written for *The Independent* following the broadcast of Andrew Davies’ adaptation of *Little Dorrit*, and although it refers to that production specifically, it includes an ironic undertone, which reflects the contemporary status of the classic serial.

productions based on novels of the quality already acknowledged. Reith left the BBC in 1938 when television was in the process of establishing itself as a major mass medium, but “an ethos of public service broadcasting had been established [...]” (Cooke 2003:9).

According to Giddings and Selby, dramatizations of classic novels became an on-going feature of radio broadcast drama from March 1939. On March 31, 1939, Val Gielgud²⁶ announced in *Radio Times*²⁷ that each Friday evening was to be devoted to drama and features.²⁸ The same year *The Prisoner of Zenda*, based on Anthony Hope’s novel, adapted for the radio by Jack Inglis, became the prototype of the BBC classic serial with its faithfulness to the dialogue and to the original story. It consisted of 9 episodes and was broadcast at 5.20 p.m. on Sundays (see: Giddings and Selby 2001:11). Once the model had been established, further adaptations followed, with Dickens’ novels being the most popular ones. Besides Dickens, the radio producers favoured Trollope, Austen, Scott, Thackeray, Hardy, Gaskell, George Eliot, the Brontës, Galsworthy and Bennett. A new slot for the so-called adult classic novel was assigned for Sunday evenings between 8.30 and 9.00. In other words, the classic serial already existed on the radio when television became commonplace. However, it has to be stressed that the classic serial remained the radio’s on-going feature and at present (i.e. late 2015) BBC Radio 4 offers Classic Serial on Sundays at 3.00 p.m., repeated on Saturdays at 9.00 p.m.

The first BBC television broadcast took place in November 1936; programs were shown six days a week, for one hour in the afternoon and one hour in the evening, within a radius of 25 miles from the production centre, Alexandra Palace, located in North London. In such circumstances the number of viewers was limited to between 20,000 and 25,000, while the radio had about 9 million subscribers (see Cooke 2003:6). The first adaptation of a literary classic was a 55-minute production of *Pride and Prejudice*, which appeared in 1938 (see Kerr 1982:14). Television broadcasting was interrupted by the war, and returned in 1946.

Television drama was an important feature of the BBC television schedule from the very beginning. Its devotion to the word more than the image, as Caughie argues, could be attributed to the very fact that television, as a broadcast medium, was – and still is – closer to the radio than to the cinema:

Cinema spends [the] first 30 years of its existence with the image and no speech, broadcasting spends first 30 years with speech and no image. As a result cinema develops a narrative based on a highly elaborated visual rhetoric and spectacle which continues even after sound is added;

²⁶ Val Gielgud was at that moment the Head of Productions at the BBC.

²⁷ The BBC weekly television and radio listings magazine, published since 1923.

²⁸ The Features Department of the BBC, which from the 1930s to the 1960s existed alongside the Drama Department, specialized in presenting real-life stories in a form modelled on that of fictional stories. The term “feature” “suggests a factual basis as opposed to an entirely fictional construct” (Stanton, Banham 1996:299). “Drama” included various types of radio plays and dramatized fictional narratives.

broadcast is a medium of speech, carrying a respect for the written word forward into its drama after the development of television. (Caughie 2000:18)

It has to be stressed, though, that – as Richard Butt suggests – these were adaptations of literary texts that in the early years of television “became the primary vehicle for the creation of a distinct form of television narrative that combined the liveness and intimacy of theatre with film’s mobility of camera and ability to cut between scenes” (2012:161).

On June 7, 1946, the first post-war drama to be televised was G.B. Shaw’s *Dark Lady of the Sonnets*. In 1948 we have the first post-war adaptation, and that is Jane Austen’s *Emma*. As Cooke (2003:9) puts it, television “had the potential advantages of intimacy and immediacy over cinema and theatre, and the advantage of vision over radio, [but] it still needed to prove its worth through its programming.” To achieve that aim it drew from British literary and theatrical heritage, and television drama in the early years of audio-visual broadcasting included mostly stage plays adapted for television. As the first broadcasts were short, there were usually only selected excerpts from the plays presented in the theatres. Eventually plays written specifically for television appeared. What has to be stressed, however, is the fact that the broadcast was live, and that imposed great limitations upon everybody involved. The camera was static and close-ups became the characteristic feature of a television shot, which remained so even when recording became affordable.

Ellen Baskin in her *Serials on British Television, 1950-1994* claims that British television’s first drama serial was an adaptation of Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*, broadcast in six 30-minute parts beginning on December 12, 1950, Sunday, at 5.30 p.m., addressed mostly to young viewers. According to Giddings and Selby (2001), the first example of what eventually became the recognisable genre of classic serial was Trollope’s *The Warden* broadcast from May to June 1951 in six 30-minute episodes at 8.00 p.m. on Saturdays. It was followed by *Pride and Prejudice* in 1952 and *Jane Eyre* in 1955, after which many serialized dramatizations appeared. None of the above was recorded. A revolution in this respect came in 1958 with so-called “Ampex taping,” which simply means videotaping. That technological novelty reduced significantly the costs of recording and modified television productions entirely by introducing editing work as a vital part of the production process. According to Giddings and Selby, the first videotaped classic serial was presented in November 1960 and was based on Dickens’ *Barnaby Rudge*. *Mansfield Park* was next, in January 1961.

In those early television adaptations of classic novels much of the original dialogue was retained, for technological and financial reasons most scenes were shot in the studio, and the focus was on the word much more than on the picture, which in the early years of television was small, monochromic and of low definition. Each year brought a number of new adaptations, almost every year one based on a novel by Dickens. Among the texts most frequently adapted in the 1950s there were also novels by Austen and Trollope. In the 1960s the classics most often

chosen for adaptation included works by such literary luminaries as the Brontë sisters, George Eliot, Henry James, Sir Walter Scott and foreign writers like Fjodor Dostoyevski, Alexander Dumas and Ernest Hemingway. Dickens' novels, however, remained the staple.

The popularity of Dickens' novels among those early serialized adaptations, as well as among those later ones, is striking, and various theories have been constructed to explain it. Cardwell (2002) stresses a similar social context in which both Dickens' texts and the classic serial are consumed, which results from their serialized form. Geraghty in her 2012 publication on *Bleak House* (2005) suggests that the apparent compatibility of Dickens and the television serial results from the fact that Dickens, while writing for serial publication:

[...] learnt how to control the potential openness of the serial with the need to plan a complex story which could be written and read over a long period of time and to develop characters who would remain vivid and memorable within such plots. (2012:21)

The plot that can be followed despite the interrupted access to it is an essential element of a successful serial, as it is of a long novel published in a serialized form. Viewers in the early years of television, unlike the readers, did not have a chance to go back in the story if they got lost. In other words, the coherence of the serial's plot and memorability of the characters were vital. Indisputably, one of the qualities of Dickens' writing style is his ability to create characters that cannot be confused with others, no matter how many of them we meet in a novel, and that fact provides one of the possible explanations of the popularity of his works among television producers.

The 1950s brought about a major change on the television market. Until 1955 the BBC held the monopoly for providing its increasing number of subscribers with the television programs they could be informed, educated and entertained by. However, in that very year, following the 1954 Television Act, the first commercial television channel was launched, ITV, and it made television drama part of its broadcasting, too. The classic serial, however, remained the speciality of the BBC. Although ITV productions were mostly contemporary drama, some adaptations appeared among them as well. Actually, an adaptation of *The Scarlet Letter* was shown during the first week of its broadcast.

ITV targeted a new audience, the working-class, which the BBC was also forced to compete for since the competitor's emergence. The competition concerned, among other areas, contemporary drama as, in 1956, ITV launched *Armchair Theatre*, offering contemporary pieces written specifically for television broadcast. A similar product called *The Wednesday Play* (transformed into *Play for Today* in 1970) was introduced by the BBC in 1964, once (in December 1962) Sidney Newman, formerly connected with ITV, became the head of the BBC Television Drama Department and split it into three divisions: series, serials and plays. That decision had a major impact on the classic serial. As Lauritzen (1981:8) notes: "The establishment of a separate department for the production of adaptations in serial form has [...] consolidated the genre and the BBC Classic Serials have a reputation

of being high-quality products.” In 1963 Donald Wilson became the first Head of Serials, but two years later he gave this position up to work on an adaptation of John Galsworthy’s *The Forsyte Saga*.

In April 1964 the BBC launched its second channel, BBC2, and devoted Saturday evenings to classic-novel serial adaptations addressed to more mature audience. It started with *Madame Bovary* in the very first week of its transmission. As Giddings (1999) puts it: “This allowed for a more sophisticated and sometimes daring choice of novel and a more adult treatment in longer episodes. The classic serial took a considerable step forward.” In 1967 a 26-episode adaptation of *The Forsyte Saga* was broadcast, innovative in its unprecedented length and introduction of serious adult issues. It was aimed at attracting new BBC2 subscribers and it worked surprisingly well in this respect. The serial was repeated on BBC1 on Sunday evenings starting in September 1968, with an audience of 18-million viewing its last episode. It turned out to be the last classic serial made in black and white, while it was BBC2 that became the first channel to broadcast in colour the same year the *Saga* was originally shown. The first classic-novel serialised adaptation to be shot in colour was *Vanity Fair* broadcast in December 1967.

The 1960s introduced classic serials which were addressed to adult audience and scheduled late in the evening. *The Forsyte Saga* (1967), which attracted the largest audience any classic serial had enjoyed before, had its faithful viewers in various age groups, both male and female, which is illustrated by two television shows²⁹ from 1969 dealing with the serial’s immense popularity labelled “The Forsyte Phenomenon.” This particular production became the first classic serial to be marketed successfully abroad, making both public and private television companies recognize the classic serial as a new attractive product to generate profits from selling overseas, to the U.S. in particular. The surprising popularity of the serial with the American audience led to the birth of *Masterpiece Theatre*,³⁰ a drama anthology television series which premiered during prime time on PBS on January 10, 1971. The series has been devoted to the presentation of acclaimed British productions, most of which belong to the genre of the classic serial.

Granada television in 1971 produced the costume series *Upstairs Downstairs*, set in Edwardian times in which a large section of *The Forsyte Saga* was set, with seventy five 50-minute-long episodes, not based on a literary text, but produced in a way which resembled a classic-novel adaptation. It did not, however, focus on the upper-class characters’ life only, but – unlike *The Forsyte Saga* – included well-developed characters belonging to the “downstairs” people.³¹ The fact that

²⁹ *Late Night Line-up* and *Talkback* can be found among the special features of the DVD edition of *The Forsyte Saga* (1967/2004), and will be referred to in more detail in Chapter 3.

³⁰ In 2008 the word “Theatre” was dropped and what is now officially labelled as *Masterpiece* consists of three sections, one of which is *Masterpiece Classics*, which still presents British serialised period drama, e.g. *Downton Abbey* (2011-).

³¹ The same formula will be used four decades later in *Downton Abbey*.

Granada became interested in serialised costume drama proved that it was good business, and was not only part of the mission to educate and improve the public.

In the 1970s the classic serial, as well as costume drama in general, flourished. Among the most successful examples, both in the U.K. and abroad, were *I, Claudius* (BBC2 1970), an adaptation of two novels by Robert Graves, and *The Pallisers* (BBC2 1974), adapted from Anthony Trollope's novels. Charles Dickens' and Jane Austen's novels remained popular with the adaptors, but new serials were made based on Thomas Hardy's *The Woodlanders* (BBC2 1970), *Jude the Obscure* (BBC2 1971) and *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (BBC2 1978, the first serial to be shot with light-weight cameras). The largest enterprise, however, was the 20-episode adaptation of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (BBC2 1972-73) which, as Cooke puts it: "consolidated BBC2's reputation as the channel responsible for 'quality' literary drama" (2003:112). The 1970s proliferated in forms of serious drama other than historical or costume, frequently addressing social and political issues of the time. Cooke summarizes the decade as follows: "[...] it was a decade in which television drama itself began to be taken seriously, by academics and others, as a significant cultural form" (2003:126).

The 1970s saw also a new approach to adapting Dickens. In 1977 ITV broadcast a new adaptation of *Hard Times*, in which authentic locations and elaborate set designs were used, and which was addressed to adult viewers, unlike most of the earlier adaptations of Dickens' works which were aimed at making that novelist's works attractive to the young. As Giddings and Selby (2001) note, in the same decade BBC Radio Four released a number of high-quality productions based on Dickens' novels and an increased academic interest in the fiction of that particular Victorian novelist was also observable.

Until the 1980s, it was the BBC that was associated with quality adaptations of literary classics. However, two Granada productions of the early 1980s undermined the BBC's position as that of a monopolist in the field. It was partly connected with the financial situation and the Conservative Party taking over power. Inflation was high, and the corporation, funded mainly from revenue generated from the licence sold to the public, had to control its spending. The BBC continued to produce classic-novel adaptations, but its reputation was undermined by Granada's eleven-episode *Brideshead Revisited* based on Evelyn Waugh's novel, broadcast in 1981 and the 14-episode adaptation of Paul Scott's *The Raj Quartet*, which appeared three years later as *The Jewel in the Crown*. The reception of both exceeded everybody's expectations. The former won seven BAFTA awards (out of thirteen nominations) and one Emmy award (out of eleven nominations), the latter a number of prestigious awards, including that of the Royal Television Society and BAFTA, Emmy and Golden Globe. *Brideshead* was innovative, as it became the first television serial to be shot entirely on location, exploiting the beauty of Oxford and the Castle Howard estate which served as Brideshead. The serial became extremely popular also in

the U.S., where it created a certain fashion for the 1920s clothes and parties. The success of *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) proved that a classic serial could be enjoyed by people far beyond the social group whose life it depicted. Self (1984:31) expresses his astonishment at the serial's popularity by asking a rhetorical question: "[...] who would have predicted that a tale of decadent, aristocratic lapsed Catholics would have proved as popular as did *Brideshead Revisited*?"³²

The two above-mentioned productions, being shot mostly on location, introduced cinematic techniques into the genre to an unprecedented extent, and contributed greatly to the way the classic serial developed its identity in the decade which followed. The two titles were also frequently alluded to in the debate over what "quality television" is or should be, as well as in the heritage debate to which I will refer further on. Ironically, those two Granada productions have been quite frequently wrongly attributed to the BBC, which only indicates the extent to which the classic serials have been traditionally associated with that corporation. Having suffered the blow, the BBC struggled to regain its position with *The Borgias* (1981), *The Barchester Chronicles* (1982), as well as more Austen and Dickens adaptations, but their style was simpler than of the Granada productions.

It would appear that the immense success of the two Granada classic serials helped to achieve recognition of the existence of the genre *per se*. Paul Kerr's article "Classic Serials – To Be Continued" was published in a 1982 issue of *Screen*, and, as Cardwell notes, was one of the first attempts to treat television adaptations as a separate genre. Actually, Kerr complains about the classic serial "escaping extended consideration"³³ (1982:7), noting also certain homogenization in television adaptations, calling the classic serial "a series of serials," as "the very profound formal differences that exist between novels become all but invisible on television."³⁴ Also Rachel M. Brownstein states that "literal-minded literary films made for television in the 1970s and 1980s" look and feel like "chapters of a single interminable Classic Serial [...] particulars and peculiarities of individual novels and novelists were absorbed in its overeager embrace" (Brownstein 2001:79). With *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) the classic serial gained a new, lavish look, which carried the serial into the 1990s, bringing new break-through productions sharing "the same kind of 'look' and style: sumptuous, high-gloss period detail allied to languidly paced, cinematic framing" (*The Listener* 1983 quoted in Self 1984:29). The same accusations would appear again in the 1990s, when the genre transformed itself into its most recognisable and marketable form.

While discussing the classic serial from the 1980s we step inevitably into the so-called heritage debate, which developed in the mid-1980s, and continued well

³² More discussion of the two serials' popularity can be found in Chapter 4 and 5.

³³ The same point is made again in 2000 by Caughie, who notes that it is "treated with much less respect by academic criticism despite its immense popularity with international audience" (Caughie 2000:206).

³⁴ The same argument will be used against "heritage films."

into the 1990s, concerning British costume drama of the time.³⁵ The publications which contributed greatly to the heritage debate include those of Cairns Craig, Andrew Higson and Tana Wollen, who in the early 1990s expressed their critique of “British heritage films.” However, as Claire Monk notes in “The British Heritage-film Debate Revisited” (2002:187), the term “heritage cinema” was originally used with reference not to the 1980s films, but to a number of patriotic British films of the 1940s. In the mid-1980s the term “heritage films” appeared in the press with reference to the costume drama of the decade, particularly in the case of Merchant Ivory productions,³⁶ i.e. *A Room with a View* (1985), *Maurice* (1987), *Howards End* (1992) and *The Remains of the Day* (1993), but not limited to them.³⁷ There is a clear connection between “heritage films” and the classic serial of the 1980s and the 1990s observed by a number of scholars, first of all resulting from the fact that the majority of heritage films were adaptations of English literary works. Caughie (2000:206) while defining the classic serial suggests that it “[...] has bundled with the 1980s and 1990s British cinema into a genre known as ‘heritage’ and consigned to the depths of nostalgia and the marketing of the past,” while Giddings and Selby refer directly to the similarities between *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) and “heritage productions”: “[...] the series bodied forth values and iconography of the Thatcher revolution – golden days of a wealthy youthful elite, high-class conspicuous consumption, Oxbridge as the backdrop location, a new emphasis on ‘heritage’” (2001:58). Higson in his 1993 article points to that connection between the heritage feature films and *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) as well as *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984), due to the fact that several of the films were partly funded by television companies, and Charles Sturridge who directed *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) was the director of two such feature films, i.e. *A Handful of Dust* (1988) and *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1991). Also Wollen writing about “nostalgic screen fictions of the 1980s” lists the two serials alongside all the feature films of the decade that were otherwise labelled as “heritage.” Craig in his 1991 article for *Sight and Sound* makes the same connection:

Indeed Merchant-Ivory [...] might claim to have originated the genre, though Sturridge and Derek Granger could equally assert that they established the territory back in 1981 with their television production of Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*. (Craig 1991/2001:3)

³⁵ Some of the sections which concern the heritage debate were originally published in a modified version in my 2014 article “British Costume Drama and the Heritage Debate” [in:] *The Subcarpathian Studies in English Language, Literature and Culture*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, pp. 198-207.

³⁶ A certain irony lies in the fact that those films were actually written, directed and produced by a non-British team, i.e. an American (James Ivory), a German-born Jew of Polish-Jewish ancestry married to an Indian (Ruth Praver Jhabvala), and an Indian Muslim (Ismail Merchant). Those very English films in terms of their setting, the literary texts they were based on, and the cast, were made from a non-English perspective, which was overlooked in the critique which was directed at them.

³⁷ Other feature films which appear most frequently in that context include, among others: *A Passage to India* (1984), *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1991) and *The Madness of King George* (1994).

One of the main accusations levelled against heritage films, and the serials mentioned in the debate, was that the productions were said to be celebrating the lifestyle and values of the privileged classes and being “the projection of dominant ‘national’ values,” presenting “a specific version of the ‘national’ past which serves bourgeois, southern-English hegemony” (Monk 2002:192). Those productions were criticised for presenting the upper class and aristocracy as the classes whose culture and values constituted the essence of Englishness, transforming “the heritage of the upper class into the national heritage [...] [while] the quality of the films [lend] the representation of the past a certain cultural validity and respectability” (Higson 1993:93), and focusing on “artful and spectacular projection of an elite, conservative vision of the national past” (Higson³⁸ in Monk 2002:180).

Heritage films were criticised for presenting the privileged classes’ life style surrounded by the aura of nostalgia and thus creating an escape from the social problems of the time. Other accusations concerned overaesthetisation of the past and paying too much attention to the visuals. Both Sargeant (1998) and Monk (2002, 2011) stress the fact that the 1980s heritage film critique applied the term “heritage films” negatively, suggesting that the costume drama of the 1980s was aimed at presenting the past as “an attractively packaged consumer item” (Hewison³⁹ quoted in Sargeant 1998:302), focusing on the costumes, props and locations more than the plot. Higson observes that in such productions “the heritage culture becomes the object of public gaze, while [...] the *dramatis personae* almost never admire the quality of their surroundings” (2003:39). In other words, the views of picturesque landscapes, estates or historic locations are included in the productions for the audience’s visual pleasure, not for that of the characters in the story.⁴⁰

The critique of heritage films was also connected with that of the whole “heritage industry,” which the government in the 1980s supported and promoted, passing two National Heritage Acts (of 1980 and 1983). In the 1980s costume drama became part of that heritage industry, which resulted from the recognition of the marketable quality of British television productions and costume drama, especially for the American market. As Miller, another critic of the productions in question, puts it: “Adaptations of British novels and histories proved so popular in the U.S. that heroic reconstructions of a lost Englishness became a means of garnering export sales even if they drew opprobrium for faux-historical, elite foci” (2010:86). In the 1980s and 1990s British past started to be perceived as part of the new enterprise culture, and films as well as television productions celebrating that past matched the image of Britishness to be marketed both at home and abroad.

³⁸ The quotation comes from Andrew Higson’s 1996 article “The Heritage Film and British Cinema.”

³⁹ The quotation comes from Robert Hewison’s 1987 publication *The Heritage Industry*.

⁴⁰ There are exceptions, contradicting Higson’s view, which can be found quite easily in the classic serial, e.g.: Charles Ryder admires the sight of Brideshead in its glamour, just as Elizabeth Bennet is overwhelmed by the beauty of Pemberley. In both case the viewers participate in the protagonists’ aesthetic experience.

In these circumstances, the BBC classic serial in the 1990s reached its most recognisable form, and flourished, as did costume drama in general.⁴¹ The most outstanding of the early 1990s television productions was *Middlemarch* (1994), based on George Eliot's novel. As Giddings and Selby claim, "It had been internally resolved that the reception of *Middlemarch* would decide whether or not the Corporation was to continue with classic novel dramatizations" (2001:89). The serial was a success, as it satisfied both the audience, and the critics. More productions followed. As Elliott (2003:271) notes:

[...] in the 1990s the BBC considerably revamped its adaptation style, partly in response to competition from LWT⁴² and partly due to the infusion of more cinematic styles in television generally. It added extradiegetic music, employed more camera angles and movements, and devised melodramatic back stories.

Although the differences in style could be already observed in *Middlemarch* (1994),⁴³ it was the BBC's new Jane Austen adaptations that caused a real breakthrough. It started with *Persuasion* (1995), followed by *Pride and Prejudice* broadcast the same year. The basic difference between these two adaptations and the earlier (numerous) incarnations of Austen's texts was the use of attractively shot locations, as well as authentic interiors, and the fact that the whole miniseries was shot on film, not on tape. It was also much more dynamic than the previous adaptations, and contained many more sexual connotations: "The social and sexual opportunities of all the Bennet girls [...] are explored as never previously. Darcy's dark, brooding sexual magnetism is more fully suggested than ever before" (Giddings and Selby 2001:121). Birtwistle and Conklin in *The Making of Pride and Prejudice* (1995:iii) quote a cartoon from *The Guardian* showing Jane Austen and a publisher saying: "Let's save the bodice-ripping for the television adaptation, Miss Austen," which appeared in response to the gossip that the planned adaptation was to be about "sex and money." The same publication also mentions using "the English landscape as a player in the film"⁴⁴ to an extent exceeding that of *Brideshead Revisited* (1981).

Pride and Prejudice started what can be called Austen-mania, becoming eventually a whole new business, with the locations used in that television production transformed into (and even advertised as) major tourist attractions. Giddings and Selby mention "the *Pride and Prejudice* factor," which according to them "assumed the characteristics of a saint's cult, complete with hagiography, shrines for pilgrims to visit, scriptures, habits and holly relics" (2001:121).

⁴¹ Cooke (2013:94) suggests that the high-quality classic serials that appeared on the market launched by the BBC in the 1990s were a result of the competitive environment created by the 1990 Broadcasting Act. A multi-channel television system that emerged was much more difficult than the tripartite one that existed until then (consisting of BBC, ITV and Channel 4).

⁴² London Weekend Television – then the ITV franchise holder for Greater London at weekends.

⁴³ Those will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

⁴⁴ These are the words of Gerry Scott, the production designer, who was trying to explain the visual concept of the serial (quoted in Birtwistle, Conklin 1995:37).

Most critics agree that the classic serial developed in the 1980s and 1990s its distinct visual style consisting in the presentation of, as Cardwell (2002:80) puts it, “beautiful, pictorial images, strung together smoothly, slowly and carefully,” with “elegant, decorous or wistful orchestral music on [the] soundtrack.” In that way such adaptations became an example of “bourgeois” television, whose cultural status was supported by its close connection with literature considered “classic,” and by the style which was close to the cinematic, and resembled that of “highbrow” films. Expensive as the costume drama productions were, they were worth investing in, as the demand for them, both at home and abroad, increased. Nelson in his “Costume Drama” entry to *The Television Genre Book* (2008a:49) characterises the classic serial with specific reference made to the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* as a production exemplary for the genre:

An abstract of a “costume drama” based on a classic novel might cite dashing heroes and attractive young women, perhaps dancing in colourful costumes, and above all a love story. There would be fine houses in verdant parklands, horses and carriages, romance and ultimately wedding. Andrew Davies’s 1995 BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* illustrates all of these generic characteristics.

He also attributes the success of the mid-1990s costume drama to its being a combination of “traditional narrative romance form and heritage splendour” (Nelson 2008a:52). Cooke summarizes the reasons for the popularity of such productions as *Pride and Prejudice* similarly to Nelson:

The country houses, landscapes, furniture and costumes that are put on display in the serial may have provided the necessary qualities for “heritage export” but what the story boiled down to was a good old-fashioned love story, a high-culture soap opera with its romance updated for a 1990s audience. (2003:168)

We can conclude, then, that in the 1990s the classic serial guaranteed its viewers (predominantly female) what they had learned to expect: traditional plots (in most cases involving a romance), well-constructed characters whose problems could be understood even from the 20th-century perspective, witty dialogues, ravishingly beautiful costumes, richly decorated houses and the English countryside (possibly on a sunny day).

“The *Pride and Prejudice* factor” stimulated public interest in the serial’s locations, which happened to belong to the National Trust. Sargeant analyses the way in which a connection was established between what was called “heritage drama” and a particular cultural and entrepreneurial activity consisting in: “the marketing and consumption of Britain’s cultural heritage as a tourist attraction [...]” (2000:301) in two of her articles,⁴⁵ and Monk refers to that phenomenon as well. The activities taken up by the National Trust aimed at advertising some of the country houses as film or television serials locations. Actually, the National Heritage Acts

⁴⁵ “The Darcy Effect: Regional Tourism and Costume Drama” (1998) and “Making and Selling Heritage Culture: Style and Authenticity in Historical Fictions on Film and Television” (2000).

of 1980 and 1983 mentioned earlier allowed “wider official national promotion of heritage industry defined by the preservation of the landscape and private built properties of the past by means of commodification and commercial exploitation” (Monk 2002:186). The activities of the conservation lobby were “said to identify with the private property of the upper classes as in the public interest, and thus to secure public acceptance of the values and interests of the propertied classes as national values and the national interest” (Monk 2002:187). Sargeant mentions the 1996 National Trust brochure for Belton House and Sudbury Hall which were used as locations in the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice*, which includes photographs of Jennifer Ehle’s as Lizzy Bennet and Colin Firth’s as Darcy. “Appearance on screen undeniably attracted visitors to Belton, Lyme and Sudbury; the BBC *Pride and Prejudice* received the top award from the British Tourist Board in 1996 for its outstanding contribution to tourism [...]” (Sargeant 1998:182). This is not an isolated case, as Higson gives an example of the “Movie Map” launched in 1998 by Tourism Minister, who expressed her gratitude to television and film producers as follows: “Thanks to the success of our film and TV exports, many parts of Britain are now well known to people across the world” (2003:58).⁴⁶ Tourism, beyond any doubt, brings large revenues, and what attracts foreigners to Britain are its historic sites: “a powerful attraction is the combination of visible history and beautiful countryside” (Fowler⁴⁷ in Sargeant 1998:177). Such interconnectedness of a number of cultural industries including the discussed here heritage, museums, tourism, publishing and television led to some controversies, though, and became part of the public discourse. As Sargeant notes:

Some correspondence in the press accused the National Trust of aiding the vulgarisation of serious art in abetting filmed novels: “[...] Instead of protecting this inheritance, the National Trust is in effect creating theme parks: surely a task better left to Disney?” But the National Trust has gratefully received location fees (for Lacock⁴⁸ a tidy £20,000 per day), increased admissions (up 59% and 42% in 1996 to Sudbury and Lyme, the interior and exterior of Mr Darcy’s Pemberley), and the generally good media publicity resulting from collaboration. While perennially blamed for being middle-class, middle-aged and middle-England, visibility of its properties may encourage a more varied membership. (Sargeant 1998:181)

However, the heritage-bound advertising of Britain decreased once New Labour took power in 1997 and some “rebranding” took place, leading to “cutting heritage down” (Powell 1998) by the Labour culture minister.

Davies’ adaptation of Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* not only contributed to making English country houses popular tourist destination, but also marked

⁴⁶ The effect of film and television productions on visitor numbers to screened locations has been studied by Tooke and Baker (1996), and the increase in the number in the tourists visiting such locations is quite impressive: e.g. in Stamford the number of visitors increased in the year which followed the original broadcast of *Middlemarch* (1994) by 27%, although no unusual events were taking place in the town at that time.

⁴⁷ Sargeant is quoting here P. Fowler’s 1992 *The Past in Contemporary Society*.

⁴⁸ Lacock was used as a location in *Pride and Prejudice* (1995) and *Cranford* (2007), among others.

a breakthrough in the approach to the literary text in a classic-novel adaptation; it showed a tendency for exercising greater freedom in the interpretation of the source text than could have been expected in a classic serial. As Cartmell (2010:22) notes, in the serial we can observe:

[...] a “preservation” of Austen’s text in its attention to language and historical detail, an “interpretation” as it reads the novel from a male rather than female perspective, and as a “translation” as it is inevitably of its own time rather than a recreation of the early 19th century.

Also both Elliott and Geraghty note that a number of adaptations which appeared since the 1990s “attempt to be faithful to nineteenth-century furniture and décor but reject and correct Victorian psychology, ethics and politics and more particularly incorporate modern ways of understanding and expressing love” (in Geraghty 2012:34). In other words, those adaptations aim at presenting contemporary passions, attractive and understandable for the viewers, in exotic settings that the past provides. Also Giddings and Selby (2001:191) point out that in the 1990s:

There was a noticeable tendency readily to abandon the old BBC tradition of faithfully rendering a classic novel in favour of rewriting, or considerably readjusting, novels to suit the perceived and expected feminist or politically correct requirements of today [creating characters] more comprehensible to modern sensibilities.

They give examples of 1998 *Vanity Fair* and later adaptations of Dickens, stressing the shift which took place, moving away from the established tradition of the genre “in which broadcasting played the role of midwife aiding the delivery of a classic novel into a new life as broadcast drama” (2001:192). Both *Vanity Fair*, and *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of Moll Flanders* adapted by Davies for ITV in 1996 revealed strong satirical qualities, which was also a new element in the classic serial.

Interestingly, Andrew Davies, at present informally referred to as “the king of adaptations,” stood behind the most successful classic serials of the decade. He wrote the screenplays of a vast number of classic-novel adaptations made both for the BBC and ITV. These following *Pride and Prejudice* include: *Emma* (ITV 1996), *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of Moll Flanders* (ITV 1996), *Vanity Fair* (BBC 1998), *Wives and Daughters* (BBC 1999), *Daniel Deronda* (BBC 2002), *Bleak House* (2005), *Northanger Abbey* (ITV 2007), *A Room with a View* (ITV 2007), *Sense and Sensibility* (BBC 2008) and *Little Dorrit* (BBC 2008). The list shows not only Davies’ contribution, but also the extent to which Granada Television assimilated the genre. Two other notable classic serials of the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century, to which the screenplay was not authored by Davies, were *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (BBC 1996) and *Lorna Doone* (BBC 2000).

In the early 2000s a tendency towards making single-episode costume drama emerged (e.g. *Mayor of Casterbridge* (2003) adapted for ITV), but the classic serial did not cease to exist, and most of the new productions, as well as older ones, were released as DVD editions, supplied with various additional materials.

Among the best received new productions of the decade was a BBC adaptation of Gaskell's *North and South* (2004), being frequently compared to the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* in the way it carried the main love theme. The production was very well received by the audience, who voted it "Best Drama" in 2004 on the BBC website's annual poll. In 2005 a new adaptation of *Bleak House* saw the daylight. Geraghty in her 2012 book on that adaptation, notes a change taking place in the visual form of the classic serial, made apparent in that particular production:

[The] interest in style as to-be-looked-at rather than to-be-looked-through was a challenge to the classic serial's more conservative tendencies throughout the 1990s [...] By the 2000s [...] it was clear that classic serials had moved decisively away from visuals concentrating either on transmission of the source or, in heritage mode, on transmission of the landscape and were becoming "stylistically more innovative, varied and reflexive."⁴⁹ (2012:104)

The innovations Geraghty is writing about could be observed in the manner *Bleak House* (2005) was filmed and marketed. The way the interiors and exteriors are shot shows a withdrawal from the "heritage" aesthetics. An entire novelty, however, was the fact that the marketing strategy for the serial was based on its assumed soap-opera qualities. It was broadcast immediately after *EastEnders*, in approximately 30-minute episodes (except for the first one, which was twice as long), i.e. in the format characteristic for soap operas, not the classic serial in which episodes are traditionally about an hour in length. Geraghty quotes Nigel Stafford-Clark, the producer of *Bleak House* (2005), explaining the creators' intentional connecting of Dickens' novel with the soap opera genre:

Dickens was unashamedly writing for a mainstream popular audience and that tends to get slightly forgotten today because his books have become "classics." The BBC's intention, therefore, was that *Bleak House* achieve that same popularity and bring Dickens back to the audience for which he was writing. (2012:13)

Such advertising, however, caused numerous controversies, which I will be referring to in Chapter 7 devoted to an analysis of this particular production.

Other classic serials of the decade, well received by the critics and popular with the audience, included another adaptation of *Jane Eyre* (BBC 2006); strongly cast *Cranford* (BBC 2007), which won three BAFTAs as well as a number of other awards, being the first ever adaptation of three novellas by Elizabeth Gaskell; another adaptation of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (BBC 2008); another Dickens' *Little Dorrit* (a joint production of the BBC and American PBS 2008), which was inevitably compared to *Bleak House* (2005), having been adapted by the same screenwriter and shown in the same 30-minute format with the exception of the first episode; *Sense and*

⁴⁹ The phrase in inverted commas is a quotation from Sarah Cardwell's 2007 article "Literature on the Small Screen: Television Adaptations" [in:] Cartmell, D., Whelehan, I. (eds.) *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 190.

Sensibility (BBC 2008) with much more explicit sexual connotations than any of the previous adaptations of the novel and in its aesthetics coming back to the exploration of the lavish beauty of the countryside and estate houses; *Emma* (BBC 2009), the reception of which was mixed;⁵⁰ and *Return to Cranford* (BBC 2009), being a Christmas special two-part sequel based on two novellas and one short story by Gaskell.

Granada did not give up upon the classic serial in the 21st century either. In 2002, a new adaptation of *The Forsyte Saga* was launched, having its memorable forerunner to compete against. Shot in colour, on location, exploring the beauty of the costumes and the interiors, it included the plot of the first of Galsworthy's trilogies. Its success, however, was moderate. In 2007 ITV broadcast four adaptations of Jane Austen's novels within *The Jane Austen Season*, which included three new ones, i.e. *Mansfield Park*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*.⁵¹ The year 2009 brought an adaptation of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, which received rather mixed reviews.

In September 2009 *The Telegraph* published an article quoting an interview made with Andrew Davies, who suggested, that "BBC costume drama has gone 'downmarket' as bosses refuse to show anything but well-worn classics" (quoted in Singh 2009). Davies claims that the viewers "like bonnets," but the BBC lost interest in the 19th-century drama, with the exception of "the most obvious crowd-pleasers." He was upset by the fact that he had to give up an adaptation of Trollope's *The Pallisers*, and Dickens' *Dombey and Son*, but was asked to work on another adaptation of *David Copperfield*. Davies' opinion seems to indicate that the classic serial has come to the point of exhaustion, despite the fact that there are some texts, sufficiently culturally accredited, which have rarely been adapted, if at all. The BBC reacted to Davies' opinion with its spokesman saying that "period drama is not 'going downmarket' at the BBC. In fact, quite the opposite is true. We are extending our range by delving into new eras and taking a fresh look at classics" (quoted in Rushton 2009). The screenplay of the latest adaptation of *Great Expectations* (2011) was prepared by Sarah Phelps, and Davies' opinion of it was rather critical (despite the general positive reception of the serial). In another interview for *The Telegraph* Davies stated that the production "stripped the heart out of Dickens" by losing the novel's humour (quoted in Singh 2012).

The contemporary critical reception of the BBC's productions referred to above reflects the expectations made about the corporation's responsibility for the classic serial. Two more recent serials are worth mentioning, as they illustrate the BBC's urge to find some new material which could be adapted into the familiar classic serial form. The first one, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, an adaptation of Flora

⁵⁰ Jonathan Brown (2009) from *The Independent* titles his review of the serial: "Has the costume drama had its day?," pondering upon the decreasing popularity of the classic serial and the BBC's consistency in adapting the same classics over and over again.

⁵¹ The fourth adaptation shown within the season was *Emma* made for ITV in 1996.

Thompson's semi-autobiographical novels set in the English countryside at the end of the 19th century, was broadcast between 2008 and 2011, and consisted of four seasons. Although the production's style is consistent with the poetics of the classic serial, the majority of its characters are lower class representatives, unlike in most of the earlier productions belonging to the genre. The serial focuses on the lives of the inhabitants of two closely related Oxfordshire communities – Lark Rise, the hamlet, and Candleford, the town – and was called in the BBC Press Release “a perfect Sunday night winter warmer,” which reflects its family-television quality and pastoral mood. Despite the protests of its faithful 7-million audience the serial was discontinued after the fourth season, as the BBC decided to develop new projects, and the three-part adaptation of *Great Expectations* mentioned above was one of them.

The other new BBC production broadcast since 2012, with the third season broadcast in the spring of 2014⁵² is *Call the Midwife* set in the late 1950s, based on the memoirs of Jennifer Worth, a former nurse, adapted into a serial by Heidi Thomas.⁵³ Although the production is classified as a period drama, and exhibits the meticulousness in sets and props characteristic for the genre, it goes far beyond the usual subject matter in telling the story of a young nurse beginning her professional career as a midwife in the East London slums. The serial won a surprisingly large audience (around 10 million throughout the first two seasons) and was sold to the U.S., receiving positive reviews there as well.⁵⁴ Pippa Harris, Executive Producer of Neal Street Productions responsible for the serial, expressed the following opinion included in the BBC Press Release:

Call the Midwife is a fascinating portrayal of birth, life, death and a community on the brink of huge social change. [...] I think viewers will be gripped by her insight into a world that, whilst being only 50 years ago, is so drastically different from how we now live.

In other words, the 1950s can be treated nowadays as the past remote enough to be attractive for costume drama producers, if we take into consideration the technological advancement which took place since then, and the social changes which resulted from it. The fourth season, to be broadcast in early 2016, will be set in the 1960s, as BBC1 has announced.

Lark Rise to Candleford and *Call the Midwife*, very different in their setting, present, however, a similar nostalgic mood for the community life of the bygone

⁵² The third and the fourth (planned) seasons are no longer adaptations, as the original material has been already exhausted.

⁵³ Thomas is another contemporary screenwriter, after Davies, specialising in adapting period novels into television drama. Before *Call the Midwife* she wrote the adapted screenplays of television series *Madam Bovary* (2000) and both seasons of *Cranford* (2007 and 2009).

⁵⁴ Both *Lark Rise to Candleford* and *Call the Midwife* have been recently broadcast in Poland on cable television channels, BBC HD and BBC Entertainment, respectively, receiving hardly any advertising, and hence attracting very limited audience figures.

era and both have been advertised as “heart-warming.” They are examples of the BBC’s reaching beyond the literary classics, and adapting the non-classic texts into serials stylistically similar to the classic one, and captivating for many, which proves that there still remains a large audience expecting productions of this kind. The most successful production of the early 21st century, however, which turned out to attract both British and foreign audiences, has been *Downton Abbey* (an ITV and PBS coproduction 2010-). This is not an adaptation, but a serialised costume drama set in the early decades of the 20th century, shot in the visual style of the classic serial. Its fourth series was broadcast in the U.K. in the autumn of 2013 gathering an average of 11.8 million viewers, and the fifth one was launched in late September 2014.

Drawing from the tradition of period drama (*Upstairs, Downstairs* and *Gosford Park*, in particular), *Downton Abbey* can be classified as a post-heritage⁵⁵ production, showing the way the title stately home functions on all its levels, presenting equally fully developed characters coming from all social strata, starting with the kitchen maid, through housemaids, footmen, lady’s maid, valet, butler to the lord and lady of the house. The plot resembles a soap opera one with its numerous intrigues and secrets, but the serial’s unquestionable value lies in the diligence with which the period detail has been reconstructed – not only to expose the beauty of dresses, furniture, architecture and the garden, in the “heritage style,” but also to show the “how” of some processes – we can see electricity being provided, the first telephone being installed, and most of all the procedures according to which the estate is run, with their very slow modification being implemented. The international popularity enjoyed by *Downton Abbey* proves once again that British costume drama, be it “heritage” or “post-heritage,” can still be an important export product, apparently satisfying the appetite for a certain “elegant” type of Britishness, and for a quality product such productions have always been.⁵⁶

David Herman in his 2013 *New Statesman* article devoted to *Call the Midwife* and *Downton Abbey* suggests that the popularity of the two productions results from an idealised view of British history and the fact that they do not touch upon any really controversial subjects. As Herman claims, Worth’s memoirs are much

⁵⁵ The term “post-heritage” refers to the phase reached by both film and television productions, as Monk suggests as early as in the 1990s (see Vincendeau 2001:xx). Such productions became more internationally funded, and they show a tendency to “sex up’ and ‘violence up’ their sources” (Vincendeau 2001:xxi). If we define “post-heritage” productions in this way, then the recently highly popular high-budget internationally-funded television productions like *The Tudors* (2007-2010) or *The Borgias* (2011-2013) represent the genre.

⁵⁶ Polish television channel TVP1 began the broadcast of the first and the second series of *Downton Abbey* on March 4, 2013, the third season was broadcast in the spring months of 2014, and the fourth in March 2015. I have been reading some of the Internet fora responses to the serial, very flattering for the production, frequently referring to the way in which the serial fits into the British tradition of costume drama.

richer in the social history and much more realistic than the adaptation is, and it is precisely in that unrealistic quality that he finds an explanation of the popularity of the production:

[...] there is always a friendly bobby on the beat, East Enders are salt of the earth types and, crucially, everyone is white. [...] This is the appeal of *Call the Midwife*. Except for one Asian pimp and a few foul-mouthed underclass mums, everyone is decent and respectable. [...] This is the world we have lost, which bears little resemblance to today's Britain of feral children, family and social breakdown and violence. The result is a huge ratings success. (2013:39)

In 2001 Giddings and Selby summarised the situation of the classic serial at the beginning of the 21st century as follows:

[...] the major companies continue to dominate the production of classic serials. [...] Despite the considerable element of co-production cash involved in such productions, (mainly from the USA and Australia) the major commercial companies and the Corporation successfully managed to maintain artistic control. This control shows in the tone, style and fidelity of the products [...]. Costume dramas, historical epics, classic novel adaptations – call them what you will – continue very much to be the property of the BBC or larger commercial companies, who can often stump up the cash as the result of co-production deals with American or Australian television companies. This will inevitably influence the choice of material and even further, the manner of its treatment. Having pioneered the “British” way of “doing the classics” the BBC may accidentally have created a prototype. This is seen as the way to do the classics, or to handle history (or even indicate what “history” actually is). (2001:197-199)

Although a certain withdrawal from the classics can be observed, as it has been already suggested, *Downton Abbey's* financing, quality, style and the resulting popularity seem to be consistent with Giddings and Selby's diagnosis. Most of present-day costume dramas are big-budget productions. As Nelson notes: “Though the production phenomenon seems peculiarly British, costume dramas reach a world market. Indeed, without co-production funding, the budgets required for a multipart serialisation are unlikely to be realized” (2008a:49). An example of a new type of historical drama, made in co-production, is provided by *The Tudors* (2007-2010) and *The Borgias* (2011-2013). This type of production, however, would deserve an entirely different consideration, as the convention they are made in, and the convention of the classic serial are worlds apart.

The classic serial as a recognisable genre still exists on the market, and despite being in varied ways adjusted to the tastes of the 21st-century audience, it remains relatively conservative in the narrative structure, even in those cases in which the texts adapted are not really “classic.” Its audience in England is still considerable, but its international popularity has diminished, mostly due to the market being dominated by American serials of the so-called new generation, which – as most media studies specialists writing on television serials agree – begins in 1999 with *The Sopranos*. Those new serials and series in most cases break the existing stereotypes and taboos, construct a new type of hero, or rather an antihero, surprise

and puzzle the viewers. Moreover, many of them have become an object of an intellectual fashion into which the classic serial does not fit. The classic serial does not surprise: in the case of adaptations we either know what is going to happen, or we can find this out – the book exists on the market, it is there to check, so the element of the unpredictable, of the “expected unexpected,” which is part of the serials of the new generation, is definitely not there. Another “disadvantage” of the classic serial is the fact that it is a closed entity: the number of seasons is limited to one only. Although there are relatively few new classic serials, the stock to explore and indulge in is immense, as both older (usually remastered) and new productions can easily be found among the DVD editions in constant supply.

Adaptation Studies and the Evolving Theoretical Approaches

“Adaptation has been the bad boy of interart criticism and decreed inartistic art for over a century now [...]”

Kamilla Elliott (2003:133)

The first scholarly publications devoted to the adaptation of literary texts into an audio-visual medium started to appear in the 1950s, when the beginning of “academization of movie culture,” mentioned earlier, could be observed. Those early publications focused on fidelity of film adaptations to the source text, referred to as “the original,” and analyses were mostly case studies evaluating the audio-visual productions’ faithfulness reflected in the inclusion of all the characters and subplots, adherence to the main plot, or faithfulness to what had been referred to as “the spirit” of a novel or a short story (such “spirit,” however, could not easily be defined, and hence was difficult to evaluate). What is characteristic of the fidelity discourse is its normative vocabulary, reflected in the usage of terms like infidelity, betrayal, unfaithfulness, manipulation and loss, with the source text representing “the original” and its adaptation a copy, inevitably imperfect. This critical attitude to adaptation, reflected in the pejorative vocabulary, partly results from the influence of Walter Benjamin’s essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (1936), first published in English in 1968, which had a great impact on adaptation studies at the time of its publication, as the conviction that “film technology obliterates the ‘aura’ – i.e. the authenticity, authority, originality, uniqueness – of the work of art” (Aragay 2005:12) prevailed. The terminology of the fidelity discourse reflects the assumption of an adaptation’s inherent inferiority, and has been refrained from in recent adaptation studies discourse, although traces of it can be found in various publications which appeared over the decades of the development of the field. Gervais, for example, in his 1994 article on the television adaptation of *Middlemarch*, compares the process of adaptation to that of copying masterpieces by student painters: “it is not the real thing but, in some ways and to some spectators, it can become more interesting than *the real thing*⁵⁷” (1994:60), hence depriving adaptation of the “real thing” quality.

⁵⁷ The italics are mine.

In 1957 George Bluestone published *Novels into Film*, which is acknowledged as the first thorough study of the relationship between literature and film. Since then adaptation studies have developed gradually into an academic discipline, taking advantage of both literature and film theories, and applying various theoretical approaches which have evolved significantly over the decades. One of the fundamental questions to be answered in the study of adaptations has been how – to quote Cartmell and Whelehan – “to theorize the textual transitions that occur in the process – whether in the mind of the adaptor, the critic, or the reader/viewer” (2007:1), and Elliott notes that:

Scholars are faced with two choices: they must either treat adaptations as a theoretical impossibility [...], or they must find some way to account for what passes between a novel and film in adaptation without committing semiotic heresy. (2003:4)

The early theoretical approach, represented by Bluestone (1957) and Morris Beja (1979), is usually referred to as **media-specific**, as it assumes that each individual medium has a uniqueness shaped by its own conventions. Bluestone was one of the first theorists to advocate evaluation of any adaptation as an independent artistic creation, and was one of the first not to favour the source text over the adaptation. It was so precisely because he perceived film as a totally separate medium. Naremore summarizes Bluestone’s theoretical approach as follows:

The Bluestone approach relies on an implicit metaphor of translation, which governs all investigations of how codes move across sign systems. Writing in this category usually deals with the concept of literary versus cinematic form, and it pays close attention to the problem of textual fidelity in order to identify the specific formal capabilities of the media. (2000:7-8)

Although the media-specific approach has not been abandoned, it was **the comparative approach** that dominated the adaptation discourse from the 1970s into the 1990s, and is applied by some of the contemporary adaptation studies scholars. In a comparative analysis the focus is on what has been transposed from the novel and what filmic equivalents have been used for the untransferable elements. Comparatists search for equivalence in novel and film, and the methodology involves narrative and semiotic analyses of both novel and film texts, focusing on the two different languages (or signifying systems) that literature and film use. The most acknowledged publications in the comparative mode include, though are not limited to, those by Geoffrey Wagner (*The Novel and the Cinema*, 1975), Michael Klein and Gillian Parker (*The English Novel and the Movies*, 1981), Dudley Andrew (*Concepts in Film Theory*, 1984), and Brian McFarlane’s seminal study *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* (1996). As Cardwell (2002:19) puts it: “Adaptation, according to the traditional comparative model, is the process of adapting one original, culturally defined ‘standard whole’ in another medium.” Cardwell, however, strongly argues against the comparative approach in which an adaptation is called a “version” of a standard whole, and does not treat it as a text itself. She quotes Roger Webster’s opinion that: “Critics who see film versions of

novels largely as adaptations fail to see films as independent texts”⁵⁸ (quoted in Cardwell 2002:20).

The comparative approach encourages the view of adaptation as a form of translation, frequently referred to as “intersemiotic translation.”⁵⁹ As Hutcheon puts it: “[...] in most concepts of translation, the source text is granted an axiomatic primacy and authority, and the rhetoric of comparison has most often been that of faithfulness and equivalence” (2006:16). Andrew (1984:103) also refers to the narrative codes, which, as he claims:

[...] always function at the level of implication or connotation. Hence they are potentially comparable in a novel and a film. The story can be the same if the narrative units (characters, events, motivations, consequences, contexts, viewpoint, imagery, and so on) are produced equally in two works [...] The analysis of adaptation then must point to the achievement of equivalent narrative units in the absolutely different semiotic systems of film and language. Narrative itself is a semiotic system available to both and derivable from both.

Comparative scholars assume that narrative elements link adaptations with the source texts, and that the story can be separated from its mode of telling, as it can be translated from one sign system into another. Cardwell suggests that perceiving adaptation as a form of translation somehow assumes existence of ur-texts, as the story “translated” pre-exists its telling; the medium is simply the mode of presentation. Hutcheon expresses a similar view when referring to comparatists who consider narrative elements as key features linking adaptations to their “sources,” and to each other.

The assumption made in the comparative approach is that in a literary text there are narrative elements which can be translated into the narrative elements of the film, and there are also “visual and aural configuration(s)” (Klein and Parker 1981:57) used to recreate a given novel’s discourse. In other words, what the comparative approach proposes is an analysis of narrative elements and narrative functions of the characters, while descriptive passages are rendered via images, and, together with the music, can (or fail to) create the mood created in the novel through descriptions. The book’s discourse can be recreated through the formal and semiotic qualities of film. And so, Lauritzen in her analysis of individual scenes in *Emma* a 1972 television serial, names two types of the adaptation process: transfer and analogy. She explains the two terms as follows:

The term transfer refers to the inclusion of verbal communication from the novel in the serial [...]. The term analogy refers to the use of alternative forms of communication which either replace verbal communication in the novel (true analogy) or provide alternative, or additional, information. In this context, the use of non-verbal signifying systems such as intonation, movement, gesture and mime will be considered. (1981:126)

⁵⁸ Webster, R. 1993. “Reproducing Hardy: familiar and unfamiliar versions of *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*.” *Critical Survey*, Vol. 5, No.2, p.148.

⁵⁹ The term was used by Roman Jakobson (1959) with reference to “an interpretation of verbal signs by means of nonverbal sign systems” (quoted in Jakobson 1971:261). The method is employed when a written text is transferred to another medium such as film or music.

Klein and Parker (1981:57) also account for the ways in which non-verbal elements can find equivalents in the filmic sign system:

[...] we may regard the total visual and aural configuration of a film (camera position and movement, lighting, editing, and music as well as cultural semiological material) as background, analogous to the novelist's devices of description or metaphoric and tonal language in prose fiction.

The two authors also stress that film conveys a range of cultural signs – the facial expressions, gestures, dialects, dress and style of its characters; the architecture, landscape, and common artefacts of its setting – which can be analysed as the semiotic expression of a culture in a particular historical period.

McFarlane in his study distinguishes between “what may be *transferred* from one narrative to another and what necessarily requires *adaptation proper*,”⁶⁰ and while using the term “adaptation” he refers to those processes “by which other novelistic elements must find quite different equivalences in the film medium [...]” (1996:13). He stresses that the novel

[...] draws on a wholly verbal sign system, the film variously, and sometimes simultaneously, on visual, aural, and verbal signifiers [and] [...] the verbal sign, with its low iconicity and high symbolic function, works conceptually, whereas the cinematic sign, with its high iconicity and uncertain symbolic function, works directly, sensuously, and perceptually. (McFarlane 1996:26-27)

Further, in “reading” a film, we must understand other, extra-cinematic codes as well. These listed by McFarlane include: language codes (involving response to particular accents or tones of voice and what these might mean socially or temperamentally); visual codes (response to these goes beyond mere “seeing” to include the interpretative and the selective); non-linguistic sound codes (comprising both musical and other aural codes); cultural codes (involving all the information which has to do with how people live, or lived, at particular times and places) (see McFarlane 1996:29).

The comparative approach has been popular with a number of Polish scholars. In 1974 Maryla Hopfinger published her seminal work *Adaptacje filmowe utworów literackich. Problemy teorii i interpretacji* (*Film adaptations of literary works. The problems of theory and interpretation*) in which she presents an analysis of adaptation as an intersemiotic translation and concludes that such translation is never complete, because full correspondence between the two sign systems does not exist, and untranslatable levels of literary works remain, while a film text complements the narrative adapted with its own medium-specific material. She also understands film adaptation as a specific reading of a given literary text and as a form of its interpretation. Wojciech Wierzewski in his *Film i literatura* (*Film and literature*), published in 1983, proposes a comparative structural analysis of both the source texts and their adaptations. Seweryna Wyśłouch in *Literatura a sztuki*

⁶⁰ The italics are used in the original.

wizulane (*Literature and visual arts*) (1994) devotes one chapter to adaptations, referring to the concept of intersemiotic translation specifying the rhetorical operations used in adaptation during the process of modification of the plot. Those operations include: permutation (rearrangement of elements), substitution (replacing elements), detraction (reduction of elements) and adjunction (adding new elements). As Wysłouch suggests, rearrangement and reduction characterise adaptations which are close to the original; while adding new elements, or replacing some elements with others are characteristic of adaptations considered to be “loose.” Hendrykowski in *Współczesna adaptacja filmowa* (*A contemporary film adaptation*) (2014) increases the number of such operations to seven, as besides substitution, reduction, inversion and addition, which are equivalents of the four mentioned above, he adds compression (condensation, adapting the source text into a synthetic whole), amplification and stress alteration (the last two being closely related, the former referring to individual elements of the adaptation, and the latter to the overall meaning of the new text).

Comparative theorists make varied attempts at dividing adaptations into categories, usually referring to the degree to which they rely on the source text. They go beyond the early division into “faithful” and “loose” adaptations, frequently applied by reviewers, and reflecting the fidelity approach. Wagner (1975) mentions “transposition, commentary and analogy,” where: transposition takes place when “a novel is directly given on to the screen, with the minimum of apparent interference;” commentary when there is a “different intention on the part of the film-maker, rather than an infidelity or outright violation;” analogy signifies “considerable departure for the sake of making another work of art [...] the director has not attempted to reproduce the original” (see Wagner 1975:222-227). Andrew uses the categories of “borrowing, intersection and transformation” (1984:98-104), while Desmond and Hawks list “close, loose and intermediate adaptations” (2006:44). Wierzewski (1983:37-39) divides adaptations into five categories: faithful adaptation – aimed at popularisation of a literary classic; aesthetic translation – searching for visual equivalents, reflecting “the spirit” of the novel; loose adaptation – showing departure from the source text’s plot while maintaining its mood (e.g. Richardson’s *Tom Jones* (1963)); creative adaptation – enriching the source text with new, creative solutions; and adaptation inspired by a literary work – borrowing some elements from a literary work and developing it in a creative way (e.g. Kurosawa’s *Throne of Blood* (1957)). What is highly significant here is the fact that none of the categorisations above favour one type of adaptation over any other.

The comparative approach seems insufficient to a number of adaptation studies scholars searching for a more comprehensive approach. Cardwell suggests that “even a detailed semiotic deconstruction of an adaptation runs the risk of being limited to a breakdown of components, thus losing sight of the text as a complete artwork” (2002:62). She also points to the fact that a comparative analysis in most cases excludes what is not a translation. In other words, it focuses on the translation

from one signifying system to another, regarding the filmic elements that are new in the film text as irrelevant, and as Cardwell puts it “left uninterpreted” (2002:62).

The late 1990s and the early 21st century saw numerous publications which move the adaptation studies discourse into a broader, intertextual context. As Robert Stam rightly points out, if we assume Gérard Genette’s definition of intertextuality as “the effective co-presence of two texts” in the form of quotation, plagiarism, and allusion, then adaptation “participates in a double intertextuality, one literary and the other cinematic” (Stam 2000:81). In Roland Barthes’ perspective “the text is a fabric of quotations, resulting from a thousand sources of culture” (1968:53), and a number of critics place adaptations in a wider cultural context, acknowledging their intertextuality. Monographs focusing on such an approach include Sarah Cardwell’s *Adaptation Revisited: Television and the Classic Novel* (2002), Kamilla Elliott’s *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate* (2003), Robert Stam’s *Literature Through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation* (2005), Linda Hutcheon’s *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006), Thomas Leitch’s *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: “From Gone with the Wind” to “The Passion of the Christ”* (2007), and Christine Geraghty’s *Now a Major Motion Picture: Film Adaptations of Literature and Drama* (2008). There were also collections of articles reflecting a similar approach, and those include *Pulping Fictions: Consuming Culture Across the English/Media Divide* (1996) edited by Deborah Cartmell, Heidi Haye, I.Q. Hunter and Imelda Whelehan, *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text* (1999) edited by Cartmell and Whelehan, *Film Adaptation* (2000) edited by James Naremore, and *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation* (2004) edited by Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo (2004), as well as *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen* (2007) edited by Cartmell and Whelehan.⁶¹

Most of the contemporary adaptation studies publications no longer discuss whether the source text’s author’s intentions have been rendered in the adaptation or not, but view the audio-visual text the adaptation becomes as having been strongly influenced by a variety of sources beyond the literary one, thus acknowledging the importance of socio-historical, institutional and intertextual contexts. Elliott calls an adaptation: “a composite of textual and filmic signs merging in audience consciousness together with other cultural narratives,” which “often leads to confusion as to which is novel and which is film” (2003:157). Cardwell (2002:25) notes: “It would be more accurate to view adaptation as the gradual development of a ‘meta-text’. This view recognises that a later adaptation may draw upon any earlier adaptation, as well as the primary source text.” Adaptations can be approached through the prism of post-structuralist ideas concerning the texts’ mosaic-like

⁶¹ Both the number of publications and their scholarly significance illustrate the fact that adaptation studies has become an established area of academic research. It is worth noting that two journals, i.e. *Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance* and *Adaptation* have been published since 2007 and 2008, respectively, and the Association of Adaptation Studies has been holding annual conferences since 2006.

composition of citations,⁶² but they also acknowledge being adaptations of specific texts. In the dialogical process (to use the Bakhtinian term) the recipients, i.e. the viewers, compare the work they are experiencing with other works they are familiar with, not only the source text, but also other films by the same director, other adaptations of the same text, other parts played by individual actors, or other films belonging to the same genre (see Hutcheon 2006:21). Simone Murray (2012) comments upon the direction in which adaptation studies has developed in the last two decades as follows:

The post-structuralist reconceptualization of adaptation as critique – which Stam terms “intertextual dialogism” and Hutcheon dubs “*transculturation*” – borrows from Bakhtin and Kristeva to posit culture as a vast web of references and tropes ripe for appropriating, disassembling and rearranging [...] The recognition that audiences appreciate adaptations precisely because of the mass of existing pop-cultural knowledge they bring to them was decisive in weaning adaptation studies from its long preoccupation with the nineteenth Anglo-American literary canon, and for introducing an ethnographic dimension into the analysis of adaptation. (2012:10)

Discussing the intertextual approach, McFarlane quotes Christopher Orr’s⁶³ opinion: “Within this critical context [i.e. of intertextuality], the issue is not whether the adapted film is faithful to its source, but rather how the choice of a specific source and the approach to that source serve the film’s ideology” (McFarlane 1996:10). Similarly Justyna Kociatkiewicz (2012), summarising the objectives of a contemporary analysis of adaptation, perceives them as embracing:

[...] a variety of aspects of film’s existence, taking into account the way in which it relates to its textual source, the way in which it *reads* this source, as well as the way in which filmic devices replace textual ones and facilitate the interpretation of the source. Last but not least, such an analysis would try to examine the way in which an adaptation works within the cultural discourse of its times. (2012:36)

And so, in the approach acknowledging an adaptation’s intertextuality scholars investigate, among other elements, the way in which a given film or television production reflects the times of its production and reflects the ideologies contemporary with them.⁶⁴ Another source of an adaptation’s intertextuality is what the actors bring in: “In the cinema the performer [...] brings along a kind of baggage, a thespian intertext formed by the totality of antecedent roles [...] the intertextual memory [...]” (Stam 2000:79).

⁶² The expression “mosaic of citations” is obviously Kristeva’s most frequently quoted expression. It can be found in her 1969 publication and refers to intertextuality.

⁶³ Orr, Ch. 1984. “The Discourse on Adaptation.” *Wide Angle*, 6/2.

⁶⁴ In the case of costume drama, the representation of a given period in a production reflects both the way in which that period was assumed to have looked, and the aesthetic taste contemporary with the production. Hence, we receive varied representations of a given period in films coming from different decades: *The Great Gatsby* filmed in 1974 tells us as much about 1970s fashion as it does about that of the 1920s, which is most apparent when we compare the make-up and costume style with that of *The Great Gatsby* released in 2013, aesthetically adjusted to the expectations of the 21st-century audience.

Adaptation can be viewed as hypertext deriving “from pre-existing hypotexts that have been transformed by operations of selection, amplification, concretization, and actualization [...] hypertextual readings triggered by the same hypotext” (Stam 2000:82). Patrick Cattrysse, in his publications advocating the polysystem approach⁶⁵ in analysing adaptations, refers to the studies of intertextuality, claiming that: “[...] while speaking of pre-texts (Broich and Pfister 1985) or hypertexts (Genette 1982), it is important to consider them not as source material to be reconstructed, but as models which have determined the production of the target text (adaptation, translation, parody, etc.) in some way and to a certain extent” (Cattrysse 1992:63).

The intertextual approach also opens the discussion over the question of authorship in adaptation.⁶⁶ In most cases the script goes through a series of shifts, being reworked to the very final moments of the production. The complexity of that process is illustrated by William Goldman, a novelist, playwright and screenwriter himself, who:

[...] sees the finished film as the studio’s adaptation, of the editor’s adaptation of the director’s adaptation of the actors’ adaptation of the screenwriter’s adaptation of a novel that might itself be an adaptation of narrative or generic conventions. (Hutcheon 2006:83 after Landon⁶⁷ 1991:96)

While analysing an adaptation in its intercultural context we can take into consideration all the contributors to the process, which makes the scope of the analysis almost infinite.⁶⁸

In 2012 Simone Murray published her *Adaptation Industry* in which she proposes another approach to adaptations. She focuses on what she calls the

⁶⁵ Polysystem theories of translation were formulated in the 1970s by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury from Tel Aviv University, while in the 1980s the approach was applied in adaptation studies.

⁶⁶ Jack Boozer’s *Authorship in Adaptation* (2009) is one of the most interesting publications devoted to the issue.

⁶⁷ Hutcheon refers here to Brooks Landon’s article “‘There’s some of me in you’: *Blade Runner* and the adaptation of science fiction literature into film” [in:] Kerman J.B. (ed.) 1991 *Retrofitting Blade Runner: Issues in Ridley Scott’s Blade Runner and Philip K. Dick’s Do Androids Dream of Electric Sleep?* Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green University Press, pp. 90-102.

⁶⁸ There are some cases of literary texts being adapted by their authors. Blum quotes John Irving, who spent 14 years preparing his own screenplay for his novel *The Cider House Rules*, and claimed that he “believed that the characters had to have the same emotional effect on an audience as they had on readers” (quoted in Blum 2001:24). Ian McEwan decided not to write the screenplay for the 2007 adaptation of his novel *Atonement*, although he originally had been planning to do so. In an interview included in the DVD edition of the film he compares the process of adapting a novel to its film version as “a demolition job”, which is too painful for the novel’s author. A similar commentary came from David Nicholls during a conversation held at the 7th Annual Conference of the Association of Adaptation Studies hosted by the University of York on September 27, 2012. When discussing the adaptation of his novel *One Day*, he admitted that he would not take up the task of adapting his own text again, as it is extremely difficult to reduce in size (which is unavoidable in the process of adaptation) something which you have already created in its complete form.

“**sociology of adaptation**” placing it in a wider economic context, in an attempt to find out the forces which work behind the adaptation market:

Such an approach takes us well beyond textual specifics and enables us to ask how the mechanisms by which adaptations are produced influence the kinds of adaptations released, how certain audiences become aware of adapted properties, and how the success of an adaptation may impact differently upon various industry stakeholders. (Murray 2012:4)

Murray analyses the adaptation industry and the way in which authors, agents, publishers, book prize committees, scriptwriters, screen producers and distributors function in it. She also argues that books are much less products of individual effort than it has been traditionally assumed, as in their cases “agents and material forces” (2012:13) play an important role, as they do in the case of today’s filmmakers. She stresses that adaptation is first of all “a material phenomenon produced by a system of interlinked interests and actors” (2012:16) and analyses adaptations in economic and institutional terms, rejecting their aesthetic evaluation. She includes in her research productions from the early 1980s onward and excludes the classic-novel adaptations, as “[t]he much longer cultural histories of such texts cause them to enter the contemporary adaptation economy already freighted with critical approbation and/or notoriety” (Murray 2012:21).

Murray is not revolutionary in her consideration of adaptations in the economic context. The fact that adaptations are in most cases made with certain financial high hopes, also shared by the publishers preparing new editions of the source texts, has frequently been mentioned by adaptation studies scholars. What Murray in her publication does is extend her study of the economic and social forces functioning behind what she labels the “adaptation industry.” Julie Sanders in 2011 in her discussion of the direction in which adaptation studies should develop also notes that:

[...] to move adaptation studies onto the next level in our teaching and our research we need to acknowledge what we might learn, and indeed embrace, from cognate domains: from business studies, game theory, performance studies, new sociological thinking on open-source initiatives and crowd-sourcing, and from a return to ideas of craft. (2011:xi)

One of the reasons for the relative scepticism of academia towards adaptation studies in general is the fact that analyses of adaptations do not fall under a clearly defined methodology. As it appears from the overview above, over the decades a number of attempts have been made to clarify which theory could apply to adaptations in the most accurate way, but until now the scholars preoccupied with the subject have remained far from speaking in one voice. However, some would say that this is precisely where the fascination with adaptation studies stems from. In contemporary adaptation studies scholars use a variety of theories, coming from both English and film/media departments, and still receive some criticism for either following old theories or, frequently, for not doing so. Elliott in her

2013 article “Theorising adaptations/adapting theories” provides an interesting discussion of the complex history of “theorising adaptations” and accusations formulated against adaptation studies during the decades of its existence. The field is divided, and the present approaches range from the still present formalist approach, connected with media specificity, to examining adaptations in a broad, intertextual context, represented by culture studies. Another aspect of the discussion of adaptations pointed out by Elliott is the recycling of ideas, which she summarizes in a table labelled “Repeated claims in adaptation studies” (Elliott 2013:26-28), covering critical works published between 1912 and 2012. She notes that too much repetition can be observed in the field, and that “[a] lack of cumulative knowledge inevitably hampers theorization” (2013:29). She argues as follows:

Adding historical, cultural, contextual, ideological, political and economic aspects of adaptation to semiotic, generic, textual and media aspects has greatly expanded the scope of the field, as have the intertextual and intermedial theories that have replaced the one-to-one translation models with longer representational genealogies and wider webs of intermediality. Adding audience reception and industrial practices has also enlarged the field. (Elliott 2013:30)

An approach emerging from the above considerations is an **interdisciplinary** one, which I find most applicable in the analyses included in Part 2 of the present study. British television adaptations are very “literary,” relying closely on the source text whose title they bear and whose author’s name always appears in the opening credits; it thus seems natural to analyse them with reference to the literary text. Hence, considerable sections of the case studies in the remaining chapters are comparative analyses, focusing on the way in which the main plot, subplots and main characters have been modified in the process of adaptation. However, I am discussing those adaptations as television productions as well, placing them in a broader context, referring both to the original reception of the literary texts, and to the context in which the adaptations were created and broadcast.

Looking at the issue of adaptation of literary texts into other media from the perspective of the 21st-century entertainment habits I feel tempted to end this section devoted to theorising with a definition which may seem inappropriate, as it refers to the biological processes. Merriam-Webster Dictionary online defines *adaptation* in point 2 as “adjustment to environmental conditions: as [...] (b) modification of an organism or its parts that makes it more fit for existence under the conditions of its environment.” Can we not look at adaptations as the forms into which literary texts are transformed “to be more fit for existence” in the contemporary world? Viewing tends to replace reading; that is an unquestionable fact nowadays. Texts are adapted to allow the stories to survive. A certain analogy between biological processes and cinematic adaptations has been pointed out and analysed by Gary R. Bartolotti and Linda Hutcheon in their article “On the Origin of Adaptations: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and ‘Success’ Biologically” (2007), which prompted Thomas Leitch to consider adaptations from such an angle in his

article “To Adapt or to Adapt to? Consequences of Approaching Film Adaptation Intransitively” (2009), where he concludes that

In order to take account of [the] radically mutable nature of textually adaptive organisms, theorists would need to shift from conceiving adaptation as a kind of making involving a maker who works with certain raw material to produce a product to a kind of change involving an organism that evolves in order to achieve a longer life, reach a new audience, or demonstrate its viability in a new medium or a new set of cultural circumstances. (2009:97)

Thanks to adaptations source texts also gain a new life, because usually a significant increase in sales of the adapted novels can be observed. Sargeant (1998) also notes an interesting phenomenon concerning the way in which novels which have been filmed are marketed in the post-adaptation reality: they are frequently marketed as middlebrow or popular rather than belonging to the highbrow canon. The temptation to view this practice as a form of evolution aimed at the stories’ survival is almost irresistible.

PART II

Selected Adaptations

The Forsyte Saga (1967)

John Galsworthy (1867-1933) and his novels

John Galsworthy's literary career started in 1897 with the publication of a collection of short stories titled *From the Four Winds* under the pen name John Sinjohn, which he also used for his next three books – *Jocelyn* (1898), *Villa Ruben* (1900) and *A Man of Devon* (1901) – and eventually abandoned. The last of the three was a collection of short stories, one of which centres around Swithin Forsyte, a member of the family that would populate Galsworthy's greatest works yet to be published. It was in those short stories that the writer showed the satirical skills he would use throughout his further writing. *The Man of Property*, the first novel of what was to eventually become *The Forsyte Saga* trilogy, took him three years to write and was published in 1906. Its reviews were very positive and Joseph Conrad, Galsworthy's close friend, referred to them in a private letter to the author, in the following way:

I have [...] heard that directly on its appearance the book began to be talked about in – journalistic circles! I confess I felt slightly sick at that, till I reflected that the *quality*⁶⁹ of your books was too high to be affected by false admirations. (quoted in Dupré 1976:116)

The Man of Property was praised for its ironic insight, well-built plot and memorable characters; it sold much better than Galsworthy's earlier publications. The main conflict of the novel grew out of its author's personal experience, as the unfortunate marriage between Soames Forsyte and Irene Heron at the centre of the plot resembled that of Galsworthy's beloved Ada's, who had been unhappily married to his cousin, Major Arthur Galsworthy, and whom she finally divorced in 1905 to marry John. The social views expressed by the narrator were identified with the author's personal opinions, while Young Jolyon Forsyte was called by the critics "the mouthpiece for Galsworthy's political and cultural sensibility" (Hargreaves 2007:133).

In 1906, in the same year as *The Man of Property* was published, Galsworthy's first play *The Silver Box* was shown on stage; this marked the beginning of his highly successful career as a playwright. Ten years later Sheila Kaye-Smith in an American

⁶⁹ The italics are used in Dupré's text.

publication devoted to Galsworthy which appeared in the series “Writers of the Day” started the chapter about the novels with the words which – in those pre-*Forsyte Saga* years – indicated what the writer’s major literary achievement had been:

Though undoubtedly Galsworthy owes his position as an artist and as a thinking force to his plays, he still carries considerable weight as both in his novels. That his novels have not the value whether social or literary, of his plays [...] does not make away with the fact that he has given some half-dozen novels of standing, which are worth consideration in themselves [...]. (Kaye-Smith 1916:52)

It seems, then, that when in 1917 Galsworthy returned to the Forsyte family with a short story “The Indian Summer of a Forsyte,” later on to become the first of the Interludes included in the trilogy and relating directly to the 1906 novel’s plot, his reputation as a playwright had already been well established. The idea to expand the Forsyte family story into a trilogy was conceived a year later, when the above-mentioned short story appeared in print in a collection titled *Five Tales*. Galsworthy explained his plans and expectations as follows:

The idea of making *The Man of Property* the first volume of a trilogy cemented by *Indian Summer of a Forsyte* and another short episode came to me on Sunday July 28th, and I started the same day. This idea, if I can bring it to fruition, will make *The Forsyte Saga* a volume of half a million words nearly; and the most sustained and considerable piece of fiction of our generation at least. (quoted in Dupré⁷⁰ 1976:241)

The trilogy was completed with two novels, *In Chancery* (1920) and *To Let* (1921), and with a short story, “Awakening” (1920), becoming the second Interlude. The positive reception of the texts did not result so much from their artistic quality, as from the fact that, as Dupré puts it:

[...] they gauged exactly the mood of the day. They harked back to the pre-war world, to a world untroubled by the frightful conflict of 1914; they were nostalgic, but at the same time, though well written, undemanding and easy to read [...] his work was welcomed by a fantastically enthusiastic public. (1976:246)

The two novels were written in subsequent years, and so they were published. A year after launching *To Let*, i.e. in 1922, the full trilogy was released as one volume, making Galsworthy a best-selling author on both sides of the Atlantic. The critical reception varied, however. Galsworthy’s biography included on the PBS website devoted to the 1967 television adaptation of the novels provides the following commentary on the criticism he faced:

As his popularity rose, however, his literary fortunes fell. A younger generation of writers, including D.H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf, attacked his work, accusing Galsworthy of embodying the values he supposedly criticized. In the 1919 article “Modern Fiction” in *The Common Reader*, Woolf proclaimed that the broad social novels of Edwardian writers such as Galsworthy, H.G. Wells, Joseph Conrad, and Arnold Bennett were no longer relevant. (PBS)

⁷⁰ Dupré quotes Galsworthy’s opinion found in H.V. Marrot’s 1935 *The Life and Letters of John Galsworthy*, London: Heinemann Ltd., p. 443.

In the years which followed, Galsworthy kept writing plays, while the story of the Forsyte family after World War I was continued in *The White Monkey* (1924), *The Silver Spoon* (1926), *Two Forsyte Interludes* (1927) including two stories, “The Silent Wooing” and “Passers By,” and *The Swan Song* (1928), collected in *A Modern Comedy* released in 1929. The first of the novels, written while Galsworthy was travelling extensively, was criticised for being confusing, having too many disconnected plots and lacking direction. The critical reception of the second one was also far from enthusiastic, but the reading public was already deeply enthralled by the Forsyte world and the sales of the novels were good.

The last novel ends with the death of Soames Forsyte, the character who was the villain in *The Man of Property*, but over time turned into the readers’ favourite, “Galsworthy’s talisman to success” (Dupré 1976:272). Gerald Gould, writing for *The Observer*, “mourns” Soames as follows:

Soames Forsyte is dead! His dust is mingled with that of Falstaff and Tom Jones and Mr. Micawber and W. G. Grace and the Duke of Wellington creatures so national, so typical, so essential that nobody pauses to remember whether this one or that of them came to birth in an epic or an epoch. Some characters in books we praise because they live: but the greatest are those who have the vitality to die. Soames Forsyte is dead!⁷¹

The parting with the Forsytes was a difficult one for the writer himself and he returned to the family’s stories once again, publishing in 1930 a collection of short stories titled *On Forsyte Change*, very popular with the public.

The Forsyte Saga was perceived by the critics as “the summit of Galsworthy’s achievement, a summit that he never equalled despite his vast output” (Furst 2006:159). The fact that Galsworthy gradually developed his skills as a playwright, influenced his writing style in general: that was reflected in an increased number of dialogues in the later novels, which is particularly conspicuous when the first novels of the Saga are contrasted with those written in the 1920s. When, in 1932, the Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to him, the Prize citation read: “for his distinguished art of narration which takes its highest form in *The Forsyte Saga*” (*The Official Web Site of the Noble Prize*). Even that statement confirms the superiority of the trilogy over Galsworthy’s other works. His health condition prevented him from going to Stockholm for the ceremony, and he died on the last day of January the following year, at the age of 65.

Popularity of Galsworthy’s works decreased after his death. They became overshadowed by those of the writers who, over time, turned out to be much more prominent. Tracy Hargreaves in her article “Nostalgic Retrieval: Sexual Politics, Cultural Aesthetics and Literary Form in John Galsworthy’s *The Forsyte Saga*” refers to Galsworthy’s place among his contemporaries in the following way:

Between Woolf and Lawrence, Galsworthy occupies an uncomfortable space: either he is overtly concerned to use literature as a platform from which to ventriloquize social ills, writing novels

⁷¹ The quotation appears on the covers of *John Galsworthy: An Appreciation Together with a Bibliography* published in 1926 by Heinemann.

that lack vitality, or he reneges on a promise to criticise the social being and ends up supporting the very thing he set out to dismantle and defeat. (2007:139)

Galsworthy emerges then as a writer whose popularity and critical appreciation did not outlive him. However, the late 1960s brought a revived interest in his works, both at home and abroad, thanks to the 1967 television adaptation, which is the main focus of this chapter.

Adaptations

The first adaptation of Galsworthy's novels was an American film *That Forsyte Woman* (1949) starring Errol Flynn as Soames, Greer Garson as Irene, Walter Pidgeon as young Jolyon, Robert Young as Philip Bosinney and Janet Leigh as June. The copyright remained with the producers, i.e. MGM, which considerably hindered the British production of a television serial Donald Wilson had been planning for years. When he eventually obtained the copyright in 1965, the adaptation process started. The serial was planned as a major attraction of BBC2, which – launched in April 1964 – still had relatively few subscribers. The production was prepared for black and white television, while – unfortunately for the production – its era ended the moment the serial's first broadcast was over, i.e. in July 1967. It was BBC2 that became the first television channel in Europe to broadcast its programmes in colour. As Wilson said in one of the interviews, they simply started the production of *The Forsyte Saga* “too early.”⁷² The costumes and the sets would have looked much better in colour, and the fact that the serial was made in black and white contributed largely to its infrequent broadcast in the decades to come.

The television serial is an adaptation of both trilogies, divided into 26 episodes of around 50 minutes each. Its cost was £250,000 and it was the BBC's most expensive drama produced to date. As many as 2 000 costumes were used, as most of them were supposed to show the affluence of the characters and could not be used over and over again, and the sets were as glamorous as technical conditions allowed.

Shown on BBC2 from January 7 through to July 1, 1967, the serial gathered six million viewers, increased the number of BBC2 subscribers, and received four BAFTA Awards. The following year it was shown again from September on BBC1, in prime time, i.e. on Sunday evening, and each episode was watched by between 16 000 000 to 18 000 000 faithful viewers. The Sunday evening broadcast led to church service rescheduling and pubs early closure: everybody headed home to watch the show in those pre-VCR times. As Bianculli in *Dictionary of Teletiteracy* (1997:112) puts it: “Due to no home-recording possible Forsyte fans in England reacted to the 26-part serial by juggling social engagement, rescheduling vacation trips and holding weekly Forsyte viewing practise.” Cliff Michelmore, the host of *Talkback* at BBC1 shown on February 17, 1969, a day after Episode

⁷² The interview is included in the additional material in the 2004 DVD edition, but was originally broadcast in 1969.

24 had been broadcast, mentions 17 million “Saga-addicts” and talks about the “national obsession,” saying that: “For the viewers of the BBC dramatization of this long-neglected saga has become a television legend of fact and folklore.” He mentions changed drinking habits and the fact that during autumn floods one man refused to be rescued before an episode ended. The power stations noticed a sudden increase in electricity demand after an episode. The statistics concerning the sales of Galsworthy’s novels show a significant growth following the broadcast – in the two years before the broadcast 10 000 copies were sold, while in the two years after it the number increased to over 1 750 000. The popularity of the serial was subsequently labelled “The Forsyte Phenomenon” and became part of general critical debate.

The serial contributed to the development of certain communal life no matter which country it was watched in, because its viewing experience was frequently shared by neighbours and friends. That communality resulted first of all from the scarcity of television sets, or, in the case of the first broadcast on BBC2, from the limited number of subscribers. Hence, the viewing had a socialising effect, and the fact that everybody was watching the serial resulted also in post-viewing socialising, as the events of the previous night’s episode would be discussed across the country the day after. The popularity of the serial was a result of many factors, including the fact that, as Fisher (1976:9) puts it: “Many English families recognised themselves and their relatives in it.” Raymond Williams in his commentaries written for *The Listener* refers to *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) and its impact more than once. In 1969 he wrote: “*The Forsyte Saga*, one dimensional as it was, commanded attention for just these reasons, though these were also the retrospective costume attractions” (1969:83). By “these reasons” he means “staying with people [...] following the action thoroughly [...] the experience of having to pick up and go on again,” trying to explain the popularity of television serials and series, which he attributes to the opportunity the viewers have to identify with the on-going process of living that they can observe. *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) gave its audience such an opportunity for over half a year.

Despite its extreme popularity with the viewers, the serial in Great Britain faced varied critical reception. In BBC1 *Talkback*, mentioned above, Stuart Hood, who was, back in the early 1960s, in control of BBC programmes, expressed his early reservations about the production: “I had always thought of *The Forsyte Saga* as a kind of stockbroker’s Coronation Street [...] *The Forsyte Saga* takes us back to the times when gentlemen were gentlemen and servants were servants and knew their places.” He claimed that it was nostalgia for the past that got people interested in the production, calling *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) “a reactionary programme [...] in political terms.” Malcolm Muggeridge, a popular English journalist of the time, was another person interviewed in the context of the serial’s popularity. He expressed his dislike of *The Forsyte Saga* as a book, but he also thought that the success of the televised version was predicable:

After all, the whole world is pining for the lost bourgeoisie. And there, on the screen, they can see an image of one. The communists want the bourgeoisie back in order to be able to destroy it in an authentic class war. The revolting students in order to have something to ridicule and deride. The rest of the people want it back, because they want its prestige and wealth. Alas, it's gone forever.

These commentaries seem to match the social and political context in which the serial was originally broadcast in the U.K.: the general elections of 1966 were won by the Labour Party (in power since 1964) and gave it a significant majority in the House of Commons. The Labour government headed by Harold Wilson introduced a number of liberalising social reforms and in 1967 was apparently at the peak of its popularity, which explains, I believe, the dominance of the left-wing commentators in television panels, who perceived the production as “reactionary.”

Francis Hope from *The New Statesman*, who was in the studio during the *Talkback* program, called the production “very distinctly and very restrictively middle-class,” giving as an example to support his opinion the way it depicts the Great Strike. The host of the program asked Hope about the middle class point of view indicated by him: “Is it inherent in the Galsworthy’s books or in the television dramatization? How much does the television dramatization sacrifice social realism for entertainment in the drama television?” Hope answered:

Oh, not at all. I’d much rather watch the television than read the books. I think a great improvement has been made. But I think there is just a lack of first rate artistic quality in Galsworthy [...] there are some heights which it doesn’t reach, and it is popular precisely because it does not reach those heights.

Hope’s opinion concerning the literary quality of Galsworthy’s novels as such was not isolated. There were a number of critics, who admitted that the novels worked so well in the adaptation because they lacked psychological depth, had mostly linear storylines and centred on domestic issues and passions the audience could identify with. The adaptors supplemented what seemed to be lacking, and made female characters stronger, which could be perceived as an improvement. American critics presented similar views, once the serial got to the United States. Miller (2000) notes that the fact that it was based on fiction by a British author was stressed in all the commentaries on the television program, while a commentary suggesting that the serial in some ways improved the original work appeared there as well. One such view was expressed by Anthony Burgess (British, obviously, but writing back then in November 1969 for the *New York Times Magazine*): “The Galsworthian conception of life [...] has been waiting all these years to slide into its true medium – the leisurely, middlebrow television serial” (quoted in Miller 2000:80). Two more critics quoted by Miller, Margot Hentoff (*Vogue*) and James Michener (*TV Guide*), presented similar views: “The Forsythe novels are good bad fiction at its best – admirably suited to the reduction of television since there is little complexity to be lost. In fact, the shrinking effect makes Galsworthy seem far leaner and more witty than he was” (Hentoff in Miller 2000:81) and “the brilliance of the series does not stem from the books” (Michener in Miller 2000:81).

It is an interesting question, then, where this “brilliance” stems from. Donald Wilson says in an interview for *Late Night Line-up* of January 7, 1967, the first day of the original broadcast: “*The Forsyte Saga* is a first-rate work for serialisation for [...] it’s a marvellous story, the characters are memorable.” He explains the way the adaptors dealt with the text, claiming that they thought “how Galsworthy would have written that if he had been writing today, in dramatic form, not in novel form,” how to plan and arrange the material to get a visual impact as well as the extra dialogue. Lez Cooke in *British Television Drama* (2003) calls the serial “a successful hybrid” of costume drama and soap opera, being:

[...] a long running, historical drama based on the personal relationships and everyday problems [...] more middle brow than high brow, [...] having “quality” overtones (as a literary, costume drama) yet also having sufficient popular appeal (its “soap opera” qualities) to attract a broad audience. (2003:83)

The connection between the serial and the soap opera genre was repeatedly referred to by American critics when the serial eventually crossed the Atlantic. The serial appeared on American screens in 1969, two years after its initial British broadcast. Bianculli (1997:112) suggests that it took so long: “because the public television executives were concerned that *The Forsyte Saga* was (1) too British, (2) too long, and (3) too ‘entertaining’ for an educational TV network.” The *Saga* was purchased by National Educational Television (NET), the non-commercial programming service based in New York, whose “main offerings at that time were documentaries and academic courses,” as Rebecca Eaton (2013:10) notes, adding that “*Forsyte* was a blockbuster.” Miller (2000) quotes a number of critics expressing their views about the soap opera qualities of the production. Jack Gould wrote in the *New York Times* that NET offered “the Sunday night home of upper-class soap opera [...]” Also Burgess, writing for the *New York Times Magazine*, called the program “a great television triumph, since the Galsworthian conception has the near-coarseness, the near-melodramatic simplicity of superior soap opera.” Another example of an attempt to connect the serial to the popular television genre is an opinion expressed by Michener in his *TV Guide* feature article, who called the serial “soap opera – at its glowing best.”⁷³ Miller tries to explain the reasons for which the serial was so frequently compared to a soap opera:

The Forsyte Saga visually employed the same techniques and rhetoric as its American cousins: restricted camera movement, a large number of two-character scenes involving repeated use of closeups, an almost exclusive reliance on interiors, careful attention to detail in props defining class status and/or plot action [...]. (2000:80)

He notes, however, certain “patriarchal upscaling of the program” in the critics’ view, as the viewers can find a number of subplots connected with social issues and politics, particularly in the episodes covering *A Modern Comedy* trilogy, and

⁷³ All the above quotations come from Miller (2000:69).

Michener, quoted by Miller again, notes that unlike most of the soap operas: “In *The Forsyte Saga* the characters are differentiated, well-rounded and with universal application; the dialogue is literate; the problems dealt with are substantial; and over all there is high seriousness” (Michener in Miller 2000:80).

The serial was very well received outside Britain, also in non-English-speaking countries, working seemingly well in translation. Wilson explained the popularity of the serial abroad as stemming from the fact that it is about “desires and needs and conflicts which everybody recognises in them.” It was the first ever British series sold to the Soviet Union. The aforementioned *Talkback* program shows Vladimir Dunaev, Moscow Radio and Television Correspondent, who explains the interest the Soviet audience took in the *Saga* as resulting from the fact that “The production is simply marvellous.” He does not specify, however, what makes it so. He also refers to some of the commentaries present back then: “It was stated in the British press that we are buying *The Forsyte Saga* because it reflects the decadence of the British society, of Victorian age, of the 1920s, of course that’s a tremendous oversimplification.” It is true, however, that the serial does include critical commentary about the urge to possess, so characteristic of the upper-middle class the serial is about, and it does refer to some social problems resulting from the capitalist system. It is not surprising, then, that the serial was shown throughout the Eastern bloc. In Poland each episode was broadcast, dubbed, for the first time between October 14, 1970 and April 7, 1971 on Wednesdays, twice, in the morning and then in the evening, during prime time (at five-past eight in the evening). The same episode was repeated in the original version on Tuesday the following week, after a television English lesson addressed to technicians (sic!). When the serial was to be broadcast the television magazine *RTV 1970/71* published a short notice calling the serial a real television best-seller, long-awaited, enumerating the countries in which it had already been seen, among them the USSR, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Łukowski (1980:48) calls the serial a great “event,” indicating that the novel had been known to the Polish viewers. Gałuszka (1996:51) writes about *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) being marketed in Poland as “a soap opera for intellectuals,” but being popular among different social groups.⁷⁴ Although the subsequent edition of *The Forsyte Saga* (1971) and *A Modern Comedy* (1972) were both the fifth editions of the titles, the general public got acquainted with Galsworthy’s fiction through the television serial first. The Polish viewers wrote letters to the broadcaster expressing their likes and dislikes and identifying themselves with the characters. Łukowski contributes the popularity of the serial to the fact that it was devoted to family issues, stressing, that what appealed to the Polish viewers in 1970 was the universal character of the problems the characters faced (see Łukowski 1980:58), which is consistent with Wilson’s assumptions about the serial’s appeal.

⁷⁴ Gałuszka suggests that defining the target group in such a way gives an impression of some hierarchization, and it boosts the viewers’ self-esteem once they can be classified as belonging to a more sophisticated segment of the television audience, if they found a given program attractive.

The production appeared in the DVD format in the early 2000s, called by some critics “the queen mother of the prime-time serialized drama” (King 2003). The same critic states that though “it may be a bit creaky – technically the show is quite dated – it’s still tremendously charming and comforting” (King 2003). The in-lay of the 2004 BBC DVD edition contains the following introduction:

The series re-invented the idea of television drama. From a huge cast with sumptuous sets and costumes came a stream of gripping storylines. Audiences had never seen such passion and glamour. A new generation of actors found fame through the small screen, and in the rape of Irene the public realised television had a very real capacity to shock.

Most critics agree that the production set the standards of classic-novel adaptation and broke a new ground with its outstanding length. Its success was unquestionable, but the monochrome quality prevented the BBC from continuous repetitions of the broadcast. In Britain it was shown again in 1974 as matinees, and for one final time in the autumn of 1986 on BBC2 on Sunday evenings. Surprisingly, in Poland it appeared again during exactly the same season, late in the evenings. One thing remains certain – for the generation that watched it, the serial became an unforgettable experience, which every private conversation I held (both in Poland and in England) confirmed. The internet reviews of the DVD edition express similarly enthusiastic opinions.

In 2002, the first two books and the first Interlude of John Galsworthy’s trilogy *The Forsyte Saga* were adapted by Granada Television for the ITV network. Additional funding for this production was provided by American PBS station WGBH, since the 1967 BBC adaptation had been a success on PBS. The production eventually included two seasons, the first one consisting of six 70-minute episodes covering the plot of the first two novels, i.e. *The Man of Property* and *In Chancery* (broadcast in the U.K. from April 2002 and in the US from October 2002). The second season covered a modified version of the plot of *To Let* in four episodes broadcast in the U.K. from May 2003. As Geraghty notes, that new production was planned to “[...] appeal to the youth market and its scriptwriter, Jan Mcverry, had a soap background and compared the Forsyte novels to a ‘highbrow soap opera’, with its cliff-hangers, coincidences and overlapping stories” (2012:14). The creators of that adaptation stressed in the press materials that they had not been remaking the 1967 serial, but adapting the novels again. The serial – quite naturally compared with the first adaptation – was characterised by modernised dialogues and faster pace, numerous outdoor scenes, shots on location, most of which were impressive estates, lush costumes and decorations, all presented in wide, decorative shots. It took full advantage of contemporary technology to impress the viewers visually. The costumes, which were very elaborate in the 1967 production, here got stunning colours. The greatest advantage, however, was taken of the possibility to explore the interiors and exteriors of the Forsyte houses. The houses themselves were much more spacious, much larger, and hence the Forsytes appeared more affluent than in the earlier production, old Jolyon in particular.

The reviews of the 2002 serial were mixed. The most common complaint originating from the “knowing” audience concerned the casting of Gina McKee as Irene. Galsworthy describes her as fair haired with dark eyes, which surely is not the case with McKee. The novel’s Irene is much younger than Soames and Young Jolyon, which makes the dynamics of her relationship with the two men different from that present in the serial, where Irene seems to be of the same age as the two men she marries. McKee shares with Galsworthy’s Irene two qualities – she is tall and she does not speak much, which helps to render that aura of mystery and detachment, which the novel’s Irene has, and which the 1967 production altered. However, the striking beauty of Irene is not always convincingly presented in McKee’s performance.

Although the plot of the first two novels was followed closely in the first six episodes of the 2002 production, the third novel underwent significant modifications, leaving Galsworthy’s fans deeply puzzled. All that led to moderate enthusiasm of the “knowing” audience. The serial did, however, gain its own fans consisting of those not familiar with either Galsworthy’s text, or the 1967 adaptation. The overall critical reception was mildly positive and Damian Lewis was highly praised for his performance. Most of the viewers familiar with the 1967 serial, besides not finding McKee’s Irene convincing, pointed to the fact that Galsworthy’s irony was lost in the process of reducing the Forsyte family story to a popular melodrama.

The Forsyte Saga (1967)

The plot and the narrative structure of the serial

The novels and the serial refer to the same points in time and the same major events. The table included in Appendix 3 lists dates and events significant for the Forsyte family and presents the way in which they are included in the novels’ and the serial’s structures. As the table shows, the plot and backstory of the first novel is covered by the plot of the first seven episodes and sixteen minutes of the eighth episode, that is twice as much time as that devoted to the adaptation of each of the remaining texts, which is about three and a half episode per novel.⁷⁵ The reason for such disproportion is simple: the first three episodes are a creative development of the backstory of *The Man of Property*, and as such constitute, in my opinion, the most interesting part of the serial as an adaptation. Hence, my analysis of those three episodes is also more detailed than that of any other in the serial, as in the remaining episodes alterations of any kind – either to the plot, or to the characters – are minor.

⁷⁵ *In Chancery*: Episodes 9-12; *To Let*: Episodes 13-15 and 8 minutes of Episode 16; *White Monkey*: 40 minutes of Episode 16 and Episodes 17-19, *The Silver Spoon*: some elements of the backstory included in Episode 19, then Episodes 20-22; *The Swan Song*: Episodes 23 to 26.

The serial had to be adjusted to the taste and expectations of the mass audience; it had to be digestible and easy to follow on the small screen. Serialisation required a coherent construction of each episode which would end in a way encouraging further viewing, and a plot easy to follow despite its division into parts. Fortunately for the adaptors the plots of Galsworthy's novels are mostly linear, with hardly any flashbacks, which facilitated their modification to the plot of the serial. As Donald Wilson notes in the interview for *Late Night Line-up* of July 4, 1967, it is Soames who holds the serial together thematically, just as he does in the case of the novels: "It is a study and in this long study everything affects or is affected by Soames [...]. This is one of the strengths of this particular work." So, Soames it is that stays with the viewers from the first to the very last episode. The effect of the unity of the plot, essential in a serial, was achieved by the reintroduction of elements of the main plot of the first trilogy in the episodes covering the plots of *A Modern Comedy* trilogy, mostly connected with the reappearance of Irene, who is not present in the later novels (with the exception of Soames' memories in which she haunts him). Hence, the plot present throughout the 25 episodes (the first episode focuses on Jo) concerns the story of Soames and Irene's unhappy marriage with its short-term and long-term consequences.

As the table in Appendix 3 shows, the first fifteen episodes cover the plot of the first three novels, i.e. *The Forsyte Saga* itself, while the remaining 11 cover the three novels of *A Modern Comedy*. The plots of the first three texts are strongly interconnected. The fact that Irene becomes involved in a romantic relationship with Philip Bosinney, which leads to a revengeful marital rape and Irene's escape in *The Man of Property*, has its consequences in *In Chancery*, as Soames still wifeless and childless twelve years later, becomes desperate to change his lot. The novel ends with two Forsyte children, Jon and Fleur, being born, and their accidental encounter and immediate infatuation become the starting point of the main plot of *To Let*, centred on their relationship, which develops against all odds. As the circumstances bring Irene and Soames together, their never-to-be-forgotten conflict casts its long shadow over the budding love of the two youngsters. Jon's choosing his mother's peace of mind rather than his own and Fleur's happiness ends the relationship and forces the girl to marry Michael Mont, a young baronet waiting patiently for her change of heart. Their wedding ends the first trilogy. The second trilogy does not really have one coherent plot holding the three books together, although it does focus on Fleur and Michael Mont's marriage. Instead of complicating Fleur's life too much, Galsworthy introduced a number of well-developed subplots in each of the novels. So, while *The White Monkey* focuses on Fleur's ambivalent feelings to her young admirer, Wilfred Desert, a poet and Michael's best friend, with whom she plays a love-like game, we have two side-stories, i.e. Bicket's, a poor packer's from Michael's office, and his wife Victorine's desperate attempts to improve their troubled life, and Soames' joining the Board of Providential Premium Reassurance Society and exposing its Chairman's dishonesty. Unlike in *The Forsyte Saga*, the

range of characters not related to the family is quite large. The same applies to the other two novels. *The Silver Spoon*'s main plot revolves around the suit for libel which Fleur has to face, and the way Soames, as well as Michael, support her. Michael's being elected to the House of Commons and his political career directly connected with some social involvement constitute a side story. *The Swan Song* centres on Fleur's desperate attempts to win Jon back, but there are a number of subplots, including Mont's involvement in slum clearance and the General Strike.

It is interesting to note how the adaptors succeeded in preserving the ironic detachment that Galsworthy presents the story of the Forsytes with, in the first three books in particular. In the novels, as Furst (2006:169, 173) puts it:

[...] we remain spectators and eavesdroppers, watching, noting, being guided by the narrator to understand what happens on "Forsyte 'Change" and sometimes what passes through the minds of its members. It is almost as if readers were anthropological beholders of the rituals peculiar to this tribe [...]. Often the narratorial ironies inject a note of mildly satirical comedy.

That perspective is imposed upon the serial's audience from its opening with a three-and-a-half minute exposition in the form of Young Jolyon's voice-over narration. All Young Jolyon's narrative monologues, of which the first one is the longest, were created in the process of adaptation, as was the plot of the first three episodes of the serial. The material for it was found of the backstory of *The Man of Property*, but the dialogues in those episodes do not come from the novel, nor do Jo's monologues. However, elements of Galsworthy's text have been incorporated into what is expressed by the characters. The exposition below, for example, includes some of the expressions coming directly from the novel, marked with italics:

London, 1879. In England today, there is no more charming and instructive sight than an upper-middle-class family *in full plumage*. This particular family is called Forsyte, and they live in Park Lane. Indeed, all the Forsytes live around the park; it's fashionable, and convenient, and property values there continue to rise steadily. Yet although each Forsyte is impressive enough singly, their true favour can only be appreciated on the occasions when they gather together at one or other of their well-appointed houses. No branch of the Forsytes has a genuine liking for any other, but as a group, they possess that mysterious concrete tenacity which renders a family so formidable a unit of society. Today the gathering is at my uncle Timothy's at Bayswater Road. Yes, my uncle, for I too am a Forsyte. They call me Young Jolyon, because my father, Old Jolyon, is at present the head of the family [...]. We all come here to Timothy's, in the Bayswater Road, known as Forsyte 'Change, to exchange news and gossip, to *reaffirm our confidence in the stability of the family*. And we go away, confident and reassured. Why not? We're *the backbone of England*. We? Well, Soames is certainly. Or will be. That fellow has a very highly developed *sense of property*. Even for a Forsyte. And I? Well, I suppose I'm a little different. Not better, I assure you, but different. For one thing, my own sense of property is negligible. For another, though the aunts and uncles adore Soames, I dislike him as intensely, as he dislikes me. There are other things, which will be revealed, but one of them is that I paint [...] and every Forsyte knows there isn't any money in that.

This long exposition accompanies a visual presentation of the Forsytes, both as representatives of their class and social status, and as individual characters present

at “The Forsyte ‘Change.” The viewers see the mid-shots of the family members whose identity they become aware of, and close-ups of Soames (Eric Porter) and Young Jolyon “Jo” (Kenneth More), who become foregrounded. Soames with his dead serious face is contrasted with Jolyon, who is smiling and looking through the window, standing aside, as if bored with the family gathering. Young Jolyon emerges as the narrator of the story we are about to watch, holding the position of an observer, whose point of view is, during most of the scene, that of the camera. Jo remains the narrator up to Episode 15, even if the situation commented upon does not involve him as a character; he provides the viewers with that kind of detached ironic point of view characteristic of Galsworthy’s narrator. His commentary concerns the Forsytes, the “species” whose behaviour he observes, and is also used for providing, in a condensed form, some of the information extended in the novel either in a scene form, or a story retold on the Forsyte ‘Change.

In some of the episodes Jo’s voice-over introduction provides general background information. It is so in the case of Episode 10 starting with the news about the Boer war. Similarly, Jo opens Episode 13, set 19 years after the events ending Episode 12, with information concerning World War I and the situation of the members of the Forsyte family who are still alive in 1920. Kleinecke (2006:144) makes the following comments concerning the role of Jo as the narrator in the serial:

Although the use of the voiceover device shows a still very strong reliance on literary techniques that reveals the origins of the classic serial in radio drama adaptation, the effect is also one of distancing – it causes the viewer to observe from the outside. Giving the words of an omniscient narrator to Young Jolyon changes their impact and singles him out. His voiceover identifies the Forsytes as Victorian middle class and, by implying that he is not a typical Forsyte, Young Jolyon constructs himself as a “modern” man. The viewer is encouraged to identify with him.

Jo’s voice introduces the viewers to 14 out of the first 15 episodes. The only one without Jo’s commentary is Episode 12, which starts with the continuation of the scene interrupted by the cliff-hanger ending of the previous episode. When Jo dies, the narrative voice is taken over by Michael Mont. Out of the remaining eleven episodes eight begin with Michael’s voice-over, even the episode showing Jon Forsyte (whom Michael has not met yet) riding a horse in North Carolina. As in the case of Jo, Michael-the-narrator seems to be somehow independent of Michael-the-character. Mont’s commentary in most cases refers to the Forsytes; in other words the adaptors tried to maintain the ironic, detached tone present in Jo’s commentary concerning that family, although Galsworthy’s novels of the second trilogy lost that particular feature. In the serial – long as it was – that element appearing consistently contributed to the overall feeling of the production’s unity.

In the first half of the serial, there is, however, one more character, who functions as an observer-commentator and that is George Forsyte, foregrounded in the adaptation. In a number of circumstances he formulates thoughts which

reflect Galsworthy's narrator's commentary. One of the moments during which George is used as an ironic commentator can be found during Winifred's wedding, the scene present in the serial only. He is shown talking to a man called Partridge and says: "A Forsyte wedding! That's when you see us in splendiferous splendour and all the glory of property. That's what it is – a major property transaction. And all the family have come to market to see the fair dos." George is far more cynical than Jo, also in the novel; that quality gains additional strength in the serial, as George has more chances to speak, due to the fact that, as in the case of most adaptations, and television adaptations in particular, the serial offers much more dialogue than the novels do. There are a number of instances in which the characters' thoughts, or the ideas commented on by the novels' narrator, become expressed in the dialogue form, and it is so with George. Also "The Forsyte 'Change' is a marvellously designed setting for such a dialogue, as the elderly aunts sitting in their drawing room and entertaining guests can, in a most natural way, verbalise all the information required.

The serial is based on dialogue; there are hardly any scenes without it, and it is virtually impossible, without close reference to the novels, to differentiate authentic Galsworthian dialogue from the parts not deriving from the novels directly. In the previously mentioned *Late Night Line-up* interview Donald Wilson talks about the necessity to create "streaks and streaks of extra dialogue" in the adaptation process. To explain why so much more dialogue had to be written, we have to go back to Appendix 3 and discuss the way in which the linearity of the serial's plot has been created. The first three episodes covering the years 1879-1882 constitute a conspicuous example of what Wysłouch (1994:160), discussing the strategies taken in adapting the plot of a literary text to the new medium, would label as adjunction, i.e. adding new elements to the plot. As Appendix 3 shows, the episodes include the events constituting the backstory of the first novel of the trilogy. The decision to start the story of the Forsyte family in 1879 instead of 1886, as the novel does, resulted in the development of a number of characters and subplots, which will be subject to closer scrutiny here.

Three full stories emerge out of *The Man of Property's* backstory, i.e.: Jo's love affair with Helene and his subsequent elopement; Winifred and Monetque Dartie's engagement, wedding and early marriage years; and Soames' meeting, courting and marrying Irene Heron. That expansion of the backstory of the first novel took an interesting angle – it led to the development of the female characters: Irene, Helene, Frances and Winifred. In the novels, Irene is presented solely through the perception of the men she impresses, Winifred is marginalised, Helene does not even have a chance to speak and Frances never appears herself in the story. The other female characters, however, i.e. June, Holly and Fleur occupy a similar space in both the serial and the novels, as they belong to the main plots of the novels, not to the backstory. Due to that development the story of the Forsyte family becomes less men-cantered, despite the fact that there is a male narrative voice-over narrator,

identified first with Jo, later with Mont. I believe that one of the reasons for it was the fact that the addressee of the serial was a predominantly female audience, which was somewhat different from who the readers of Galsworthy's novels were expected to be. The fact that the novels were adapted in the mid-1960s must have contributed to the strengthening of female voices as well.

In the novel Jo's existence is signalled in the introductory chapters through his relatives' thoughts, e.g. those of Aunt Ann:

A sad blow to his father and to them all [...] A sad blow, though there had been no public scandal, most fortunately. Jo's wife seeking for no divorce! And when June's mother died, six years ago, Jo had married that woman, and they had two children now [...]. (Galsworthy 1964:56)⁷⁶

In the serial a whole subplot is developed out of the scarce information the novel provides in this respect. In Episodes 1 and 2 we can see how loveless Jo and Frances' marriage was, how little understanding there was between them; we see Helene, sensitive and devoted, and Jo's affection for her. We witness the circumstances in which his decision to desert his family to be with her is made, and how the final decision to elope coincides with Helene's realising she is pregnant. Jo is presented as rejecting the comfortable life in favour of his ideals, love and devotion. As an artist, rebelling against the social conventions imposed on him, against what he calls "established, ordered society," true to himself, he appears to be the right hero for the 1960s audience, who is expected to identify with him.

The development of the subplot of Jo's affair in the serial has two basic functions. It helps to construct Jo as a character the audience likes and understands, but also it becomes the foil for what will be taking place in Soames' marriage. The difficulties Jo faces, his being deprived of his allowance and his (temporary) disinheritance, life in relative poverty (when contrasted with the "true" Forsytes' standards of living) is actually comparable to the treatment Irene gets and the problems she faces once she decides to leave her husband.

Episodes 2 and 3 provide space for the development of Soames' courting of Irene, which in the novel is referred to in a conversation between uncle Nicholas and uncle Roger as follows: "Ann tells me [...] he was half-cracked about her. She refused him five times" (Galsworthy 1964:62), and then in one paragraph reflecting Soames' thoughts we can find the following summary of his desperate courtship:

[...] that year and a half when he had besieged and lain in wait for her, devising schemes for her entertainment, giving her gifts, proposing to her periodically, and keeping her admirers away with his perpetual presence [...] the day when, adroitly taking advantage of an acute phase of her dislike to her home surroundings, he crowned his labours with success. (Galsworthy 1964:97-98)

Episode 3 brings this backstory to life. So, we can see Soames going to a concert with Irene, we witness his multiple visits, the presents sent, and the proposals made.

⁷⁶ An interesting point made by Galsworthy here is that the elopement as such *was not* a public scandal. A divorce would have been, and fortunately for the Forsytes that was avoided, first by Frances' refusal to seek one, and then due to her death.

We, unlike Soames, become aware of the reasons for Irene's "dislike to her home surroundings," which are Mr Lomax's sexual advances and his future marriage to Irene's stepmother. All that changes Galsworthy's understated Irene into a fully developed character the audience can pity and understand.

The plot proper of *The Man of Property* begins with Episode 4 to finish in the 16th minute of Episode 8, the remaining part of which covers the first of Galsworthy's Interludes. The main events of the novel's plot remain the same, but Irene has more chances to speak in them. There is one lengthy conversation between June, Irene and Philip Bosinney about the plans for Robin Hill house, and Irene makes allusions to Soames' possessiveness. The whole love affair with Bosinney is developing with the viewers' full awareness of it. Unlike in the novel, where the hints about Bosinney's attraction to Irene are subtle, on the television screen his infatuation becomes apparent very quickly. While in the novel Irene as the character is built on understatement and her relationship with Bosinney is deduced by other characters rather than actually witnessed, in the serial we gain access to Irene's thoughts and observe the development of the love story to its very tragic end, including the scene in which Irene comes over to Bosinney's place, confesses she loves him, asks him "to kiss [her] and love [her]."⁷⁷ The serial includes also the scene in which Irene, having left Soames, meets Bosinney at a hotel and unwillingly reveals to him the truth about being raped by Soames. The viewers, then, are fully aware of the reasons for Bosinney's startled look and extreme anxiety which could be an explanation for his absent-minded behaviour and involvement in a traffic accident leading to his death.

Although the subplot of Irene-Bosinney affair is more elaborate in the serial than in the novel, two of its elements have been removed, i.e. a ride Winifred invites Irene and Bosinney for, and the ball during which June, like everybody else, can see the mutual attraction between the two lovers. In the novel we get only as much of the story of Irene and Bosinney's relationship as other characters can observe. Hence, the ball scene and the ride are important, as the general public can see the two together. The serial offers a number of scenes in which Irene and Bosinney are together with no witnesses; their mutual attraction is signalled to the viewers the moment they meet for the first time, so the exclusion of the two elements of the novel's plot mentioned above does not alter the viewers' reception of the situation. Such a construction of the subplot of Irene's affair makes it less mysterious, but the aura of mystery had to be sacrificed for reasons of clarity.

There is some plot condensation in time in the case of Irene-Bosinney affair. The way the plot develops in the novel suggests that the two became lovers in summer, and the rape, Irene's departure and Bosinney's death take place in November. In the serial the rape takes place the day Irene returns home from

⁷⁷ In the serial the kissing scenes definitely belong to the weakest ones in the whole production, dreadfully theatrical and bordering on the grotesque. It seems that what has dated most in that production is the way affection is represented.

Bosinney, having actually become his lover. There is a scene in the novel showing Irene's return from a date with Philip and the adaptation presents this scene in Episode 7, faithful in almost every detail, including a woman playing a barrel organ in the street, with a basic difference in its ending. In the novel Soames does not follow Irene upstairs, and the narrator poses a question: "What prevented him from following her?" (Galsworthy 1964:295). The adaptors apparently assumed that nothing should, and in the serial Soames, highly upset by Irene's evident happiness, chases her upstairs and assaults her.

The scene of the rape is dramatic and violent, unlike in the novel, where we only witness Soames' remorse the day after and the rape is referred to as his taking advantage of the fact that she had not locked her bedroom door, and he at last "asserted his rights and acted like a man" (Galsworthy 1964:329). The scene in the serial does not go too far in presenting the rape as such; the times and the public medium would not allow for it, but the viewers witness the violent ripping of Irene's blouse, and the sight of her lying on the bed afterwards, sobbing. As Kleinecke (2006:146) puts it:

The rape scene is not sexually explicit but it also does not shy away from the subject matter, instead showing the brutality of Soames's attack on his wife with simple means, making the scene remarkable in its straightforward dealing with the subject of rape in marriage [...] the BBC serial [...] addressed the horror of the act itself, spelling out Irene's entrapment in her marriage and hinting at the wrongness of Victorian social norms that imprison her and give her little agency over her life.

Kleinecke also makes the connection between the representation of the scene and the way in which British television dealt with serious adult problems at the time:

[...] the representation of the scene can be understood in direct relation to the television environment at that time, rather than faithfulness to the literary source. The treatment of the rape can thus be seen as a response to the more challenging and competitive televisual context and a social awareness introduced by programmes such as those shown as part of the *Wednesday Play*. (2006:146)

As we can observe, then, that the adaptation on the one hand develops the romantic theme of Irene and Bosinney's love, assuming its melodramatic attractiveness for the television audience, but by presentation of Soames' violent behaviour it touches upon the taboo subject much stronger than Galsworthy's text ever did.

The final scene of Galsworthy's *The Man of Property*, appearing at the beginning of Episode 8, in which Soames meets Irene after she returns to their house having nowhere to go, has also been developed in the serial, but that has been done to Soames' advantage. The serial's Soames does what the novel's Soames fears and is not able to do. He tries to save his marriage the moment he realises that his wife's lover is dead and she is defeated by the circumstances. Soames tries to be gentle and to make her forgive him, suggesting that they "can make a life together, if [they]

both try.” The result, however, is the same as in the novel – Irene rejects him, in the serial more aggressively than in the novel, as she is much more outspoken: “You don’t own me, and nobody ever will! From now on, I own myself.” This Irene is not a victim; she is a desperate woman who cannot stand her husband, and who wants her freedom back more than anything else. She certainly is the character a female viewer of the 1960s could identify with, but the way Soames behaves also makes the viewers sympathise with him. Although Soames evolves as the character both in the novels and in the serial, Eric Porter’s Soames is, from the very beginning of the serial’s plot, much less obnoxious than the novel’s. While writing the first Forsythe novel Galsworthy did not know how this character would evolve years later. The adaptors, however, did.

The plot of Galsworthy’s *In Chancery* is covered by Episodes 8 to 12, with minor alterations only. Again, the backstory is put into a dramatized form, but unlike in the case of the first novel, it takes up only a few minutes of Episode 8. The viewers witness Jo’s acceptance of his role as Irene’s trustee, and Helene’s deteriorating health and subsequent death. As the novel’s subplot of Monty and Winifred’s marriage gained significant space in the serial’s early episodes, their divorce proceedings are also more involving in the subsequent parts, and represent more than just a foreshadowing of Soames’ marital problems and the solutions he tries to apply. A relatively rarely used formal solution was applied for the first time in Episode 12, to be repeated later on in the episodes covering the time of the General Strike and Ascot horseracing: the use of authentic documentary material.⁷⁸ As both Irene and Jo, and Soames and Anette are in the crowd observing Queen Victoria’s funeral procession, the shots showing them are cross-cut with the authentic material. Episode 12 ends the way the novel does, i.e. with Fleur’s birth, which is both climactic and dramatic, constituting a perfect closure.

The adaptors excluded from the literary material the second Interlude, titled “Awakening”, which introduces 8-year-old Jon Forsythe and his admiration for his mother. Episode 13 moves the viewers directly to the plot of Galsworthy’s *To Let*, when Irene’s son and Soames’ daughter are already 20 years old. Although a number of new characters appear, including Jon, Fleur, Michael Mont and Prosper Profond, the viewers’ feeling of continuity of the narrative is maintained by the presence of all the protagonists of the earlier episodes, aged, but recognisable. As the viewers are halfway through the serial, certain recapitulation is helpful, and that is taken directly from the novel. The adaptors’ work was made easier in this respect, as Galsworthy’s novels were originally published at intervals, and the novelist introduced devices making the summaries of the main conflict sound natural. The adaptors took advantage of the fact that such explanatory scenes existed and willingly included them in the serial. Together with the developing

⁷⁸ Richard Butt claims that film inserts were cut into the live broadcast of television adaptations from 1952 (see Butt 2012:161).

mutual infatuation of Fleur and Jon, other characters feel the urge to return in their discussions to the unfortunate marriage of Irene and Soames, and some of them share their knowledge with those unaware of the complicated family history. Winifred, Profond, June and Holly function as the informants: the former three for Fleur, the latter two for Michael Mont.

In the episodes that follow, the adaptors included most of Michael Mont's social involvement and political career, even his speech in the Parliament, which enriched the serial with social undertones, giving its fans arguments against the accusations of its being too soap-opera-like. The dramatic plot of thwarted passion of the earlier episodes returns with Jon coming back to England in the middle of Episode 23, in which documentary materials are cross-cut with the scenes shot in the studio. The Irene-Soames conflict cast its long shadow over other characters' lot to the very end of the serial by constantly being retold by various characters, but also Irene herself remains in the story with no other narrative function but to guard her son against Soames' offspring, or – as she sees it – Soames' passion and possessiveness which found their embodiment in his otherwise charming daughter.

As is shown by the brief discussion above, and as appears from the tables in Appendix 3, the adaptors found ways to include practically all the subplots of the source texts, and in the episodes covering the plots of individual novels we can find only a few examples of permutation and detraction, to use Wyślouch's terminology, with adjunction taking place only in Irene's reappearance and obviously in the development of the backstory of *The Man of Property*.

The characters

The number of characters that appear in the novels, and consequently in the serial, is proportional to the length of the source text. Some of them have been developed in the adaptation, or some of their characteristics got amplified for dramatic reasons. Those, I believe, deserve more attention here, as an analysis of the modifications introduced, or new qualities gained, provides an illustration of how a literary text can be interpreted in an adaptation to become more attractive for the audience.

As it has been shown earlier in this chapter, Irene Forsyte, née Heron (played by Nyree Dawn Porter) remains one of the central characters throughout the television production. Galsworthy, in the Preface to the 1922 edition of *A Man of Property*, refers to Irene in the following way:

[...] this long tale is no scientific study of a period; it is rather an intimate incarnation of the disturbance that Beauty effects in the lives of men.

The figure of Irene, never, as the reader may possibly have noticed, present, except through the senses of other characters, is a creation of disturbing beauty impinging on a possessive world. (Galsworthy 1964:37)

In the novel Irene is, as Hargreaves notes, “far more conceptual than real” (2007:135), while in the serial she gains her own voice which significantly reduces

the mysterious aura the novel's character is surrounded by. Galsworthy's Irene is a personification of beauty, and her looks are frequently referred to in the novel. She is a tall woman, with a beautiful figure, blond hair and dark eyes. Nyree Dawn Porter meets all the requirements, with the make-up, hairdos and dresses complementing her natural good looks. Irene's appearance is vital for the plot, as she enchants virtually every man she encounters, and the actress cast in that part should meet the viewers' expectations.

Irene appears in the early episodes which were created by the adaptors and the viewers witness her conversations with Soames which clearly foreshadow the future of their relationship and make her eventual claiming her freedom back understandable. Those scenes with Soames and Irene preceding their marriage present Irene as a brave, outspoken person, possessing an artistic soul and romantic nature. She is not flirtatious or encouraging, but is not discouraging either. The freedom with which she expresses her views seems closer to that of resolute young women contemporary with the serial, than that of a woman of the late-Victorian era. One of the scenes in which pre-marriage Irene is expressing herself is the scene of the proposal, and it is worth quoting, as to illustrate the boldness of the serial's Irene:

I.: "Other men have wanted me and I've always known, so I could draw back at once and they've been discouraged. But between us I felt nothing [...] And perhaps that's why I'm certain we should never marry." [...] "I admire and respect you. You will be a good husband, but not for me. [...] "When a man shows interest in a woman, she knows it, because in her there is some response, whoever he is. If he persists, the response can grow or die away, if it grows then she falls in love. If she likes and admires him, she will move heaven and earth to get him."

S.: "Then the man must persist."

I.: "Yes, but if the original spark is not there, there is nothing to grow. Don't you see that?"

S.: "No, I don't. I think very few women know about love until after they're married."

I.: "Yes, and what a risk they take!"

Irene sounds in this conversation exceedingly mature for the 18-year-old girl just out of a convent school she is at this moment of the narrative. However, the adaptors' motivation for including such a conversation in the serial is quite clear; it prepares the audience for the way in which Irene eventually "moves heaven and earth" to unite with Bosinney. In the serial we see the moment Irene rejects Soames' proposal for the first time, but the subsequent proposals are only signalled by a sequence of brief scenes illustrating his courting.

Irene at the beginning of the serial is a sensitive young woman, who is forced to marry the man proposing to her, as that is the only way out of the situation she is in. It might be perceived as a selfish act, but similar selfishness is shown by Soames. So, when the viewers get to Episode 4, in which we see Irene and Soames after about four years of marriage, grim and deeply unhappy, we know the background of the story. There is no information gap here, as we have been acquainted with the events that led to Irene's acceptance of Soames' proposal.

Another Irene emerges in the episodes that follow her departure from Soames: the Irene who befriends first Old Jolyon, then Young Jolyon; talkative, smiling, warm and lively. As there are more conversations in the serial than in the novel, she has more opportunities to express herself. She is, again, less mysterious and less withdrawn, becoming a charming companion of the two men who become infatuated with her. Irene remains in the serial to its very end, accompanying her son no matter whether he is single or married. The way the relationship between the two is presented indicates Jon's complete devotion to his mother and the fact that he sees her good as the highest value, which places him in the group of the characters she casts her spell over. Although Irene is never presented as manipulative or abusing the power she holds over either Jon or any other person under her influence, she does interfere in the affair which restarts between Jon and Fleur, believing it to be her duty. The adaptors not only gave Irene a stronger voice from the very beginning of her story, but also made her mature into a mother who moulds her son's lot once he turns out to be weaker than she would like him to be.

The reception of the 1967 serial's Soames (Eric Porter) was changing during the long broadcast, which reflected the way in which that character develops in Galsworthy's narrative. The conflict between him and Irene seems to have divided the British audience, particularly so during the BBC1 broadcast. *Late Night Line-up* shown on February 10, 1969 after Episode 23, in which Soames sees Irene for the last time at the American hotel, was broadcast on BBC1, refers to a poll carried out in Oxford Street, London, with 50 men and 50 women asked about their loyalties in the Irene-Soames conflict. 54 of the surveyed pedestrians supported Soames, 39 Irene and 7 were indifferent. A similar question was asked of the studio audience a week later in the BBC1 show *Talkback* and 54% voted for Soames. Some of the Oxford Street interviewees were allowed to present more elaborate opinions on the issue of Soames and Irene's marriage. One of the men expressed the following opinion: "Soames, in the book, is rather an ugly, rapacious person. Of course in the series he is put out as a rather attractive, wholesome sort of man, with a lot of British qualities." That comment does provide an insight into the 1960s canon of male beauty, but which British qualities in Soames are to be admired remains nowadays a bit unclear. At the same time Olga Franklin from *The Daily Mail*, who was one of the guests in the studio said: "For me Soames is an ideal husband. Perhaps a little unBritish, unEnglish, because his whole life is dedicated to love." Sir Gerard Nabarro, another guest in the studio, opposed Franklin's view, as for him "Galsworthy created Soames Forsyte as the epitome of property. He was the man of property. His manifestation of property was the creation of Robin Hill." At this moment we can hear Olga interrupting Sir Gerard by saying: "We are judging him as portrayed in the television serial by Eric Porter!" The comment illustrates the shift which took place in the process of adaptation. Soames became more human, and more suffering. Eric Porter's young Soames is grim, strict, stiff, and possessive but never becomes hateful or grotesque. He remains a loving son, a helpful brother,

and a man who cannot understand why he is unlovable. Galsworthy in the preface to the 1922 edition refers to Soames as follows: “[...] Soames, the tragedy of whose life is the very simple, uncontrollable tragedy of being unlovable, without quite a thick enough skin to be thoroughly unconscious of the fact” (Galsworthy 1964:37).

The Soames of *A Modern Comedy*, a man in his late 60s and early 70s, is different. Galsworthy has been frequently accused of having betrayed his early critical attitude towards the Forsytes and for making Soames much more understandable and likable throughout the second trilogy. As Soames in the serial is generally nicer, that shift is less striking. Eric Porter’s elderly Soames not only looks different, but also his manner of speech is altered. Porter uses lower voice pitch, adds a characteristic “hmm...”, and makes his character age not only in his looks, but also in general conduct. Soames’ conservativeness, strictness and his old-fashioned manners are wonderfully contrasted with Fleur’s modernity and Winifred’s commonsensical progressiveness. Conservative as he is, he remains a loving father, for whom Fleur’s happiness and peace of mind – which is hardly possible – are a major concern. The viewers are also reminded from time to time, as are the readers, that Soames’ love for Irene has never died, and that trait – at that moment of his life clearly romantic, deprived of the previous desirous possessiveness – makes the viewers sympathise with him, which explains the positive opinions about Soames expressed by the viewers interrogated in Oxford Street back in 1969. The character develops through the trilogy the characteristics of a tragic hero, which is also clear in the serial.

Young Jolyon “Jo” Forsyte (Kenneth More) is one of those characters who benefit from the serial considerably. Although his point of view in the novel is frequently identified with that of Galsworthy, it is the serial that makes Jo speak most of the commentary that Galsworthy’s omniscient narrator delivers, as it has been already mentioned earlier here. Jo creates himself as at once an outsider and an insider. He provides the viewers with an ironic commentary about his relatives, but he also plays his functions as a character in the plot. The viewers are supposed to identify with him; with a rebel, an observer, a man critical of his class, but also aware of his own weaknesses and imperfections, humble as a painter, devoted as a lover and husband to those wives he loved, i.e. Helene and later Irene. Jo is the central character in the first three episodes (see Appendix 3), as they tell the story of his elopement in a relatively detailed way. Also a number of the conversations he takes part in have become longer in the serial, as some thoughts and commentaries had to take the form of dialogue. One of the best examples is the scene in which Jo tells Jon the story of Irene and Soames, which in the novel was conveyed to the boy in a letter.

Kleinecke suggests that the biased representation of Victorian society mediated by Jo, consistent with what is known of Galsworthy’s own views on the period, is foregrounded because of its relevance to social changes in the 1960s:

Young Jolyon’s attitudes towards Victorian norms and stifling social conventions mirror conflicts and debates of the time. His privileged role in the adaptation mirrors an acting

out of conflicts between tradition and social change that, within the more traditional and conservative confines of the classic serial, corresponds to the social awareness of the up-to-date and politically and socially progressive *Wednesday Play*. (2006:144)

Nevertheless, Jo – revolting at the beginning of the serial against the social norms and critical of the possessiveness of the class he comes from – becomes “a man of property,” which he finds rather ironic, having inherited Robin Hill after his father’s death.

Visually, the rather stout Kenneth More’s Jo is in a counterpoint to the slim and stiff Eric Porter’s Soames, as is the character in terms of his personality. More was probably the most recognisable actor in the production, as he was among the most popular male film actors in the 1950s. The character he plays is in his thirties when the serial starts and in his seventies when he dies in Episode 15. More was 53, while Joseph O’Conor, playing his father, was 51, which was frequently a subject of jokes. The make-up crew is to be praised for the fact that the two men do look like father and son.

Another character whose role rises in significance in the serial is Winifred “Freddie” Dartie, née Forsyte (Margaret Tyzack). In Galsworthy’s text she plays a vital role only in *In Chancery*, when her husband deserts her. In the first three episodes of the serial there is space for developing the subplot of Winifred’s engagement to Monty and the early years of their marriage. The early episodes show Freddie, then a young wife madly in love with Monty, who quite quickly discovers that her husband is dishonest. The most interesting subplot involving Winifred is the one concerning Monty’s unfaithfulness and desertion. The scenes showing the way Winifred handles the divorce proceedings, started upon Soames’ advice, and then her decision to “keep” Monty once he returns, are memorable, mostly due to Tyzack’s performance. In the serial there are more scenes involving Winifred, than we can find in the novel, so she becomes a character whose subplot is of individual interest to the viewers, not just a foil to Soames.

Tyzack’s performance is among the best in the production. Although she is not entirely convincing as a young girl about to get married, Winifred as a mature, headstrong woman is among the most likable characters. She also introduces a bit of comic relief with her comments made towards Soames, especially in the episodes in which the siblings are already advanced in age. Winifred in the serial is also given the function of Fleur’s mother’s substitute, as for some reason in the serial Soames’ second wife deserts him forever. That alteration contributes to Winifred’s more frequent appearance in the episodes covering the second trilogy.

Jo’s elder daughter, June (June Barry), appears in the first two episodes as a child (played by Susan Pennick), then reappears as a 17-year-old girl engaged to Bosinney in Episode 4 and remains present in fifteen more episodes, including the last one. We see her grow up and age, and at the end of the serial she is in her fifties. June Barry’s performance is most convincing when June Forsyte is a young, passionate, energetic girl, desperately trying to help the man she loves. She is much less natural

in her attempts to show the aging process, and the make-up she wears does not help much.

June's main function in the first novel is to make Irene and Bosinney meet. Her own love life is ruined in that way, as having lost her lover she stays single for the rest of her life. In the serial the lesson she learns is formulated by Irene, her former "chum", when they meet accidentally after Bosinney's disappearance. When June accuses Irene of being a false friend, Irene responds: "You are a woman now. And you should know by now that women don't have friends. They have a lover and other people they just happen to have met." Those lines come from the adaptors and sound more of the 1960s than of Galsworthy's times.

The background for the game of passion played by the young is created by the Old Forsytes. Three gossiping aunts and equally gossiping uncles varying in number are charming in their commentaries, frequently bringing comic relief to the otherwise gloomy story. The comic shading of the characters like uncle Swithin, uncle Timothy and aunt Julie comes both from their own behaviour and views expressed, and from Young Jolyon's commentary. The absence of "The Forsyte 'Change'" is genuinely felt once its members die. Old Jolyon (Joseph O'Connor), as has already been mentioned above, emerges at the beginning of the serial as properly conservative, but mellows over time and takes an attitude to life closer to that of his rebellious son. Old Jolyon is the warmest, the most sensitive and the least possessive of the male siblings, with James (John Welsh) being his opposite, which results in an open conflict. However, in the serial James becomes a more sympathetic character than the one emerging from Galsworthy's text, partly due to the fact that we do not have access to his thoughts. His aging receives the closest portrayal of all the siblings, and at the end of James' life Welsh's performance is genuinely moving, with some deeply tragic undertones.

Out of the young Forsytes who take over the serial in its midst it is Fleur Mont, née Forsyte, played by Susan Hampshire that turned out to be the most memorable. Hampshire's Fleur is restless, childish, selfish, but genuine, energetic, quick, and simply charming. Fleur appears for the first time in Episode 13 and remains the central character to the end of the serial. Every scene she is in centres on her. Pretty, lively and natural she is entirely likeable, despite the viewers' awareness of her little manipulations. For Hampshire the serial marked the beginning of her career in costume drama, as she played Becky in the 1968 BBC adaptation of *Vanity Fair*, then in *The First Churchills* (1969) and in 1974 in *The Pallisers*, to mention just the most memorable of the productions which followed.

Fleur is a complex character, both in the novel and in the serial, but despite her constant feeling of not gaining what she really wants, she lacks that tragic aura that her father has. Fleur has marvellous exchanges with Soames, showing the differences of personality and mutual affection. Also her conversations with Michael Mont make their marriage appear a happier one than it is in the novels. Fleur is nice and warm towards Michael; her manner is very friendly and she is

happy to rely on him. There is much less estrangement between the two than in the novels. The serial does not include any scenes involving Fleur's son, Kit, who remains only talked about. This exclusion gives the impression of Fleur being a much more neglectful mother than she is in Galsworthy's text.

Hampshire, in an interview given to *Late Night Line-up* after the production finished, made a comment about Fleur, saying: "Fleur is restless, because she should work, like girls do today." It is an interesting perspective for 1967. Fleur, both unmarried and married, definitely has energy to spare, and is in constant search for an aim in life. That is why she enjoys running the canteen during the strike so much. It seems that this energy, intelligence and lack of occupation make her manipulate first Wilfred Desert, and later Jon.

Nicholas Pennell's Michael Mont is a highly likeable character in the television narrative, positive inside and out, with a strong social conscience, as is that character in the novels. Fleur's words "you're too good" do justice to the character. There is cheerfulness about this character, who seems to be a personification of kindness and optimism. Pennell's performance matches Susan Hampshire's and they create a charming couple to watch. This impression of their marriage is important in the viewers' reception of Fleur's desperate hunt for Jon. As a husband he is the exact opposite of Soames. Mont loves Fleur "madly," as he puts it, but accepts her decisions, wants her to be happy, and could even have moved out of her life, had she demanded that. Mont comes from an aristocratic family and both he and his father alike create a nice contrast to the Forsytes, never entirely certain if their hard-won social position is stable enough. Although Mont inherits the function of the narrator, introducing episodes from the sixteenth onward, his role remains in most episodes rather peripheral. Nevertheless, there are quite long passages devoted to his fascination with foggartism (although the visit Mont pays to Mr Foggart himself is not included in the serial), there is his parliamentary speech, and his involvement in slum clearance. Michael is much more than just Fleur's husband: "Through Michael [...] the novel [*The Silver Spoon*] becomes considerably more than a mere society affair, it is a study of national problems covering the wide field of England's economic condition" (Schalit 1970:96). The same comment could be made with reference to the serial, as Michael's social involvement takes up significant space there, despite Fleur remaining in the centre of the narrative.

There is also a group of characters whose presence becomes more conspicuous in the serial, namely the servants. When a narrative is set in the 19th-century or early 20th-century middle-class, and upper-middle class households the presence of servants is a necessary element. In Galsworthy's texts that presence is obvious, although not always stressed. There are a number of servants, whose surnames are known (not the first names, though) and who are present in almost every scene taking place in one of the houses. They include Warmson at James,' Smither at Timothy's and later on at Winifred's, Coaker at the Monts,' Bilson at Soames' and Parfitt at Old Jolyon's. In the voice-over introduction to the fourth episode Jo

makes a comment about the attitude the Forsytes hold towards their servants. Jo's words create background for a sequence of pictures showing servants of different types working in the houses of the Forsytes: serving food and drinks, making a fire, bringing newspapers, scrubbing the floor. Jo mentions the fact the Forsytes tend to ignore the role of the servants as the source of information about their private lives:

[...] that numerous body of trained observers who attend to almost every detail of their personal lives, keeping them warm and mobile and extremely well-fed. And they forget, if ever they knew, that these servants are human beings much like themselves with loves and hopes and fears, and just as much relish for gossip, particularly about their masters.

The text above can be found in one of the sections of the narrative that were created by the adaptors. The servants' presence is more conspicuous in the serial simply because they become visible. Their existence, and the place they hold in the household, become of greater significance in the visual form, created from the 1960s perspective. They not only gain human qualities, but also more clearly are those behind the functioning of the house. The Forsytes, Soames included, are presented not as fraternising, but kind towards the servants. Nevertheless, we do not have any insight into the servants' private lives or their own problems. Their representation is close to what Higson wrote about servants in heritage films: "servants seem to figure as little more than authentic period props, heritage decoration – and may in that respect underline the pleasures of the leisured classes they serve [...]" (Higson 2003:27). The fact that the Forsyte stories excluded those of the servants, led – as Rebecca Eaton suggests – to the production of the highly successful ITV *Upstairs, Downstairs* series. Its future creators, Jean Marsh and Eileen Atkins claim that the idea came to them during *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) broadcast: "It was disgusting, the way there were no downstairs people in it at all. We thought we'd show what might have been going on downstairs. We were the pith of it" (Marsh quoted in Eaton 2013:29). Hence, out of the rage against only "the fabulous lives" being represented on screen, the forerunner of *Downton Abbey*, the contemporary blockbuster, was born.

The visuals

As has already been mentioned, *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) was made in black and white, and most of the scenes were shot in the studio. As in the case of other television productions in that period in television history, *The Forsyte Saga's* television space is constructed around the actor, who is at the centre of the viewers' attention. The only scenes without the actors are those included in the documentary materials, which are introduced in a number of episodes adding to the serial's realism and setting it in a specific historical context. Generally, the camera in early television productions is more stationary than the cinematic one, but some dynamics can be achieved by the use of two or three cameras, which take longer shots from different angles. This is precisely the way in which most of the scenes are shot in this particular production. Most of them are shot in the studio, with almost

exclusively diegetic sound (with the exception of Jo's voice-over commentary), with hardly any mood music. Outdoor shots are short, rare and usually used only to signal the location, not to represent it. The settings are as numerous as there are family members at whose premises various events take place. The most important location throughout the first 12 episodes is Uncle Timothy's house at Bayswater Road; his drawing room, to be more specific, as that is the usual location of "The Forsyte 'Change.'" The houses of Old Jolyon, James and Emily, Soames and Irene, Winifred and Dartie, in which a number of scenes are set, do not differ significantly in their style and décor. Kleinecke (2006:152) makes an interesting point about the decorations of the locations the Forsyte story is set in, contrasting them with those of the 2002 Granada adaptation:

[...] the BBC adaptation of *The Forsyte Saga* was also acclaimed for its authentic period detail, and indeed, looking at the decor of Victorian middle-class interiors, the cluttered, claustrophobic interior spaces that dominate the 1967 adaptation seem very much in keeping with period decor, [...] mise-en-scene becomes a manifestation of Victorian social structures and conventions and at times can be seen as literally projecting itself between characters, crowding in on them and bearing over their relationships as if to separate, to remove privacy and prevent intimacy [...].

Most of the interiors are claustrophobic, with the rooms looking over-decorated. More space is provided in the case of two settings, which required more attention, because Galsworthy was very detailed about them. These are Robin Hill, and Fleur and Michael Mont's fashionable drawing room, which I would like to elaborate on a bit more.

Robin Hill and its construction play a vital role in the plot of the novels and the serial almost to the very end. The house whose construction devastated the lives of everybody involved, i.e. Bosinney, Soames and Irene, and then became an idyllic refuge for Old Jolyon, a family house for Young Jolyon, Helene and their children, and finally the place where Irene finds twenty years of happiness, is not only significant because of its function, but is also extraordinary in its layout and décor. There were two crucial elements of this setting which had to be rendered in the visual form: the location and the modern look of the house, which had to be significantly different from all the other houses we have a chance to see in the serial. Robin Hill had to create a contrast with all those richly decorated and rather dark interiors, cluttered with furniture, that the Forsytes lived in. Bosinney designed it so as to be dominated by light. The colours mentioned in the novel could not really play any role in the monochrome production, so the view of the interiors of Robin Hill which we get before it is inhabited impress with light and space. The first and only full image of the interior is presented in Episode 6, during Irene and James' visit to the house. We see what Bosinney calls "the court;" the camera is on the entresol, and tries to give the viewers an impression of space. The walls are white, and so are the columns and a statute in the middle of the court. As the camera comes down we see one of the rooms, which will be used in a later scene, with one wall consisting of windows only. This particular room is used a number

of times later in the production in most of the scenes taking place in Robin Hill. Once the place becomes inhabited, interior decorations appear, which are fewer than in the case of the older houses, and not extravagant. The exterior of the house is also much different from any other house in the production, and that impression is achieved also by the fact that it is set in the country, on a hill. The shape of the house is unusual, and it is conspicuous in its whiteness. The aesthetic quality of both the exterior and interior reflects the technical possibilities, the budget and the television production convention. Never in the story are the viewers tempted to believe that Robin Hill is anything more than a decoration.

The other interior whose décor is significant as being characteristic of those who live there is Fleur's drawing room. At the beginning of Episode 16 the room is "Chinese;" spacious, with all the decorations being Chinese-style: Chinese-looking vases, paintings on the walls, even the door is covered with Chinese-looking panels. The room is supposed to reflect Fleur's habit of following fashion trends. The same room becomes redecorated after Fleur becomes a mother and the plot of *The Silver Spoon* begins. It becomes more "stylish."

There are props that the television moves to the foreground of some of the scenes. One of them is certainly the piano, which Irene plays wherever she finds herself, i.e. at home (at her stepmother's place, then at Soames' house and in the apartment she rents), in Robin Hill, Francis Wilmot's house in North Carolina, at the hotel in Washington D.C. Irene not only expresses herself through her playing, but also seems to seduce men who find themselves under the spell of the music. The situation is repeated in the case of all four men who love her, i.e. Soames, Bosinney, Old Jolyon and Young Jolyon. In the television serial we not only get the sight of Irene playing, but we also have a chance to listen to her play and see how the sound of music and the beauty of the player attract subsequent admirers.

The technological progress which took place over the years the Saga covers is illustrated by the presence of a number of new inventions. Cars replace horse-driven carriages, while gossip can be exchanged over the telephone, which as a prop becomes eagerly exploited by the production. It appears for the first time in Episode 14, and becomes a vital means of communication. The telephone looks Edwardian, and so does the way in which it is handled and put out of sight. Fleur's telephone, when not used, is hidden in a cupboard, while Winifred possesses a special cover for it. The serial shows that attention paid to the detail which has been so the characteristic of the genre to this day.

Costumes have always been a vital element of classic-novel adaptations. Those used in *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) are very elaborate; women's dresses are as stunning as they can be in the shades of grey. Two female characters are present throughout the serial covering 47 years: Irene and Winifred, whose costumes undergo changes reflecting the changing fashion. The costumes created a retro-fashion in Britain, through which the viewers were trying to "buy a little nostalgia for themselves," as *The Late Night Line Up* suggests. "Forsyte Saga style" clothes became popular,

i.e. dresses inspired by late Victorian ones, and so did the hairstyles. The same documentary presents a hairstylist instructing the viewers how to pin a hairpiece to create “the Irene bun.” The work of the make-up team is admirable, and it can be appreciated when one watches the episodes to the end, and then re-watches the early episodes. For Irene, Soames and Winifred the serial covers a period of 47 years. All three of them age gracefully, although Irene the least, as Galsworthy intended. It is also interesting to see how the costumes change. Irene’s dresses show the changing fashions best, as they diminish in skirt size over time, to change completely in the 1920s. The same applies to the hairdos, which become significantly smaller. An eye make-up on the younger women clearly is that of the 1960s, with top eyelids outlined with a black eyeliner and artificial eyelashes.

The use of documentary materials in the serial (Queen Victoria’s funeral, Ascot horseracing and the General Strike), mentioned earlier, is another interesting element of the production. In this case the fact that the serial was shot in monochrome worked to the production’s advantage, since it led to smooth incorporation of the documentaries, without much difference in style. Technically, from today’s perspective, the documentary material leaves a lot to be desired, but it does add an element of realism to a production that is otherwise theatrical in its studio aesthetics.

The 1967 production achieved something most adaptors aiming at fidelity to the source text would like to achieve – while preserving most of the original dialogue, plots and subplots, keeping the full range of the novels’ characters, despite the limited technical means, it managed to create an involving, well-paced, and in most cases fantastically performed narrative. The production marked a breakthrough in the genre not only because of its length. As Giddings (1999) notes, discussing the changes that the classic serial underwent in the 1960s:

There is interesting evidence of change and adjustment with the times. Classic serials got a little more – how shall I put it – adult (?) in the Swinging Sixties and the politicising of TV drama post *Cathy Come Home* and the pioneering *Wednesday Play*, and dramas by Dennis Potter, Colin Mercer and others. The sense of change is clear in the handling of *The Forsyte Saga*.

What Giddings is referring to is the inclusion of the marital rape theme, and more reference to human sexuality than in the earlier productions. The serial showed also attempts to increase its realism through the use of the documentaries, and presenting some of the scenes shot outdoors – something almost unheard of in the classic serial until then.

The adaptation introduced significant modifications to the first of Galsworthy’s novels by developing its backstory, which means actually creating more than one-eighth of the whole 26-episode narrative. We can assume that it was acceptable within the genre of the classic serial only because Galsworthy was a “modern classic” – nobody would dare do it in the case of Dickens’ or Austen’s novels. Back in 1967 Galsworthy’s trilogies were not particularly popular, and no earlier

adaptation existed, so the adaptors could introduce some modifications without the fear of being accused of desecrating the source text. The modifications introduced in the adaptation process – e.g. consistent presence of the voice-over introductions with slightly ironic commentary and reappearance of Irene in the second half of the serial – resulted in the production's greater narrative and formal unity. Despite the initial addition of the dramatised backstory and making the female characters stronger and better developed the adaptation was perceived as faithful to Galsworthian plot and dialogue. It was an example of the classic serial, but with contemporary undertones, and despite the costumes, hairdos and props telling the story of universal human passions, which sold remarkably well.

Malcolm Bradbury in his 2000 article for the *New Statesman*, anticipating the new adaptation of *The Forsyte Saga*, wrote about the 1967 serial in the following way: “The scripts were excellent, and the brilliant casting and dramatic chemistry between the lead characters set a new standard, holding a fascinated audience for 26 weeks. The ‘modern’ classic serial was born.” In his considerations on the production's success he stated that it had been back then “half-contemporary drama” and it “told an understandable truth about society; and its mixture of love and criticism of Britishness worked.” Writing that, and wondering if *The Forsyte Saga* of 2002 would be a success, he did not know that Granada's production would reduce the social and political context of Galsworthy's novels to an absolute minimum, focusing on the melodramatic story of love and passion, which was apparently considered to be better suited for the 21st-century audience.

Although *The Forsyte Saga* of 1967 was undoubtedly a memorable production, from the perspective of the early 21st century it remains a relic of the past in its reverence for the source text, although the next production to be discussed, coming from the early 1980s, proves that a television serial can rely on the literary text to an even greater extent than Donald Wilson's adaptation did.

Brideshead Revisited (1981)

Evelyn Waugh (1903-1966) and his novel

Evelyn Waugh's literary output is impressive and consists of 15 novels, numerous short stories, three biographies, as well as autobiographical and travel writing. He became a professional writer in 1928 with the publication of his first novel, *Decline and Fall* and quickly established his reputation as a satirist. *Brideshead Revisited* was his eighth novel, published in 1944 in a limited edition, and then again in 1945 after being revised. It was successful with the readers both at home and in the U.S., but its critical acclaim was moderate, as it differed significantly from his earlier works in being much more serious. It was also the first novel in which he, a converted Catholic, picked up a religious theme. Most of the critical works published on Waugh since then have compared that work with those preceding it. As Kennedy notes, before the publication of *Brideshead Revisited* Waugh was "known to his readers as a purveyor of ironic, apparently nihilistic black comedy and as a writer of no explicit moral or religious persuasion" (1991:23). Both the religious subject and almost complete absence of humour puzzled readers and critics alike.

Brideshead Revisited was written between 1943 and 1944, when Waugh was in the army, but due to a minor parachute accident he had "a rest from military service" as he admits in the Preface to the 1959 edition of the novel. He explains there the reasons for which the book is so "lavish" in style:

It was a bleak period of present privation and threatening disaster – the period of soya beans and Basic English – and in consequence the book is infused with a kind of gluttony, for food and wine, for the splendours of the recent past, and for rhetorical and ornamental language which now, with a full stomach, I find distasteful. (Waugh 2008:ix)

Some autobiographical elements can easily be traced in the novel; Waugh, a middle-class boy, was himself a student of Hertford College in Oxford in the 1920s, had aristocratic friends, was converted to Roman Catholicism and served in the British Army during World War II, like the novel's narrator and central character, Charles Ryder, did. Some critics, and Waugh's biographers, also note that the novel revealed Waugh's snobbism much more than did any of his earlier works.

The publication of *Brideshead Revisited* marks the mid-point of Waugh's career as a novelist. The seven novels published between 1948 and 1966, when he died of

heart attack, vary thematically and stylistically. He returned to his earlier satirical mode in *The Loved One* (1948) and *Love Among the Ruins* (1953), touched upon the religious theme in *Helena* (1950), and drew extensively on his military experience in the novels which in 1965 were published in a single volume as the *Sword of Honour* trilogy.⁷⁹

Similarly to E. M. Forster, Waugh has eventually received the label “a modern classic.” The late 1970s and the early 1980s saw “the Great Waugh Boom,” as Michael Barber, Waugh’s biographer, calls the rise of interest in the writer’s life and works, which began with the publication of his diaries, first serialised in *The Observer* and then published in one volume in 1976. In 1980 his letters appeared in print, to be followed by *The Essays, Articles and Reviews of Evelyn Waugh* in 1983. *Brideshead Revisited*, adapted into a television serial broadcast in 1981, fits into that “Waugh vogue” perfectly well. The novel was readapted in 2008 into a feature film and at present Waugh is recognised primarily as the author of that particular novel, despite his impressive literary output, and popularity with his contemporaries. There are also more scholarly articles devoted to *Brideshead Revisited* than to any other of his texts and their focus is mostly on the religious theme, on the discussion of the main characters’ implied homosexuality, and on the explicit nostalgia for the lost old England. As Garnett notes: “Brideshead is Waugh’s daydream of the best place to hide from a world of disagreeable people and discouraging novelties” (1990:159). That escapist quality of the novel has been rendered convincingly in the adaptation to be discussed here.

Adaptations

The first two attempts to adapt *Brideshead Revisited* for the screen were American. The initial offer came in 1946 from MGM, but the talks with the novelist failed. Another offer came in 1950, with Graham Greene becoming the potential screenwriter. Eventually, as Derek Granger claims: “The film company ran out of money and the idea was abandoned” (1981:396). The novel had its strong admirers in the U.K. and Granger, one of Granada’s producers, belonged to them. In 1972 he became interested in the copyright, which was not easy to obtain for a television production, because Waugh’s agents would have preferred a film offer. However, as Roddick notes in his article in *Sight & Sound*: “By the summer of 1977, the status of television drama had improved enough for the TV rights to become ‘available’” (1982:60), and Granger’s efforts led to the acquisition of the rights to adapt the text into a television serial.

John Mortimer was assigned the task of writing the screenplay, while Michael Lindsey-Hogg was chosen to direct the production. Together with Granger they did most of the casting and chose the locations. In May 1979 the production was

⁷⁹ Those include *Men at Arms* (1952), *Officers and Gentlemen* (1955) and *Unconditional Surrender* (1961).

launched, with the first shots being made in Malta imitating Morocco. When the crew returned to England in August the production was interrupted for over three months by the technicians' strike. That unplanned break brought about a number of highly significant consequences. First of all, Lindsey-Hogg had other commitments and resigned. Charles Sturridge, aged 28 and with little experience, replaced him. Sturridge turned out to be an ideal director for the serial, as he knew Waugh's text by heart, and was himself a Catholic and an Oxford graduate. As Bottum (2011) puts it, he "turned in exactly the competent, non-intrusive, slightly Merchant Ivoryesque filming that the story needed." Jeremy Irons playing Charles Ryder was cast in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and after much consideration the decision was made to synchronise his schedules and make his involvement in both productions possible. The strike altered other actors' plans as well, and made Lawrence Olivier available to play Lord Marchmain. All in all, the production restarted in December 1979 and lasted for two years, much longer than anybody had initially expected or planned, turning out more costly than any other television serial prior to that time.

The initial screenplay was prepared for 6 hourly episodes. However, Granger and the directors decided to come back to the novel and to extend the serial. Granger in the commentary included in the Special Features to the DVD edition of the serial states, that the climate was suitable for making such an expensive production. He claims, that back then if television companies, immensely rich at that time, made "quality" programs, they did not have to pay the special levy the Conservative government otherwise imposed on them. Hence, Granada was willing to spend its money on that particular serial, which was the first major series made all on film. The BBC experimented with shooting their adaptation of *Tinker, Taylor, Soldier, Spy* (1979) on film, but its scale was much smaller. In *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) the only scenes shot in the studio were those in the ship's cabins, which were reconstructed and put on rockers to simulate the movement. All other scenes were shot on location, although not necessarily identical with the ones described in the book (e.g. Malta played Morocco, and a number of interiors, supposedly found in Oxford or London, were actually located in Manchester).

Although the serial's credits officially indicate Mortimer as the author of the screenplay and some critics, like e.g. Inglis (2000) in his article devoted to the serial constantly credits Mortimer with the adaptation, Graham Lord's unofficial biography, *John Mortimer: The Devil's Advocate*, revealed in 2005 that none of the scripts submitted by Mortimer had in fact been used in the production and that the screenplay was actually written by the serial's producer and director. These and other facts are confirmed by what Lindsey-Hogg, Sturridge and Granger say in their commentaries to the DVD edition: when the script arrived, the decision was made to go back to the book. Lindsey-Hogg claims it was him who did not really like the way the stories of Sebastian and Julia were cross-cut in Mortimer's script, so he suggested using the book as the map, and using voice-over to frame the story,

which could only be done for television in the extended format of a television serial. Sturridge also talks about writing and rewriting of scenes, moving away from the original Mortimer script, coming back to the book, and writing things over the weekend. He mentions the actors getting their script two or three days in advance, which was not common practice, but was accepted by the actors, who sacrificed their comfort for the greater good.

No matter how convinced the production team was of the quality of the serial, doubts remained. Granger recalls a conversation with Sturridge which took place in the cutting room. Granger asked Sturridge: "Who do you think will watch such a slow, elitist thing?" and the director's answer was: "Probably our mothers." This statement, by the way, illustrates the stereotype concerning the audience of the classic serial, which was traditionally assumed to be middle-class, middle-age, and female. However, in the case of *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) the group of viewers turned out to be much more inclusive.

The original broadcast took place from October 12 to December 22, 1981. The serial consisted of nine one-hour episodes and two episodes (the opening and the closing ones) of double length, becoming "a visual masterpiece of awesome proportions" (Roddick 1982:58). Its popularity – both abroad and at home – was much greater than anybody had expected and the critical reception was either highly, or moderately enthusiastic. James Naughton in his review of the serial in December 1981 summarises it as "a seductive story of aristocratic folk, set in the home of the Chairman of the BBC, in which nothing much happens, except that everyone is destroyed, in one way or another" (Naughton 1981b:695). Duncckely in his 1981 review for the *Financial Times* (quoted in Higson 2003:15) states that "*Brideshead Revisited* looks like the nearest thing to perfection that the television serial has managed in its entire history." As Bottum commented in 2011 in his reminiscences of the serial's initial success in the U.S.:

The homosexuals loved it. The Catholics loved it. The literary types went gaga over it. The cinephiles praised the filming, the drama critics raved about the casting, and everybody – everybody – in the fall of 1981⁸⁰ seemed to be watching the PBS presentation of ITV's *Brideshead Revisited*.

An interesting illustration of the serial's popularity and its wide appeal comes with a sequel of articles by Naughton reviewing television programmes for *The Listener*. On October 15, 1981 he published his review of the first episode, calling it "a two-hour visual feast" (1981a:346). He also posed a question: "One wonders, though, what the average viewer will make of it all [...] what will the man on Clapham omnibus think, in this age of Livingstone-reduced fares?" which was quite a provocative one. Subsequently, the editors received a letter (at least one), which was published on October 29, 1981 under the title "Mystical beasts," signed

⁸⁰ Bottum seems to mistake the dates of the broadcast. The fall of 1981 was the time of the original broadcast in the U.K. In the U.S. the serial was shown from January 1982.

by Harry Eyres of Clapham, London, who clearly felt offended by the patronising tone of Naughton's remark. Naughton responded in another review, published on December 3 the same year, explaining the context of his unfortunate commentary, but also expressing the feeling of surprise resulting from the fact that the popularity of the serial apparently reached far outside the circles of the intelligentsia:

I was doubtful that it would engage the attention of the mass audience. The viewing figures, however, suggest that I was mistaken. Episodes one to five [...] have pulled audiences in the nine to 12 million range, which is not exactly small potatoes, even when you count the people who don't know where the off-button is [...] it has set new standards for lavishness, scale and endurance. (Naughton 1981b:694)

However, we have to remember that the viewing figures might be misleading in the actual evaluation of how many people watched a given production regularly. As Barwise and Ehrenberg (1992:43) suggest, only 3% of British adults actually saw every episode of *Brideshead Revisited*, although 28% (26 million) saw at least one episode of the serial.⁸¹

The critics were generally consentaneous in their opinions that it would be virtually impossible to make a better adaptation of Waugh's text. As Naughton notes in the above-quoted review for *The Listener* "[...] in making *Brideshead* the way they did, the production team have effectively hedged their bets: any flaws that there are in the series are also flaws in the book" (1981b:694). As Giddings and Selby claim, *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) as a drama is actually better than Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* as a novel: "The narrative and the relationships in the dramatization have more coherence than they do in the book" (2001:61). The serial was nominated for many awards, out of which it won 7 BAFTA Awards,⁸² one Emmy Award⁸³ and two Golden Globes.⁸⁴

The adaptation is surprisingly long when compared to the length of the novel. The fact that 345 pages were rendered into 13 hours of film means that the actual serial viewing process takes longer than the reading of the novel. I believe this is one of very few examples when adaptation makes the narrative longer than the source text with the addition of hardly any new elements to the plot. The extraordinary length results mainly from the slow pace of the production, set by Irons' unhurried reading of the passages of Charles' narration. Granger provides the following commentary upon Waugh's text:

Although it is a rather hard book to adapt, because there is very little action in it [...] it's a book about people just talking to each other, and rooms, and gardens, and you take it could be terribly boring, but it's not, because underneath that seemingly tranquil surface where nothing

⁸¹ In the case of *The Jewel in the Crown*, the next serial to be discussed here, in 1984 the numbers were respectively 2% and 30%.

⁸² For Best Drama Serial/Series, Best Actor (Andrews), Best Costume Design, Best Scenic Design, Best Film Editor, Best Film Sound and Best Make Up.

⁸³ For Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Limited Series or a Special – Lawrence Olivier.

⁸⁴ For Best Mini-Series and Best Performance by an Actor in a Mini-Series (Andrews).

much is happening, there is an enormous reverberating engine of doom and redemption [...] on a simple level [...] it is a sort of fairy story about an upper middle class boy who goes to the ball and meets the high aristocracy and he is absolutely bewitched by this enormously grand life.⁸⁵

The success of the serial resulted, among others, from the adaptors ability to render the qualities Granger mentions above.

The serial was immensely successful in the U.S., once it reached it in January 1982, shown within the PBS' Great Performances series (not *Masterpiece Theatre*, as it is frequently assumed). However, as Erickson (2010), reviewing the serial for *The New York Times* admits: "The miniseries created a stir in the U.S. because of its mild nudity and profanity; the presentation had to be re-edited when it was shown for a second time on PBS." It also created a vogue for the 1920s-style clothes and parties. In Poland the serial was shown much later, i.e. from January to March 1990, nearly ten years after its initial broadcast in England, and unlike *The Forsyte Saga* (1967), or *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984), it did not enjoy special popularity, although for those who did watch it, the production was memorable.

It is unquestionable that *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) won its place in television history and in the history of adaptations of literary texts. In 2003 Higson when discussing the marketability of heritage films and its connection with tourism gives an example of still its existing popularity:

To celebrate the launch on video of the classic British drama series, *Brideshead Revisited*, the magazine *Country Living* ran a competition, the first prize for which was "a weekend at the Wormsley Arms Hotel, Yorkshire, where Sir Lawrence Olivier stayed during the filming of the series [...] plus an exclusive private tour of Castle Howard" [...]. A few years earlier, an auction of unwanted furniture and objects d'art from Castle Howard, some of which had been used in the television series, was reported to have done unexpectedly good business. (2003:61)

A reference to *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) appeared when the BBC showed in 2006 *The Line of Beauty*, a three-episode adaptation of Alan Hollinghurst's (2004) novel.⁸⁶ The DVD edition of the mini-series includes a quotation from *The Independent*, which refers to the production as "a Thatcher era *Brideshead Revisited*." The comparison seems to some extent justified, as the two productions show a number of narrative similarities. *The Line of Beauty* is a story of Nick Guest, a middle-class Oxford graduate, who becomes a lodger of his friend's upper-class parents living in a luxurious London house. In the first episode Nick is taken to visit Hawkeswood, a stately home belonging to the family, and is astonished by its grandeur. He falls in love with the upper-class life-style, only gradually discovering the dark side of the family whose life he admires. In *Brideshead* Charles won Lady Marchmain's acceptance, as she believed he could help her in pacifying Sebastian. In *The Line of Beauty*, Nick is accepted by the family as he befriends Cat, the

⁸⁵ The text quoted is the transcript of what Granger says in a commentary to Episode 1 included in the DVD edition of the serial.

⁸⁶ The novel was adapted by Andrew Davies.

daughter, who suffers from manic-depressive states and is difficult for her parents to control. As De Groot (2009:195) notes “The series directly shadows *Brideshead*, with its ingénue narrator falling in love with a monied but flawed family and attaching himself to them first through the son (at Oxford) and then through the daughter.” Nick’s relationship with Cat has nothing of Charles’ attachment to Julia, though, as he is openly gay, and Cat loves him as a friend only. Similarly to Charles, Nick is eventually forced to leave the family, as in the mother’s view he has betrayed the trust they had in him by helping Cat to do what her parents would not approve of. The real problems of the family are much more complex and serious than that, though, and as De Groot notes, similarly to *Brideshead* “the family are fetishised in order to demonstrate just quite how unpleasant they are” (2009:195). What adds flavour to the comparison of the two productions is the fact that *Brideshead* was made more or less at the time *The Line of Beauty* is set in.

Interestingly, another adaptation of the Waugh’s text – a feature film – was made in 2008. Adapted by Andrew Davies and Jeremy Brock, directed by Julian Jarrold, it starred Emma Thompson as lady Marchmain, Matthew Goode as Charles and Ben Whishaw as Sebastian. Castle Howard was reused as *Brideshead*, but that fact seems to be the only similarity between the two productions. Waugh’s text was condensed to 133 minutes of viewing, which resulted in an unavoidable reduction of some sections of the novel. The main criticism that the production faced, however, was concerned with the alteration made to the part of the plot concerning the relationship between Charles and Sebastian, not only presenting their relationship as overtly homosexual, but also making Charles betray Sebastian and get involved emotionally with Julia, which provides an easy explanation for jealous Sebastian’s heavy drinking. All those who remembered the serial – and there are still many of them – had critical opinions about the film. Those not familiar with either the novel or the serial were more positive about the production, apparently unaware of the complexity of the source material. It is worth noting, however, that the film was perceived as a coherent narrative by those latter viewers. Paradoxically, it also revived the interest in the serial, the title of which emerged in the context of the new production, as of the ideal the feature film was only a shadow of. David Ansen ends his *Newsweek* review of the 2008 adaptation with a comment referring to the potential increase in the popularity of the 1981 serial:

Think of Jarrold’s briskly paced, stylish abridgment as a fine introduction to Waugh’s marvellously melancholy elegy. It brings these unforgettable characters to life again, and if it sends people back to the novel, and back to the classic TV series, codirected by Charles Sturridge and Michael Lindsay-Hogg, all the better. There’s room for more than one “*Brideshead*” in this far less glamorous day and age. (Ansen 2008)

Undoubtedly, the two adaptations can co-exist in the contemporary audio-visual sphere, but a comparison of the two will inevitably work to the older one’s advantage, be it for its coherence or mesmerising quality.

It is worth noting that a number of other of Waugh's texts were adapted into film. The earliest ones are a 1965 Anglo-American production *The Loved One: An Anglo-American Tragedy* based on his 1948 novel of the same title and a 1967 film adaptation of *Sword of Honour* (readapted for television in 2001). Two adaptations made in the 1980s, following the success of *Brideshead Revisited*, are a television film *Scoop* (1987), based on the 1938 novel, and *Handful of Dust* (published in 1934), directed by Charles Sturridge and co-adapted by him together with Derek Ganger and Tim Sullivan in 1988. That last production had the best reception of the three, and remains memorable at least for two reasons: Kristin Scott Thomas' leading role (for which she received the Evening Standard British Film Award for the Most Promising Newcomer) and Judy Dench's performance in a supporting role for which she won a BAFTA Film Award. The most recent adaptation of Waugh's fiction is the 2003 British film *Bright Young Things*, directed by Stephen Fry, based on one of the early novels, *Vile Bodies* (1930).

***Brideshead Revisited* (1981)**

The plot and the narrative structure of the serial

The scope of *Brideshead Revisited* is much narrower than that of the other texts discussed here, and the number of characters is limited. The novel is narrated in first person by Charles Ryder, one of the main characters. The Prologue and the Epilogue are probably set in 1943 (the date is never clearly stated) and present Ryder as a Captain of the British army, who, together with his troops, finds himself in Brideshead Castle, a private estate taken over by the army. This was a place he had previously visited a number of times, and even lived in for some time, as he had been closely attached to the Flyte family owning the place. Having – unexpectedly – returned to Brideshead with the troops, Charles goes back in his memories to the 1920s when he met and developed a romantic friendship with Sebastian Flyte, a young aristocrat he had met in Oxford, and retells chronologically the story of his connection to the family, and to Brideshead itself. As Cook notes: “The prologue and the epilogue serve the narrator not only as a narrative device for getting the story told [...] but also as a means of interpreting the events retrospectively” (1971:201). The events retold take place during two basic periods: 1922-1926 and 1936-1939. The main settings of the novel include Oxford, where Charles and Sebastian were students for two years, and Brideshead, where the two spent together the summer of 1923, which Charles revisited during two subsequent Christmas breaks and one Easter break, and which he actually moved into having become Julia's, Sebastian's sister's, partner. The story Charles retells covers: his relationship with Sebastian, who drifts inevitably towards self-destruction through alcoholism; Sebastian's conflict with his pious Catholic mother, and the tangled Flyte family liaisons in general; Charles' career as a painter, his failed marriage and eventual relationship

with Julia, which ends when Lord Marchmain, the father of the family, returns home to die; and finally the circumstances of Lord Marchmain's death, his final return to his faith, which result in Julia's rejection of her life with Charles, perceived now as sinful, and turning back towards religion. The final lines of the novel clearly suggest also Charles' eventual conversion to Catholicism.

As it has been already stressed, the 1981 serial reproduces Waugh's book to an extent hardly seen in any other adaptation. The chronology of the novel is exactly that of the serial (see Appendix 4), with the first eighteen minutes covering the Prologue and the last sixteen minutes covering the Epilogue. All the events present in the novel, as well as all the characters, are included in the serial; moreover, the dialogues and Charles' voice-over narration are taken almost verbatim from the novel itself. If some information is not provided by Charles, it is rendered by visual means, with very few exceptions, and with hardly any modifications of Waugh's concepts. As Granger puts it in the commentary to the DVD edition:

It's Waugh's novel exactly. A lot of people said at that time that's the only way to do adaptations. I wouldn't agree with that. I think it just works for this particular property. I know many adaptations which are marvellous because they take the essence of it.

It is a "walking" serial – the pace it assumes is that of a leisurely walk, which the audience joins in. Once the viewers are drawn in, the serial becomes mesmerizing, engaging for the viewers on both the aesthetic and emotional levels, particularly so during Sebastian's presence in the narrative. Its mood is constructed by a number of elements, one of which is definitely Jeremy Irons'/Charles Ryders' voice-over narration. As Waugh's novel is written in the first person, such a narrative device was relatively easy to implement. All the text read comes directly from the novel. What distinguishes that narration from others of that kind (besides its pace) is the fact that Charles not only provides the viewers with information about events which take place off the screen during the intervals not presented through dramatization, but also with a commentary, frequently referring to his own feelings. That voice-over is accompanied by background music, composed by Geoffrey Burgon, which amplifies the mood of nostalgia created by the narration. Irons in his commentary included in the DVD edition of the serial recalls the moment he heard the score for the first time, having already recorded part of the narration. He exclaimed: "That's half of my part! The music does half of the work I have been trying to do. It's fantastic!"

Appendix 4 presents the chronology of events in the novel and the serial, and the way Waugh's plot is broken into individual episodes. To illustrate the way in which the text was adapted and to show how the audio-visual adaptation completes it in its own way with images, I would like refer to a few selected scenes from individual episodes.

One of such scenes appears in the 23rd minute of the first episode when Charles and Sebastian take a break in their first ride to Brideshead. The text below comes from the novel, the lines in italics are delivered as Charles' voice-over narration:

It was about eleven when Sebastian, without warning, turned the car into the car track and stopped. It was hot enough now to make us seek the shade. On a sheep-cropped knoll under a clump of elms we ate the strawberries and drunk the wine – as Sebastian promised, they were delicious together – and we lit fat, Turkish cigarettes and lay on our backs, Sebastian’s eyes on the leaves above him, mine on his profile, while the blue-grey smoke rose, untroubled by any wind, to the blue green shadow of foliage, and the sweet scent of the tobacco merged with the sweet summer scents around us and the fumes of the sweet, golden wine seemed to lift us a finger’s breadth above the turf and hold us suspended. (Waugh 2008:19-20)

The text not delivered in the voice-over narration gains its near-exact visual equivalents. The first image we see is that of the car parked off-road; then we see the boys lying on the grass (it is difficult to state if it is sheep-cropped, but it is certainly short) on their backs, in the shade of a big tree, smoking. Sebastian, exhaling the smoke, is staring at the tree branches – we see the sun shining through the leaves as it could be seen from Sebastian’s perspective. Charles’ admiring look, reflecting his affection for Sebastian, is focused on his friend’s profile. The scene ends with Sebastian’s words being taken directly from the novel, closing the quotation above.

The adaptation method used in this scene has been applied throughout the serial; the dialogue is used in its source text form, Charles’ voice-over narration provides information which cannot be shown, and what can be presented as an image, is shown as such, with the world created by Waugh being reconstructed. Waugh is very detailed in some of the descriptions, and the interior decorations imitate those mentioned in the novel – e.g. of Charles’ room, the room of Nanny Hawkings, the room where Charles eats the first lunch with Sebastian, the Chinese room and the queen’s bed Lord Marchmain dies in, the chapel at Brideshead, the interiors of Marchmain House in London – all of those locations are equipped with the decorative elements which Waugh refers to in the novel and which the props team meticulously reconstructed.

Developing dialogues out of the passages narrated in the novel by Charles is one of the ways in which Waugh’s novel is modified in the adaptation process. Such dialogues appear throughout the serial, and a few such examples can be found, for example, in Episode 3. One of them is the scene in which Lady Marchmain meets Charles, and walks with him in Oxford. Waugh’s text informs: “She found Sebastian subdued, with all his host of friends reduced to one, myself” (Waugh 2008:99). Out of this line we have a dialogue in the serial in which Lady Marchmain makes a comment upon Mr Samgrass’ presence in Oxford, expresses her gratefulness to Charles for being with Sebastian in summer, and expresses her – as well as others’ – high opinion of Charles’ paintings in the Garden Room in Brideshead. The scene takes less than two minutes, but that sort of expansion of the original text contributes to the final, impressive, length of the serial.

Another form of development comes in the same episode, when Rex comes to the police station to collect the boys arrested during the night for drunk driving. In the novel there is the following passage:

[...] Rex settled the business. He examined the charge sheets, spoke affably to the men who had made the arrest; with the slightest perceptible nuance he opened the way for bribery and quickly covered it when he saw that things had now lasted too long and the knowledge had been too widely shared [...]. (Waugh 2008:109)

In the serial we see the boys standing, hung-over, tired, waiting to be released, and Rex, looking elegant, and being nice to the policemen. He offers a cigar to the policeman he is talking to, which is accepted eagerly. While lighting that cigar Rex says: "Sergeant, do you think we could keep [the] incident between ourselves?", which corresponds with Waugh's "slightest perceptible nuance he opened the way for bribery." The policeman shakes his head: "No, sir. I'm afraid it's too late for that. The report's gone upstairs, and we've taken the ladies' names as witnesses." Those words constitute a different verbalisation of "things had now lasted too long and the knowledge had been too widely shared." Rex says quietly: "I see. Is there anything else, Sergeant?" The policeman answers: "Yes, sir. If you'd like to complete the formalities, sign for the sureties." Rex does so, and then the boys sign for their possessions. The dialogue, although created for the serial's sake, is derived directly from what Waugh's narration suggests. There are some more instances of such an operation being carried out in the adaptation.

Very few scenes are added in the serial. One of them is in Episode 1, when Charles is retelling his first semester and his being aware of Sebastian's presence in Oxford. There is a scene in a pub, where Charles sees Sebastian wearing artificial whiskers, beard and glasses attached to it, and Anthony Blanche (whom the viewers do not know yet) coming over and kissing Sebastian. Nickolas Grace, who plays Blanche, makes a comment upon that scene in the commentary to the DVD edition, claiming that including that scene was Sturridge's idea, derived from what Blanche says in Chapter 2 of Book Three: "It reminded me of dear Sebastian when he liked so much to dress up in false whiskers. It was charm again, my dear, simple, creamy English charm, playing tigers"⁸⁷ (Waugh 2008: 254-255). The scene, however, diminishes the impact of what in the book is the first appearance of Anthony Blanche: his coming to the lunch at Sebastian's Charles is invited to. The added scene, due to the kiss, and association with the very effeminate Blanche, is the first signal of Sebastian's homosexuality.

The serial's episodes do not end with cliff-hangers, but rather with closing of the parts of the story which are encapsulated in each of them. Episode 1, which is of double length, ends with Charles coming to Brideshead for the summer, having received a telegram about Sebastian's accident and its final scene shows the boys together in the greenhouse, and Charles leaves the viewers with this commentary: "It is thus I like to remember Sebastian. As he was that summer [...]," which is repeated as the first scene of Episode 2. That repetition was apparently assumed as necessary for achieving thematic unity in the second episode, depicting the joyful

⁸⁷ That text does appear in the serial, in its due place.

summer at Brideshead, and then the boys' trip to Venice, and was not applied again in any of the subsequent episodes. Generally, episode endings either close a section of the story (Episodes 2, 5, 7 and 9), or finish with Charles' commentary or behaviour introducing a new turn in the story to be expected in the next episode (1, 3, 4, 6 and 10). In both cases the curiosity necessary to maintain the viewers' interest concerning "What happened next?" is raised.

Episode 6, which retells the story of Julia, is an excellent example of how images and actors' performance enrich Waugh's narrative. Taking full advantage of the opportunity to shoot on film, the adaptors supported Charles' retelling of Julia and Rex's affair with images of the two in various environments, cross-cut with dialogue scenes. The technique of shooting dialogue scenes on location, or while the characters are moving (usually walking) was new in the classic serial, and became one of the generic features, used in the classic serials which followed.⁸⁸ We have, then, an adaptation which treats the source text with reverence, which provides visual equivalents for those elements of Waugh's text which are not delivered verbally, and adds visualisations which smoothly fit into Waugh's narrative.

The novel's wartime Prologue and Epilogue, gloomy in their tone, provide contrast for the years in Brideshead which Charles spent two decades and a decade earlier. The same contrast is achieved by a frame the serial has, having imitated the structure of Waugh's novel. The Epilogue presents Brideshead which has become military quarters. In the novel we do not have the description of the interiors "desecrated" by the military, as all the information about the damage done and the alterations introduced comes in the form of the monologue delivered to Charles by the Quartering Commander. The monologue has been preserved in the serial and it is illustrated with the shots of the interiors, crammed with military furniture, with pieces of old furniture stacked in piles in the rooms remaining unused. So, we revisit, together with Charles, the Garden Room which he decorated with his paintings, now being partly covered with obscene drawings, which becomes the background to the Commander's words: "[...] destructive beggars, soldiers are!" (the same text appears in Waugh 2008:231). Another room presented is the one in which Lord Marchmain died, i.e. the setting of one of the climactic moments of the serial. The visual revisiting of those places, so important for the Flyte family and for Charles, has a stronger effect than the novel's Epilogue, which is based to some extent on understatement. The sight of Brideshead deprived of its former aura makes the viewers experience the feeling of loss Charles is experiencing.

Inglis in his article quoted notes, that "Memory, not God, is Waugh's first theme and that of the television production and its extremely intelligent, forgivably sentimental authors" (2000:195). He also stresses that the religious theme,

⁸⁸ One of the most obvious examples is Andrew Davies' adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (1995), which distinguished itself from all earlier adaptations of that text with large sections of the dialogues being delivered outdoors, while the characters were mobile.

foregrounded in the novel, in the adaptation is overshadowed by other themes, and he conspicuously “blames” the adaptors for it:

Rather than Catholicism, the heart of this translation of Waugh’s ruined but classic folly is the theme of friendship and the love of place. It is a theme dear to the hearts of the cultural fraction of the English bourgeoisie which made the film. (Inglis 2000:183)

It still, however, remains a story about the role of religion in human life – not only in the lives of the members of the Flyte family, but also Charles’. Although his eventual conversion is signalled at the very end of the serial in a way as subtle as it is in the novel, the long passages containing Charles’ reflection upon religion are included in the voice-over narration.

The characters

Unlike John Galsworthy’s trilogies or Paul Scott’s *Quartet*, *Brideshead Revisited* has a relatively limited number of characters. The serial covers the complete plot of Waugh’s novel, all the characters appear in the serial, play the same narrative functions and deliver the same parts of the dialogues as they do in the novel. The cast includes both “British greats and striking newcomers,” as Ben Heineman (2013) calls it in his recent article for *The Atlantic*. The “newcomers” included Jeremy Irons, just at the threshold of his great international career, who turned out to be an excellent choice for Charles Ryder, as was Anthony Andrews becoming Sebastian. The “greats” were obviously Lawrence Olivier and John Gielgud, mentioned in the opening credits as the special guest stars.

For a contemporary audience, Jeremy Irons’ presence in the serial is one of the production’s major assets, as nowadays he is probably the biggest name in this production. He himself admits, in an interview found in the additional material, that the period of eighteen months he spent shooting the serial was an excellent opportunity to learn his trade, as it was comparable to making six feature films. He is present in virtually all episodes; there are very few scenes in which he is absent and in those he provides the voice-over narration. The story is told by Charles the way he remembers it, and he is the sole source of information both for the readers and the viewers.

The main plot of the novel is frequently viewed as Charles’ progressing from his love for Sebastian, through his love to Julia, to the love of God. The way the novel is structured, however, makes his conversion very subtle, while it is his love for Sebastian that dominates the narrative. One of the questions which the critique of Waugh’s text focused on was whether the relationship between Charles and Sebastian can be called homosocial, or homosexual. Is it only a very close friendship, or is there an erotic side to it as well? Pugh (2001:65) argues that in the novel that relationship is “a romantic friendship” common in sex-segregated societies, which Oxford colleges certainly were. Cara, Lord Marchmain’s “mistress” refers directly to such a romantic friendship when seeing the boys together in

Venice. That friendship, as she understands it, is not to mature into a homosexual relationship. Social acceptance of such romantic relationship among young men of the time is quite obvious both in the novel and in the serial, while the latter makes the mutual attraction of the two young men much more obvious.

Although in the serial there are no explicitly sexual scenes, most of those showing Sebastian and Charles in the early happy days are actually love scenes. The way the two young men look at each other, the way they walk arm in arm in Venice, or lean against each other, speaks of love, which Cara talks about to Charles, both in the book and in the serial. In the serial the link between the two is amplified by visual representation, as we see the two men in *Brideshead*, sunbathing naked on the rooftop, drinking wine, and then in Venice, sightseeing together, with Charles' arm around Sebastian's shoulders. Bellafante in his review of the serial written from the 21st-century perspective calls *Brideshead* "a milestone in the history of mainstream depictions of homoerotic life":

It enlivened the relationship between Ryder and Sebastian that the novel merely implies, slavishly submitting it to the forced naturalism of '70s cinematic style. From a distance the camera fixates on the two as they languish in green fields, smoking and silently gazing at each other [...]. (Bellafante 2008)

There are a number of scenes in the serial which demonstrate Charles' fascination with Sebastian. At the beginning of Episode 1, in the scene when the two boys stop for a picnic, Charles is looking at Sebastian with sheer admiration. There is a sequence of scenes which show Charles' interest in Sebastian before they are introduced to each other. The way Irons acts out Charles' behaviour towards Sebastian looks like genuine love at first sight. The manner in which he observes his new friend during their first lunch, and in which his facial expression alters when Anthony comes over and kisses Sebastian's head, indicate Charles' homoerotic attraction. Charles is never shown as attracted to any other man than Sebastian, although he finds himself in the company of gay men at least twice, once at a party they are at during the General Strike, with Anthony Blanche and Boy Mulcuster, and then again, when Charles meets Blanche after the painting exhibition and they go for a talk to a bar of Anthony's choice. There are men who know Blanche and try to flirt with him, while Charles is presented as the odd one out in those situations. As long as Sebastian is with him, Charles is not attracted to any woman around, either. He likes Julia, but nothing in his behaviour indicates any special interest in her, while the way he looks at Sebastian always shows affection. Higdon, analysing the novel states:

About Sebastian's sexual preferences there can be little doubt. He initiates two very different affairs, and he seems to enjoy his power over his "chums," a reflection of the English tendency for men like Sebastian to take lovers from lower classes. (1994:86)

Such "lower class" lovers are easy to impress. Although Charles recognises Sebastian in the street before they are introduced, the moment of actual seduction takes place

when Charles' room is flooded with flowers in a gesture aimed at apologising for the mess Sebastian accidentally made at Charles' place the night before, and an invitation is left for Charles to join Sebastian for luncheon. The interiors of the dining room at Christ College, the menu consisting of plover's eggs and lobster impress Charles. The next step is taking him to Brideshead, and then to Venice. Charles is enchanted by Sebastian and by the standard of the life he lives. In the commentaries frequently quoted here Granger calls Charles Ryder's story that of a Cinderella. Charles is head over the heels in love with Sebastian the prince, with his decadent, nonchalant life style, first with his beauty and then with the beauty of his surroundings, both Brideshead and Venice. Later on Julia becomes the substitute for Sebastian, her brother's alter ego. Charles' marriage to Celia is a failure on all levels – the relationship with Julia is a happy one, as in her he returns to Sebastian.

Sebastian, unlike Charles, is present only in half of the serial. In the commentary to Episode 4 on the 2003 DVD edition of the serial Andrews and Granger recall the reasons for which Andrews was eventually cast as Sebastian. Granger claims, that the final decision was made when he and Michael Lindsey-Hogg saw Andrews in a theatre performance in which he played "a blind male homosexual hustler in the South of France." That gives an open signal of how Granger and Lindsey-Hogg perceived Sebastian. Andrews himself was determined to get the part, because he claims he knew precisely how he wanted to play that "extraordinary, eccentric, powerful character." It did pay off, as he received for the part both BAFTA and Golden Globe Awards.

Sebastian is the most dynamically changing character in the novel, and his development is rendered in the serial in a captivating way. In the early episodes he seems entirely in control of the situation, leading Charles into his world with charming nonchalance. Then the unhappy drinking bouts become more frequent, and despite what Andrews calls in the commentary "periods of clear sober lucidity" Sebastian's gradual self-destruction becomes obvious to everybody who cares about him. Andrews "cracks" as convincingly as he plays an Oxford dandy. His Sebastian is deeply tragic, in his love-hate relationship with his mother, and in his being torn between his hedonism, half-concealed homosexuality and Catholic faith. It is also quite natural to conceive that Sebastian's "unhappy" drinking results to a large extent from the conflict of the Catholic upbringing and his homosexual desires, as those two cannot be reconciled. The reasons for his plunging into alcoholism are more complex, but it is tempting to conclude that what Charles calls "naughtiness high in the catalogue of grave sins" (Waugh 2008:39), practiced by the two during the summer term spent together, contributes significantly to Sebastian's sinking.

Bellafante turns our attention to one more interesting aspect of the serial's representation of Sebastian. His

[...] disease – a term absent from the era's vernacular for alcoholism – lands him in an infirmary, suffering from, of all things, pneumonia resulting from his worn immunity. The first AIDS film would not come until the mid-1980s, but the image of Sebastian, pallid, listless and emaciated,

casts *Brideshead* as a chilling predictor of the epidemic, 1981 being the year that cases of a syndrome later identified as AIDS were reported in the United States. (Bellafante 2008)

Taking into consideration Sebastian's belonging to the group at high risk of contracting the disease, had he lived in the 1980s, the present-time serial viewing experience involves making the "chilling" connection between his health condition and the late 20th-century epidemics.

Julia, the third central character of Waugh's narrative, is ambiguous both in the novel and in the serial. She either serves as a substitute for Sebastian, both for Charles and for the readers/viewers, or Sebastian is her "forerunner." The second option might be true for Charles, for the readers/viewers it is not. Sebastian is not replaceable, he disappears from the narrative (in the novel it is Chapter 3 of Book 2, in the serial it is Episode 7), and his place is taken over by Julia becoming Charles' beloved in Episode 8 and 9, with Sebastian being awaited back, which never happens. Inglis makes an interesting point noticing that Charles and Julia's first sex is in the serial presented as much more joyful than that depicted by Waugh. He concludes that in that way the television story creates "a present-day lesson about the easiness and gladness of straight sex," while the cold comment about the sexual intercourse found in the novel "speaks eloquently of misogyny apparent throughout the book and epidemic in Waugh's life and art" (Inglis 2000:190).

Anthony Blanche (Nickolas Grace), one of the most memorable characters, appears at the serial's very beginning. Unlike any other character, he is utterly "camp" and openly homosexual, as it is in the novel, also the visual representation leaves no space for speculation. Angelini in his review of the serial for BFI webpage notes that "the script does put greater emphasis on the homosexual aspects of the story, which are tastefully handled throughout, although the representation of the Wildean dandy Anthony Blanche [...] lacks subtlety." His presence in the first episode signals Sebastian's homosexuality, as it has been already suggested earlier. Blanche is an overdrawn character, almost grotesque, in his clothes more extravagant than those of other students, with his French accent, and very characteristic stammering. Grace's looks and performance border on the grotesque, but never cross the line. He says in an interview included in the DVD edition: "You have to convince the audience that it is the character that is going over the top, not the actor." Derek Granger in his commentary to Episode 1 calls Blanche: "cleverly devised by Waugh, and brilliantly played by Grace, the commentator, who knows, a lovely device." That function has been preserved, although his camp style draws the viewers' attention away from the ironic commentaries he passes.

Lady Marchmain (Claire Bloom) is a character whom Blanche calls "a bloodsucker," when he discusses Sebastian's family with Charles, adding that: "You can see the tooth marks on all her victims." She is, as McDonnell notes "[...] a beautifully drawn character: a saint who spreads unhappiness all about her [...] [her] saintliness has driven her husband away, and it does the same for Sebastian" (McDonnell 1988:92-93). The way that character is played by Bloom has no

viciousness in her, just coldness, which combined with her religiousness estranges both Sebastian and Julia from her. She appears at the beginning of Episode 3, when she comes to Oxford to visit Sebastian, and meets Charles for the first time. She is shown walking with Charles, telling him how grateful she was Sebastian had such a friend in him. The scene finishes with Charles' voice-over commentary, in which he stresses that she accepted him as Sebastian's friend, and: "sought to make [him] hers, also. And in doing so, unwittingly, struck at the roots of [their] friendship. That is the single reproach I had to set against her abundant kindness to [him]" (the same text appears in Waugh 2008:99). However, the most important scenes with Lady Marchmain are those set in Brideshead during next two holidays which Charles spends there, witnessing Sebastian's gradual succumbing to alcoholism. She remains in her detached "divinity," making no attempts to actually talk to Sebastian himself, as if his problems were completely beyond her comprehension. In Episode 3 Julia informs Charles and Sebastian, who have just been released from the arrest, that Lady Marchmain knows about the incident of Sebastian's drunk-driving, and "She was divine about it, of course." Sebastian reacts to those words, by stating: "It is Mummy's being divine about everything that worries me the most." This line is not in the novel, it was added to the script, but it aptly summarises the tension between Sebastian and his mother. She is a walking perfection, who happens to have very imperfect children, which frustrates both them, and her.

The delay in the production resulting from the strike of technicians made possible Lawrence Olivier's joining in as Lord Marchmain, which contributed greatly to the prestige of the production. Lord Marchmain appears in the serial in two episodes: Episode 2 and Episode 11. The former shows him in Venice, where he hosts Sebastian and Charles in the summer of 1923. The latter, set in Brideshead where Lord Marchmain comes back when his health deteriorates, gives Olivier more space to perform. Higson, when writing about British heritage cinema notes that "The key to the type of English acting that such roles call for is of course understatement and restraint, in which the tiniest of gestures can speak volumes, although careful diction counts for much too" (2003:32). That characteristic applies fully to what Olivier does in that last episode of the serial, in which Lord Marchmain comes back home to die. As his health condition worsens gradually, there are a number of scenes in which he holds conversations with his relatives and with Charles. The speeches he gives, in what is to become his death bed, are of considerable length and vary in pace. The early ones, especially the one in which he expresses his dislike for Bridey's wife, Beryl, are lively and quite amusing despite the grievous context. Sturridge in his commentary to Episode 11 expresses his admiration for Olivier, who managed to turn scenes which seemed "unplayable" (e.g. a long speech delivered when Lord Marchmain is so weak that he can only lie in bed) into a remarkable performance, with every pause becoming meaningful.

The serial benefited greatly from the involvement of another legend of the British theatre, namely John Gielgud, who played Edward Ryder, Charles' father,

a minor character in the novel and the serial, but one of the very few that show Waugh's satirical skill admired in his earlier texts. It is never entirely clear – both for the viewers and for Charles – whether his father is an absent-minded eccentric, or a cruel cynic. It is obvious, however, that he lacks affection for his son, but whether he plays a game with him, or simply has lost touch with reality remains unknown. The scenes showing Charles and his father indicate complete miscommunication between the two. Gielgud shines in those little scenes, providing an example of how a background character can become highly memorable in an adaptation due to the actor's performance. As Marciniak (2007:64) notes, frequently the way a given actor creates a character in an adaptation influences forever the subsequent reading of the source text:

Our attitude towards the characters is marked by the performers' acting skills, it can be even fully changed in comparison with our first contact with the adapted text, for the actors have the most direct power to suggest new subtexts to the story and play a crucial role in establishing a new relationship to the book. The brilliant performance of a supporting actor can even reorganize the hierarchy of the characters we have in mind by letting a character who appears in the book on the margin of the main story emerge from his shadowy existence.

This, I believe is the case with Gielgud's Edward Ryder. Granger in his commentary to Episode 4 mentions the fact that even Olivier complained that Gielgud got the best lines in the production (a rivalry had existed between the two for decades).

Waugh's narrative involves two more, besides Sebastian and Julia, Flyte siblings: Lord Brideshead "Bridey" (Simon Jones) and Cordelia Flyte (Phoebe Nicholls). The latter becomes another memorable character in the serial. She is a charming child, who grows into the most level-headed adult out of the four Flyte siblings. In the novel she is described as a child of ten or eleven in 1923. In the adaptation she is slightly older, as the same actress plays Cordelia through the whole serial, and does that convincingly. Cordelia changes from a teenager to a young woman looking old, when she comes back to Brideshead in 1938. She is the most reasonable of the Flyte siblings, early in the serial genuine in her child-like emotionality, and then considerate as a woman in her late-twenties. She functions as Charles' ally and informer, loving Sebastian unconditionally.

It is a pleasure to watch Phoebe Nicholls' performance, varied as it is. There are a number of scenes in the early episodes, when she moves smoothly between her pious mother, and Sebastian, falling into alcoholism, for whom she feels "special love," realising that she cannot stay loyal to both, but somehow preserving her child-like cheerfulness. Cordelia reappears in Episode 10, in the 1930s, giving at first an impression of being a "plain and pious spinster [...] thwarted" (Waugh 2008:290), but eventually turning out to be considerate and even-tempered, which contrasts significantly with Julia's imbalance.

Bridey is an interesting character, as Waugh manipulates us into perceiving him as almost a villain whom he actually is not, if not viewed from Charles' perspective. Bridey stands in opposition to Sebastian and Julia, being very serious about religion,

very concerned about rules and forms, and entirely devoid of empathy. Simon Jones' deadpan performance nearly strikes a comic note, but the gloomy circumstances in which Bridey usually appears deprive the character of any opportunities to bring comic relief as such. In most cases he is the one who brings the bad news or evokes remorse in Julia, and due to his strictness, righteousness and complete refraining from any form of hedonism make him a foil to both Sebastian and Julia.

Julia's story involves her husband, Rex Mottram (Charles Keating), a character exhibiting a surprisingly uncomplicated personality for the complicated narrative functions he plays in the plot. Since we see that character – as all others – from Charles' biased perspective, he emerges as an emotionless businessman, deprived of deeper feelings and interested always in what he perceives as most beneficial. However, his early appearance in the story is quite amusing, especially the process of his conversion to Catholicism during which he is diagnosed by Lady Marchmain as “an idiot child.” Keating – despite being British – makes that Canadian character entirely convincing, both when seductive, and when calculating. His Rex is never obnoxious, as neither is Waugh's character – he simply lacks moral backbone, and has no idea whatsoever why would anybody need something labelled as “spiritual life.”

There are very few humorous elements in Waugh's narrative, but some that can be found involve Mr Samgrass (John Grillo), who as the serial's character becomes a bit more developed than the novel's is. Mr Samgrass is Lady Marchmain's helper, “a spy” who is supposed to act as Sebastian's Guardian Angel once the young man's drinking intensifies. Waugh describes him as “a short, plump man, dapper in dress, with sparse hair brushed flat on an over-large head” (2008:100) and the way Grillo looks in the serial meets the characteristics. Grillo's Samgrass takes a stronger comic turn, however. Waugh provides brief characterisation of that character – “His manner was genial and his speech idiosyncratic” (2008:100) – that apparently led the adaptors into creating a slightly grotesque character, bringing a little comic relief. Mr Samgrass seems to be quite benevolent, although irritating for Charles and Sebastian in his talkative omnipresence, even more conspicuous in the serial, with his smiling face popping out here and there.

There is a rather amusing moment at the beginning of Episode 5, when Mr Samgrass shows slides from the trip he and Sebastian took to Southern Europe and the Holy Land. The pictures show, as the novel suggests, mostly “guides and ruins and mules” (Waugh 2008:140), and Mr Samgrass. However, in the serial one of the pictures presents Mr Samgrass in a white suit and hat, standing, with his right hand resting on the shoulder of a young Turkish man wearing traditional clothes, kneeling next to him, looking up. Mr Samgrass explains: “That's me with a rather tiresome Turkish youth” and seems to have a naughty simile while looking at that picture. The photograph, besides evoking certain homoerotic connotations, symbolically represents the superior status of the white man exercised towards an “exotic” looking youth. Mr Samgrass looks like an epitome of a British coloniser,

willingly bearing what Rudyard Kipling called “the white man’s burden.” This brief ironic commentary made through that scene comes from the adaptors, not from Waugh.

The serial, like the novel, presents a number of characters who appear in episodic parts and who are nonetheless worth mentioning. In the early episodes Charles’ cousin Jasper (Stephen Moore), a bore – as young Ryder perceives him – creates a marvellous contrast with charming Sebastian who he warns Charles against. Nanny Hawkins played by Mona Washbourne (one of the guest stars of the production) is a bit catatonic in the serial, has a symbolic role, suggesting Sebastian’s inability to grow up. Memorable episodic parts are played by Bill Owen (Lunt, Charles’ scout at Oxford, wonderfully interacting with young Ryder); John Le Mesurier (Father Mowbray, charmingly helpless during the most amusing scene of Rex Mottram’s attempt at conversion); Niall Toibin (Father Mackay, who is patiently waiting to deliver the last rites to Lord Marchmain), Michael Gough (doctor Grant, taking care of Lord Marchmain), and Richard Hoper (Hooper, Ryder’s platoon commander – for Charles the symbol of “young England,” a representative of the new generation taking over Brideshead – literally, and England – metaphorically). All of those peripheral characters, with life given to them by, in most cases, renown British actors, add to the texture of the serial, fill the space left by the principal characters, contributing significantly to the overall effect the serial has on its audience.

As in any other period production, a number of house servants appear on the screen, with Wilcox (Roger Milner) at Brideshead and Hayter (Michael Bilton) at Mr Ryder’s being the most noticeable, including a group of other “downstairs” people moving noiselessly around Brideshead to the comfort of the Flyte family and their guests, without whom no picture of the life of British aristocracy and upper class would be complete. The focus of the narrative, however, is consistently not on their lives, but on those of their social superiors.

The visuals

As the serial tells the story Charles remembers, the way he remembers it, the beginnings of his relationship with Sebastian and his family are idyllic and so they are filmed. In the early episodes most of the shots take place during the day, in summer, and the beauty of all the three primary locations, i.e. Oxford, Venice, and Brideshead Castle (in the serial played by the magnificent Castle Howard, Yorkshire) is fully exposed. That last named appears almost as one of the characters in Waugh’s narrative, reflecting the novelist’s fascination with architecture.

Oxford is the main setting in the first four episodes. The first image of the historic city is its misty panorama, with the “dreaming spires” of the rooftops of the colleges. The charming presentation of the city does have its justification in Charles’ narration, only slightly abbreviated from Waugh’s text: “Oxford, in those days, was still a city of aquatint. When chestnut was in flower and the bells rang

out high and clear over her gables and cupolas, exhaled the soft airs of centuries of youth” (Waugh 2008:17). Cardwell comments upon the initial introduction of the viewers to Oxford as follows:

[...] long-take shots, moving from cityscape to spires to colleges to quadrangle. Both these shots and subsequent scenes set in Oxford are softly lit, pictorially framed and accompanied by the haunting theme music. (2002:125)

This way of filming historic locations resembles that used a few years later in *Maurice*, a Merchant Ivory production partly set in Cambridge, or in *Inspector Morse*, a Granada television drama, set in Oxford. Numerous scenes are shot in wide angle while the characters are walking along the streets, showing the beauty of college buildings and gardens, and lively street life, with students walking and cycling. The interiors are also authentic and appropriately propped – Charles’ room being rather simply furnished, Sebastian’s more lavish. The atmosphere of Charles and Sebastian’s Oxford years is that of hardly disrupted happiness and beauty. Another seductively presented location is Venice, in which the boys “play tourists” accompanied by Cara, filmed similarly to Oxford, illustrated by the romantic score and Charles’ voice-over narration. Inglis notes that

The television Venice, like the television Oxford, is handsomely regilded and restored, its canals clean and green, its stones golden, its pastels freshly pink and pale blue. Nothing here of Thomas Mann’s foetid waters, decadent desires and lurking, odorous plague. (2000:191)

The two locations are presented as they are remembered by Charles in the months of his happiness resulting from his infatuation with Sebastian himself, as well as with his luxurious surroundings and the hedonistic lifestyle Charles is drawn into, being “charmed” by the young aristocrat.

The most important setting, however, is Brideshead Castle itself, together with its fountain, the garden and the chapel. There is no evidence for Waugh’s being familiar with Castle Howard or modelling Brideshead on any specific estate he knew. Nevertheless, the serial’s principal location matches Waugh’s vision wonderfully and being probably the only one of a kind it served also as Brideshead in the 2008 feature film. The element essential for the estate is its dome; an element not at all common in secular buildings. Sławomir Koziół (2012) in his article devoted to the spiritual dimension of the world in Waugh’s novel and the serial notes the significant difference in the construction of the castle dome. In Castle Howard the dome is a real one, covered with a fresco, which Charles admires. In the novel it is “false”: “[...] designed to be seen from below like the cupolas of Chambord. Its drum was merely an additional storey full of segmental rooms” (Waugh 2008:30). Sebastian’s nanny lives in one of those rooms, which by having such a location is symbolically closer to heaven. This symbolism is lost in the serial.

Another architectural element possessing some symbolic meaning, altered in the serial, is the fountain located in Brideshead gardens, which in the novel is in the Baroque style, and having painted it Charles announces his aesthetic

“conversion to the Baroque” (Waugh 2008:73), calling the fountain “a life-giving spring” (Waugh 2008:74). As Koziol notes, in the serial the fountain as found in the garden of Castle Howard is neo-classical and the text about Charles’ conversion to the Baroque appears in Charles’ voice-over narration illustrated by his looking around the interiors of Castle Howard. In Koziol’s interpretation, “for Waugh, the Baroque clearly indicates the end of a truly Christian epoch in Europe. It is the last period in which the human being has still preserved his or her divine measure” (2012:86). In the television serial, however, as Koziol further points out,

[...] this extra-aesthetic significance of the Baroque is lost. The obvious reason seems to be the fact that in this version Charles’s words concerning his conversion to the Baroque had to be said in the context of the main building and not the fountain. Thus the crucial comparison to the life-giving spring could not be made and the Baroque in the serial just seems to be only one of many architectural styles. (2012:86)

Although the dome and the fountain remained the way they are in Castle Howard, the chapel had to be redecorated, so as to become properly Pre-Raphaelite, as Waugh envisioned it. Numerous other interiors were used for the scenes set in *Brideshead*, all of them fully furnished, exhibiting the ostentatious wealth of its proprietors. The house is immense, and the viewers admire its grandeur together with Charles, similarly to the way the readers do in Waugh’s narrative. In the early episodes the way *Brideshead* is filmed is contrasted with the way Charles’ house in London is presented. The former is full of light, spacious, bright, with a lot of open space. At the Ryders’ rooms are dark, with no natural light, hence the surroundings seem to amplify Charles’ feeling of loneliness and gloom in the world without Sebastian: Charles-Cinderella returns to his dark den.

The grandeur of the Marchmain family is reflected in the lavish interiors and exteriors, but also in the clothes they wear. Costumes play a vital role in the serial, like they do in any period drama. The first episodes, focusing on Charles and Sebastian’s Oxford years present a range of male outfits. Sebastian in Oxford stands out from the crowd of other students, with his blond fringe, light-colour clothes, as well as his eccentric behaviour and the constant company of Aloysius, his teddy-bear. Julia is the only female character who gave an opportunity to the costume designer to impress the audience with her outfits. She appears in a variety of gorgeous dresses when she is a young girl in the 1920s, and then as an affluent woman in the 1930s. Parties provide a wider spectrum of costumes to be imitated later on by faithful admirers of the serial, organising *Brideshead*-style parties both in the U.K., and in the U.S.

Derek Granger attributes the serial’s international success to “Zeitgeist, the mood of the moment,” resulting from the fact, that the new conservative government was leading the U.K. into new prosperity and a hedonistic lifestyle, while the ostentatious wealth presented in the serial resonated with the early 1980s audience. The popularity of the serial in Thatcherite Britain, and the fashion for the 1920s it created among the young led Tana Wollen (1991:183) to the following conclusions:

The trappings of great wealth, as enjoyed in *Brideshead*, fitted contemporary aspirations. City yuppies bought imitations of Aloysius bears, practised the Sebastian drawl, and champagne had never had it so good. The television fiction made good times lost instantly accessible and while the fiction showed old wealth corrupting and sapping its inheritors, the new entrepreneurs could taste its flavour without shouldering the burden of ancient class allegiances.

Wollen's diagnosis might be right in the case of the wealthy and aspiring young, but as it has been already mentioned, the serial's popularity could be observed through a wide social spectrum.

As previously mentioned in Chapter One, *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) was one of the productions under discussion in the heritage debate. The main criticism in the case of this serial concerned the fact that the past was viewed as so much more attractive than the present. Higson (2003:15) calls *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) "a lavish serialized adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's lament about the decline of the English country house, its values, and its inhabitants." Newcomb (2004:315-316) notes that

These "white flannel" dramas, both on television and the big screen, represented a yearning for an England that was no more, or never was [...].

The elegance and nostalgia, the longing for a by-gone "Englishness" of empire and perceived stability led to *Brideshead* being widely attacked in cultural criticism. It was seen as Thatcherite text, part of a resurgence of regressive nationalism. [...] an example of what the British do best.

Reviewing the serial for the *BFA Screenonline* Angelini also refers to the "rose-tinted view of the past" that the serial presents, and the influence it had on later costume productions going "hand-in-hand with the backward-looking worldview propounded by the Thatcher and Major governments (1979-1997)."

The serial became an example of an almost unbelievably faithful adaptation which at the same time remained a very good product in the televisual medium. The adaptors found a way in which at that moment in television history the slow, mesmerising pace of the production, the beauty of the images and the language used both in the dialogues and the voice-over narration (without being modernised) absolutely captivated the audience. Being the longest serial made on film at that time it did, as Cardwell (2002:108) puts it, establish "more than any other, [...] the generic identity of the traditional television classic-novel adaptation," despite the fact that the text it is based on is not a nineteenth-century novel. As she argues:

[...] from the vantage point of the twenty-first century it is clear that the nature of Waugh's novel and the ways in which the programme-makers attempted to achieve equivalence with it are in fact [...] notable in terms of establishing an important television genre. (Cardwell 2002:110)

It is worth remembering that *Brideshead* did not meet the existing television standards for the classic serial – it actually created the new ones, at least in terms of the filming style and the use of real locations. Cardwell in her 2007 article lists the serial's attributes which contributed to its success in the revitalisation of the genre of classic-novel adaptation and leading to consolidation of the conventions, and which include:

[...] high production values, “authentic” detailed costumes and sets, “great British actors;” light classical music, slow pace, steady, often symmetrical framing, an interest in landscapes, buildings and interiors as well as characters; strong, gradually developed protagonists accompanied by entertaining cameo roles; and intelligent, “faithful” dialogue. (2007:189)

In the 2003 DVD edition of the serial, Episode 1 contains commentary by Granger, who attributes the serial’s lavishness to the times in which it was made: “It was such a different time. No competition for ITV. A marvellous time for television makers.” It has to be stressed that what ITV did with this adaptation could be perceived as trespassing on the territory of the BBC, which the classic adaptations were. Theoretically, Waugh’s text would not be labelled as a classic one. But in practice, as it appears over time, that fact has become of little significance. The serial was so “literary,” and its quality was so high, that there was little doubt about its belonging to the genre of the classic serial. *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) played its role in the history of the genre, because – as MacKillop and Platt observe – “by its very lavishness and slowness [it] set the standards of attentiveness to the detail of novels that made emulation expensive, well-nigh impossible” (2000:90). It took the BBC more than a decade to overshadow this serial’s fame with its Jane Austen adaptations.

The Jewel in the Crown (1984)⁸⁹

Paul Scott (1920-1978) and his *Raj Quartet*

Paul Scott's literary career began in 1952 with the publication of his first novel, *Johnnie Sahib*, in which – as in all his later works – he draws from his wartime experience in India, where he served in the British Army between 1943 and 1946. Before he embarked on his *The Raj Quartet* project in 1964 he had published eight novels, all of which concerned the British presence in Asia and none of which turned out to be particularly successful. In 1964 he decided to revisit India, hoping it would provide him with the inspiration he needed to write. When he returned after six weeks he started the composition of the complex narrative which would continue through four novels and was to become his major literary achievement, i.e. *The Raj Quartet*, describing the last years of the British rule in India. The Quartet includes, chronologically: *The Jewel in the Crown* (first published in 1966), *The Day of the Scorpion* (1968), *The Towers of Silence* (1971) and *A Division of the Spoils* (1975).

The reception of the four novels varied. The first one “remained in the top-ten fiction sales lists for several weeks” (Moore 1990:116) and its reviews were generally positive, focusing both on the complex narrative technique, and on the discussion of the position of India and of the British there at the decline of the Empire. The middle two novels were less successful, which led Scott to the conclusion that the Quartet, his potential *magnum opus*, was neither going to bring him “the immediate literary acclaim nor the financial independence for which he had hoped” (Moore 1990:117). The publication of *A Division of the Spoils* turned the critics’ – and the literary scholars’ – attention to him. The first academic article devoted to Scott’s fiction appeared in *Encounter* in May 1976, titled “The End of the Raj: Paul Scott’s Novels as History” and was authored by Max Beloff, who praised the novelist’s ability to render the historical complexities.

⁸⁹ Large sections of this chapter appeared in print as two separate articles: “Quality Drama in Practice – Paul Scott’s *The Jewel in the Crown* and the Granada Television Mini-series” [in:] *Studia Anglica Resoviensia* 8, *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Zeszyt 73/2011* and “The Preserved, the Lost and the Gained in Adaptation – Paul Scott’s *The Raj Quartet* and the Granada Television Serial” [in:] *From Page to Screen*, Kallaus A. and Koziół S. (eds.), 2012. Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo UR.

The Quartet was followed by a short novel *Staying On* published in 1977, in which some of the already known characters appear in the background; hence some critics treat this text as a form of an epilogue to the four Raj novels. Although Scott believed *The Raj Quartet* was his most important work, for which he had prepared himself thoroughly by going back to India and conducting in-depth research, the books attracted less attention than he hoped for. Nevertheless, *The Towers of Silence* and later on *Staying On* received the *Yorkshire Post* Fiction Award and the Booker Prize in 1971 and 1977, respectively. When Scott was dying in 1978, he would not have expected that his Quartet would ever fall into the category of “classic novel.” Appreciation of his work came later on, largely due to the television and radio productions based on his novels, which contributed greatly to the texts’ popularity.

Scott put a lot of effort and energy into making the historical background of his novels genuine. As he himself admitted: “The characters were imaginary. So were the events. The framework was as historically accurate as I could make it” (quoted in Boyer 1985:64). Weinbaum in his 1992 *Paul Scott: A Critical Study* stresses the value of Scott’s novels in this particular respect: “[...] his novels fulfil our expectations of the historical novel, concerned as they are with the legacy of the past, race and class discrimination, and conflicting nationalisms and ideologies.” Weinbaum quotes Sir Walter Scott’s definition of a historical novel, which can be applied to Scott’s Quartet:

[...] two cultures in conflict, one dying and the other struggling to be born, cause an upheaval into which fictional characters are introduced who move among historical figures and who participate in historical events, re-creating a personal and direct portrait of an age. (Weinbaum 1992:94)

The focus of Scott’s attention is the Anglo-Indian community and the way it handles the political changes inherent with the end of the Raj, which alter their private and public lives forever. He was right about the significance of the Quartet – it did become his most recognisable work, but again, as in the case of other texts discussed here, it happened so because of the fact that it was adapted into a television serial.

Adaptations

Scott’s earlier works had been adapted for the BBC a long time before the Quartet saw the daylight. *Johnnie Sahib* and *Mark of the Warrior* were adapted for the radio in 1951 and 1959, respectively, while in 1954 *Alien Sky* and in 1964 *The Bender*⁹⁰ appeared on television. Moore (1990) suggests that Scott would have been happy seeing the Quartet filmed, as he expressed such views in numerous letters and conversations, stating eventually that “perhaps one day the TV people might do a dramatized series. Which would [...] be nice” (quoted in Moore 1990:206). And he was right.

⁹⁰ The adaptor in the case of this text was Irene Shubik involved later on in Granada’s adaptations of Scott’s novels.

Encouraged by very positive critical reception of *Brideshead Revisited* (1981), Granada decided upon an even more challenging task, which was the adaptation of Scott's *Quartet* into a television serial. In 1980, Granada released its television adaptation of Scott's *Staying On*. That project was sufficiently successful to encourage a large enterprise, namely filming the whole *Raj Quartet*, under the title borrowed from the first novel of the four. As Denis Forman, the Chairman of Granada television at the time of the production, puts it:

The sun rose over Paul Scott's literary reputation when *Staying On* won the Booker Prize in 1977 [...]. *Staying On* led to the *Raj Quartet* and immediately I was back in the India that I had known in the years before Independence. As I made my way through the labyrinthine narrative it became clear that the *Quartet* was an epic story on the scale of *War and Peace*, introducing a galère of characters every bit as real as those in Tolstoy's novel, and like them playing out their parts within a greater plot concerned with national politics and a world war. (1983:7)

The Jewel in the Crown, as the production was eventually called, was broadcast between January and April 1984.⁹¹ Naughton starts his review of the serial written for *The Listener* in March 1984, when the serial was still running, with a statement that on Tuesday evening "in the ordinary course of events" viewers would customarily watch the news: "But these are not ordinary times, and the audience awaits not the world news, but the leisurely doings of a small circle of Brits in a setting that is now almost 40 years old" (1984b:32). Although *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) is set in the 1940s, not in a distant past, it shows the English in India functioning within a clear class system at the end of the British rule there. The virtually unquestionable social hierarchy present in the community depicted in the serial might have been intended to evoke a certain feeling of nostalgia so characteristic for the heritage films. That production was part of British film and television revival of interest in India in the early 1980s,⁹² beginning with Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982) and including such productions as James Ivory's *Heat and Dust* (1983) and David Lean's *A Passage to India* (1984), as well as *The Far Pavilions* (1984) directed by Peter Duffell.

A number of critics agreed that the renewal of interest in the English experience in India was connected with the political situation of Thatcherite Britain and the British intervention (and victory) in the Falklands. Salman Rushdie in 1984, after *The Jewel in the Crown* had been broadcast, was among those few who expressed a strongly critical opinion of the nostalgia established on faulty foundations:

[...] the rise of raj revisionism, exemplified by the huge success of these fictions, is the artistic counterpart of the rise of conservative ideologies in modern Britain. And no matter how innocently the writers and film-makers work, no matter how skilfully the actors act [...] they

⁹¹ It was shown on ITV at the peak viewing time, i.e. 9 p.m., on Tuesdays.

⁹² The cultural and social impact of the Raj revival was quite far-reaching. Giddings and Selby (2001) suggest that one of the long lasting consequences of the wave of Raj films was the increasing popularity of curry restaurants, many of which used the name "Raj." Also the number of British package holidays to India increased significantly between 1979 and 1984.

run the grave risk of helping to shore up the conservatism, by offering the fictional glamour which its reality so grievously lacks. (1984/2010:94).

Critical reception of *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) was generally positive. The serial, as well as some of the actors, picked up a number of prestigious awards, including that of the Royal Television Society and BAFTA, Emmy and Golden Globe. Naughton's commentary in *The Listener* (1984b:32) provides another flattering echo of the production:

Given the rambling, multi-faceted nature of Paul Scott's *Raj Quartet*, it seemed inconceivable that it could be rendered for television without being "restructured to destruction." What I had overlooked, of course, was the possibility that this restructuring might be an *improvement* on what went before. [...] the result is not only something that works in its own terms, but something that is almost as original and subtle as *The Raj Quartet* books themselves.

Also Moore in his study *Paul Scott's Raj* analysing the novels, refers to the serial and the transmutations that Scott's texts underwent, stating ultimately that "The makers of *Jewel* grappled with the inner meaning of Scott's text, and reached conclusions that Scott would have endorsed" (1990:212).

There is, however, a controversy surrounding the process of adaptation of Scott's novels. Irene Shubik, the producer of *Staying On*, claims that she contributed to the production of *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) in its early stage, but she was not given sufficient acknowledgment.⁹³ In the 2000 edition of her book *Play for Today* she includes a detailed account of her involvement in the project and her explanation of the general concept which was used in that particular adaptation process. As she claims, the BBC had earlier considered the books for adaptation and rejected the idea, finding the *Quartet* too complicated for the task. One of the questions Granada had to answer when the production was being considered, was whether there would be a big enough audience for it. The answer was "yes," on condition that Scott's story-telling was sufficiently simplified. As Shubik puts it: "The only feasible method was to make a detailed, page by page break-down of each volume in terms of dialogue, action and historical background" (2000:208). She claims that she was the one who insisted on keeping as much of the dialogue as possible, using Scott's text as far as it was feasible. She also claims it was her idea to start the serial in medias res, with Sister Ludmila, not with Edwina Crane's story where the novel begins. However, it was Ken Taylor, the scriptwriter, who suggested that Kumar should not disappear, but function as "a ghost," whose presence haunts both the viewers and Merrick through the serial, but is scarcely seen again. It becomes apparent that Shubik feels offended by not being credited for the work she had done before they got together with Forman to make the draft of the plot (see Shubik 2000:248), although Forman does stress her contribution in his "Introduction" to *The Making of The Jewel in the Crown*. Having been eventually excluded from the

⁹³ *The Making of The Jewel in the Crown* does list Irene Shubik as a member of the team in the role of the "series originator."

production, Shubik was deeply disappointed, and was not very impressed with the final product. Her critical commentary reads as follows:

[...] the books when thus pared down and cast to type could come across like a superior, thinking man's soap opera rather than a realistic portrait of the English in India, as I had originally envisaged. [...] Like *Ghandi* the serial had a didactic undercurrent, giving the audience the illusion of being educated in the history of India while they sat back enjoying the trials and tribulations of a rather stereotypical set of characters [...]. (Shubik 2000:252)

Shubik clearly defines her contributions to the production: she supervised writing the scripts, she suggested Morahan should be offered a contract, and being the producer and editor of *Staying On* she found locations which later on were used in the serial: "The stage was perfectly set for a take-over" (Shubik 2000:252). Christopher Morahan became the producer and one of the two directors of the serial.

The Jewel in the Crown (1984) consists of 14 episodes of roughly 50 minutes each (with the exception of the first episode, which lasts twice as long as it was aimed at getting the audience engaged in the story), directed by Christopher Morahan (even episodes) and Jim O'Brian (odd episodes). Despite being directed by two men the serial is stylistically homogenous, which results, among other things, from the fact that there was the same editor (Edward Mansell) for the whole production, and the same lighting cameraman (Ray Goode). The vast majority of the outdoor scenes were shot on location in India, while the interiors were constructed in Granada's Manchester studio. The task was expensive and, at the moment of planning, on unprecedented scale, with seven main geographical locations. Visually attractive, with a well-constructed plot, the serial was more popular than could have been hoped. The audience amounted to 8 million during the first season in Britain and the production attracted a surprisingly large audience abroad. It was sold to most European countries (even to those behind the Iron Curtain), the U.S. and Australia, making the actors recognizable worldwide.

The enterprise was a challenge much more daring than that presented by *Brideshead*, due to the scope of the novels and the overseas locations. *The Raj Quartet* consists of almost 2000 pages and the story is frequently told through flashbacks and by several narrators. There are numerous references to the political scene, which were not part of the main plot but had to be preserved in the narrative. As Denis Forman retells, the actual process of rendering Scott's tetralogy into a television series started with:

[...] chopping a roll of wallpaper into thirteen segments about one yard square, pinning them around the walls of a room and writing down on each the outline of a scene for each episode. After walking some miles around this gallery, touching, retouching, shifting and deliberating, it did, at last, seem feasible that Paul Scott's great book could be made into a television series that would not betray the quality of the original work. (Forman 1984:8)

One of the difficulties with adapting Scott's novels results from the fact that, as Tedesco (1985:57) notes, "Scott concentrates on developing the interior drama of

his characters and the effect of events rather than the events themselves.” “Interior drama” of novels’ characters is much harder to be rendered into a visual form than actual events. As the plots of all four of Scott’s novels partly overlap, the serial’s producers had to put together the elements of what they decided should constitute the main story of the serial, to create a single linear narrative. As Brandt (1993:204) notes,

[...] sustaining interest over fourteen episodes is a difficult enough business anyway. If chronology had been disrupted, viewers of this essentially realistic narrative might have found it difficult to keep all the intricacies in mind [...] the simplification of *The Raj Quartet’s* narrative line meant sacrificing some of the story’s resonances; but the gain in the direct dramatic impact amply made up for this loss.

One of the reasons for which the novels required certain repetition and retelling was the fact that they were published at two or three-year intervals, with the plots all making reference somehow to the rape of Daphne Manners in the Bibighar Grades and Hari Kumar’s imprisonment. As Tedesco (1985:129) puts it: “Scott traces the impact of Bibighar, as if it were a stone thrown into the sea producing ever-widening, encircling waves like rings of influence to even remote distances.” Hence, the readers might be under the impression that Scott’s narrative is running in circles, coming back over and over again to the events depicted in the first novel. Although that repetition was significantly reduced in the serial, some of the retelling remained, which served the serial’s own ends.

The Raj Quartet, due the length of the text and its narrative complexity, required more modifications than was the case in of most of the earlier serialised television adaptations. The narrative the four novels contain had to be squeezed into a much shorter form, hence the strenuous reading effort required to become acquainted with Scott’s work was replaced by 778 minutes of viewing, which definitely made Scott’s story accessible to a much wider audience.⁹⁴

The serial is no longer broadcast anywhere, but a new remastered edition appeared on DVD in 2008 as a special 25th Anniversary Edition, becoming not only an example of how the last years of the Raj were depicted from the 1980s perspective, but also, to quote McLuskie once more, representing “the golden days of pre-deregulation quality television.” In Poland it was broadcast from January to April 1986 by Channel 2 on Saturday evenings at 22.25. After the last episode there was a follow-up discussion in the studio focused on Paul Scott’s works and the history of the Raj. Paul Scott’s novels were hardly known in Poland, as until the purchase of the serial only *The Day of the Scorpion* had been published in here, in 1973. A new complete edition of the Quartet appeared in 1988.

Although there has been no other film or television adaptation of Scott’s tetralogy to date, the novels did find their way into the 21st-century audience

⁹⁴ Granada had planned the serial as a product for export as well and contracted its sales abroad even before its broadcast at home had been completed. As during its broadcast in Britain BBC1 was showing American *The Thorn Birds*, it sparked a wide ranging debate over what actually constituted “quality” television and what the role of public television should be.

consciousness, at least into that of the British one. In 2005, from April 10 to June 5, BBC Radio 4 aired a 9-part adaptation of *The Raj Quartet* as Classic Serial, under the original title. The novels were dramatized by John Harvey and Shelly Silas, while the serial was produced and directed by Sally Avens and Jeremy Mortimer. The cast was rich and varied, and included Anna Maxwell Martin as Daphne, Lia Williams as Sarah Layton, and Benedict Cumberbatch – an international star nowadays – as Nigel Rowan. A connection was established between the television adaptation and the new radio dramatization, because Geraldine James, playing Sarah in the former, played Mildred, Sarah’s mother, in the latter. Mortimer explained the reason for turning towards Scott’s text in the 21st century as follows:

It’s a period people are fascinated by. Questions of personal and national identity in the dramatisation are echoed by things happening now. Hari Kumar [a pivotal Anglo-Indian character] feels neither British nor Indian [...] an issue that’s very much a current one in any multi-cultural society. (“Your radio is a time machine”)

The Jewel in the Crown was last broadcast on BBC Radio 2 on January 4, 2013.

The Jewel in the Crown (1984)

The plot and the narrative structure of the serial

The subsections below discuss the way in which the plots of individual novels were adapted into the serial’s narrative structure, while the table in Appendix 5 shows how the main events of the plots were broken into the serial’s episodes. As the plot of the novels had to be modified in the process of adaptation much more than in the case of the two earlier discussed adaptations here, it is particularly useful to analyse the alterations made in the case of this particular adaptation with reference to the specific rhetorical operations mentioned by Wyslouch (1994:160). Those operations include: permutation (rearrangement of elements), substitution (replacing elements), detraction (reduction of elements) and adjunction (adding new elements).

The Jewel in the Crown

The first novel of the Quartet, i.e. *The Jewel in the Crown*, set in the fictitious town of Mayapore, centres on the story of a young English woman, Daphne Manners, who is raped by unidentified hooligans in August 1942 during the period of social unrest connected with the Congress’s “Quit India” campaign. Daphne’s boyfriend, Hari Kumar, an England-educated Indian forced by family problems to come back “home,” is falsely accused of having committed the rape by the District Superintendent of Mayapore Police, Ronald Merrick, who victimises Hari for personal reasons. Besides Daphne’s story the novel includes

an account of the life of an unfortunate English missionary, Miss Edwina Crane, who after years of working in India is assaulted by rioters the same day Daphne is raped. The main plot of the novel ends with Daphne's death during childbirth, Hari's imprisonment for unfounded political reasons and Edwina Crane's suicide in a fire she starts in a garden shed inside which she locks herself. The story is told in retrospect by multiple narrators, interwoven with some political and social commentaries concerning the situation in India and the position of the British there.

The plot of the first novel of the Quartet is covered by the first two episodes of the serial ("Crossing the River" and "The Bibighar Gardens") and nine minutes of the third episode ("The Question of Loyalty"). Examples of permutation are the most conspicuous in the case of the episodes covering the plot of the first novel of the Quartet; in the seven chapters (called "Parts") a number of narrative strategies have been used. They range from omniscient third person (Part One "Miss Crane" and shorter passages in other parts), through having some of the characters speak to an anonymous listener, a visitor to whom the story is retold some twenty years later (Part Two "The MacGregor House" where Lady Chatterjee, Daphne's Indian hostess, talks about Miss Crane and Daphne; Part Three "Sister Ludmila" where the title character [a woman of possibly Russian descent who helps the poor] tells her version of the story; and Part Four with Mr Srinivasan tells the story of Mrs San Gupta) to personal narratives in the form of letters (appearing in various parts of the novel as written by Daphne, Lady Manners, Hari and Colin), a diary (Daphne's) and reports (Brigadier Raid's and Robin White's). This variety of voices and points of view was rendered into a chronologically ordered story, with suspense properly created at the end of the first episode, when the viewers learn that Daphne is missing. There are very few instances in which flashbacks are used in the serial due to the linear approach applied in the plot modification.

To maintain the coherence of the initial narrative, and to make it engaging for the viewers, the producers decided that the first episode should be twice the length of the regular episodes, i.e. 105 minutes long. The plot of the first of Scott's *Raj* novels ends with the death of Daphne, and Lady Manners reading parts of Daphne's diary in which she asks her aunt to either take care of the baby or to support the baby financially. The episode then moves smoothly to the story of Sarah Layton, which belongs to the second novel of *The Raj Quartet*.

Information about the political situation in India can be found in Scott's novel in the numerous commentaries made by the omniscient narrator. There was no easy way to include that background information in the television production, but a solution was found. A decision was made to include sections of documentaries obtained from Pathé, the Imperial War Museum and National Film Archive which illustrate perfectly the historical background. Scott's novel starts with a passage referring to the presence of the Japanese in Burma and Gandhi losing Miss Crane's admiration by extending "what looked like an open invitation to the Japanese to

come and help him rid India of the British” (*Jewel*⁹⁵ 1976:2). The first episode of the serial starts with the newsreel clip “Stand fast, India!” in which the Japanese attack Burma; the commentary states: “the defence of India has become one of the most urgent duties among the urgent duties of Great Britain and the United Nations.” Also reference is made to the threat of Gandhi’s “violent non-violence” in the Congress. The documentary presents a convoy of British troops being brought in for the defence of India. Throughout the first two episodes we have six newsreels altogether, referring to the Japanese in Burma and to the unrest and demonstrations in India. The use of documentary material becomes a stylistic device throughout the serial. The newsreels clips not only provide a historical background to the story, but, as Brandt (1993:209) notes,

[...] they also reflect period attitude in their camerawork, editing style and commentaries. Seen some four decades later, they carry an ironical subtext. Wartime certainties have softened in the light of subsequent history; attitudes natural at the time now seem stilted and patronizing.

The decision to use the newsreel clips, with all the “ironical subtext” gives the serial that kind of distance which is achieved in the book by having the narrator investigate Miss Manners’ case some twenty years after the actual events had taken place. The characters interviewed speak about the events with a certain detachment, stressing the different perspective they have. Watching the documentary material the viewers also assume that kind of detached perspective, which is not experienced during the non-documentary sections of the film. Moore makes the following comment upon that element of the serial: “The historical context is brilliantly conveyed by newsreel clips so patently pro-British that they serve as a parody commentary, though too much reliance is placed on them to emphasise that during the war India was an armed camp” (1990:212). Morahan, quoted by Robinson (1984:49), justifies the inclusion of the newsreels as an element that should encourage the viewers to see the characters and the tensions and conflicts between them in a broader context:

Perhaps by looking at the newsreel and the story in juxtaposition, you’re able to use your own mind. Don’t lose yourself entirely in the story and believe that it is happening. Remember that the atmosphere in which it took place was the atmosphere in which the newsreels were written.

The newsreels, then, on the one hand place the story in the authentic historical context, while on the other, they interrupt the flow of the narrative or, to use Newcomb’s words, arrest “narrative development, giving the serial a heavy, ponderous quality” (2004:1224).

As the plot of Scott’s *The Jewel in the Crown*, contained in roughly 451 pages, has been squeezed into 170 minutes of the serial, significant reduction of elements of the plot was unavoidable. The most evident example of detraction is the part of the novel which focuses on Miss Edwina Crane, one of the characters whose role

⁹⁵ As I will be referring here to one 1976 edition of *The Raj Quartet*, abbreviated forms will be used for the titles of the novels, i.e.: *Jewel*, *Day*, *Towers* and *Division*.

in Scott's narrative is much more prominent than in the television production. While in the novel her story takes up most of Part One, in the serial she appears only at the end of the first episode, when she is in hospital, traumatised, and Daphne is asked to visit her in her room. In Scott's story the fact that the two women met is mentioned by Sister Ludmila and we do not have any reference to a detailed conversation between them. The scene in the serial showing Daphne meeting Miss Crane is new (hence, becoming another instance of adjunction) and serves two purposes. It takes place when the viewers are already familiar with Daphne's infatuation with Hari and the fact that the missionary lady was found on the road "nursing an Indian schoolmaster who had been with her," as one of the nurses puts it, seems to be a warning for Daphne, foreshadowing the trouble to come. Miss Crane's conversation with Daphne becomes an opportunity for telling a part of the teacher's story and for showing the picture that becomes one of the crucial symbols for the series, namely *The Jewel in the Crown*. Hence, the subplot of Miss Crane becomes reduced to a symbolic function: that of a helpless English woman saying "There was nothing I could do;" her role as a teacher and a missionary in India finishes with a defeat. Miss Crane's suicide is retold by Daphne to Dr Klaus. Again, Miss Crane and her story seem to function in the serial only as a foil to the main plot, i.e. the story of Daphne and Hari. However, in subsequent episodes Edwina Crane is mentioned again as Barbie Bachelor's friend and her suicide in a circle of fire is recalled throughout the serial.

Another part of the plot which has been reduced and condensed is the story of Hari Kumar and his family. Although Hari remains one of the main characters of the serial, we receive his biography in a contracted form, including the most significant facts, but giving the character a number of instances when he can release, verbally, his frustration at his cultural displacement and the feeling of otherness he experiences in India. However, Scott is much more generous with information, providing the readers with Hari's parents' story and Hari's problems with finding a job in India. In the film, all that is reduced to a number of sentences appearing in conversations, as the producers of the serial decided to start their narrative with the events taking place in February 1942, excluding from the chronological narrative Hari's return to India. Despite the reductions, however, Hari is still the most complex and tragic character of the early episodes, to which Art Malik's acting skills and good looks contributed significantly.

As mentioned above, in the serial the original plot was condensed rather than extended; hence there are not very many examples of new elements being added. The scenes which appear in the adaptation as new are in most cases those resulting from the condensation – what Scott develops into full narratives or what appears in the fragmented narratives throughout the novel is frequently reduced to one scene not present in the novel, but covering some of the elements which would be missing otherwise. One such scene is set in a hospital, which Daphne enters, talks to one of the nurses and is identified as a new volunteer. That leads to Daphne's

introducing herself to the Matron, who used to know her late uncle when he was a governor and that results in small talk about Lady Manners, Daphne's aunt, being in Rawalpindi at that time. Daphne also mentions that she is staying at the MacGregor House with Lady Chatterjee. We learn that Lady Chatterjee is a Rajput princess and she entertains a wide circle of friends, both European and Indian. Daphne bumps into Anna Klaus and is introduced to her. That scene, not found in the novel, makes it possible to cover a number of issues relevant for the events to come and provides the viewers with the necessary background information, which in the novel comes at various times and from multiple sources. Here, that one condensed, short scene clarifies Daphne's position to the extent necessary for the serial's further development of events. We also have one distinctive feature of Daphne suggested – that is her clumsiness due to short-sightedness, which results in her collision with Dr Klaus, a background character who will support Daphne after the rape.

The scene which follows is also a combination of information which in the novel can be found in different places. The setting is the MacGregor House and we witness a conversation between Daphne and Lady Chatterjee. The conversation becomes the source of information about Doctor Anna Klaus's past and about her telephoning to inform Lady Chatterjee about the trouble a young Indian had fallen into. In this way Hari Kumar's existence is signalled to Daphne. Daphne mentions seeing Merrick, which leads to a brief exchange concerning that character. Lady Chatterjee calls him "a chum," but she also states that she has a feeling that he comes to the MacGregor house "to pick things up. As she says there are not so many places where a district superintendent of police can mix with congress wallahs and hear their news." In the novel this piece of information comes from the omniscient narrator. The conversation ends with Lady Chatterjee mentioning the party she wants to give and invite Hari Kumar to. In this way most of the necessary information has been provided about Daphne, as well as about the character of the relationship between her and Lady Chatterjee. All the additional dialogue familiarises the audience with the necessary background.

As indicated previously, the plot of the television production reduces the amount of information concerning Hari and we do not learn about his actions the way the readers do in the novel. So as to make Hari's infatuation with Daphne more convincing to the viewers, two short scenes were added. In one of them, Hari stops working at ten past five to look through the window of the Mayapore gazette office to watch Daphne riding her bike on her way back from hospital. His colleagues' reaction suggests that they are aware of his attraction to Miss Manners. The other scene is again an example of the condensation of the information contained in other places of the novel. Daphne meets Hari in a Mayapore street, talking to Pandid Baba who reproaches him for his apparent unwillingness to speak the language of his people. Daphne comes up, interrupts them, and talks about the pictures for Aunt Ethel. When they enter the photographer's shop, a white woman exits,

casting them a critical look. The scene serves a number of ends – it shows Hari’s connection to Baba, which will be referred to during his interrogation, illustrates the mutual attraction of Daphne and Hari and shows the critical attitude of the English towards mixed couples, frequently complained about by Daphne in her accounts in the novel.

Another new element in the visual version of the narrative is “telling the story through servants” as Tim Pigott-Smith points out in his commentary to the first episode of the DVD edition. In a number of cases the directors start a particular scene by showing the servant first, then following him with the camera work. Most of the scenes set in the MacGregor House are shot in this way, particularly those taking place during the party. In some of the shots we see in the foreground the servant pouring drinks and serving the guests; we see the gardener, when Daphne shows Hari the garden. The scene of Hari’s visit to Daphne also includes the role of the servant, first bringing food, then sitting patiently in the hall on a chair, eventually lying down, which suggests the length of Hari’s visit and creates a slightly comic commentary on it. The scene set in Merrick’s house is another example, when we see his servant’s hands in the foreground, pouring drinks, with Merrick in the background talking to Daphne. The camerawork seems to stress the subservient position of the Indians, and almost allows the viewer to adopt their position. Nor are they invisible to the filmmakers – it is the other way round. Their presence in the foreground seems to be foreshadowing the unrest to come and the approaching end of the Raj. In the novel there are a few references to the servants and their position, but in the serial starting a scene with the servant becomes one of the frequently used narrative devices.

The first three episodes could have been were an odd introduction to the serial for viewers not familiar with the four novels, because Daphne dies and the story is moved to focus on the Layton family, with Sarah Layton becoming the main protagonist. However, the shift from “the Manners case” plot to the Layton family plot takes place part way through the third episode, which prevented the audience from worrying about whether they were actually watching the same serial, as they had to wait a while to see Ronald Merrick as the character who connects the fragmented story.

The Day of the Scorpion and The Towers of Silence

In *The Day of the Scorpion* the setting includes Ranpore, the provincial capital, the princely state of Mirat and the hill station in Pankot. Daphne Manners’ story is partly retold, and as a development of the previously dominant plot we witness Hari’s interrogation, in which new facts about the treatment he experienced in Mayapore are revealed. Generally, however, the novel focuses on the life of the Layton family, consisting of two daughters, Sarah and Susan, and their mother, Mildred, at a time when the father of the family, Colonel John Layton, remains separated from his relatives as a prisoner of war in Germany. Captain Ronald Merrick reappears, having

been transferred to the Military Intelligence Service, and serves as the best man at Susan Layton's wedding. The Laytons' plot in the novel ends with the death of Teddie Bingham, Susan's husband, during the campaign against the Japanese and the pregnant young wife's decline into serious mental problems, culminating in attempted infanticide once the baby is born. A significant section of the novel is devoted to the Kasim family, whose father, Mohammed Ali Kasim "MAK," is the Congress Party leader, imprisoned by the British, and whose two sons, Sayed and Ahmed, display starkly contrasting attitudes towards the British.

The third novel, *The Towers of Silence*, also centres on the Layton family, frequently in retrospect, providing information additional to the facts known from the preceding novel. The central figure, however, is Barbie Batchelor, a retired missionary and a companion of Colonel Layton's stepmother, Mabel, living in Rose Cottage in Pankot. Barbie's decline into madness coincides with reflection over the history of the British in India and her own displacement after Mabel's death. Although Ronald Merrick reappears later in the novel, the chief villainous character in this part of the Quartet is the unscrupulous and adulterous Mildred Layton.

The Day of the Scorpion introduces new characters, many of whom will remain in focus to the end of the fourth novel. In *The Towers of Silence* Scott goes beyond the immediate circle of people affected by the Manners case, and moves in a wider circle to include further members of the Raj community in Pankot. The plot of the first novel does not receive a great deal of further development, but more information about individual characters is provided. The time-span of the second and third novels is almost the same. While *The Day of the Scorpion* introduces new characters and shifts the main focus from the Manners case to the problems that members of the Layton family have to face, *The Towers of Silence* seems to be a variation of the preceding novel, presenting a different perspective and developing elements that beforehand were only implied. For this reason it is more feasible to refer to the contents of both novels when analysing the seven episodes covering their plots, i.e. the remainder of Episode 3 and Episodes 4 to 9. Barbie Batchelor's death, however, taking place at the end of *The Towers of Silence*, coincides with the atomic bomb being dropped on Hiroshima, which chronologically fits into the beginning of Episode 11. Despite the fact that the main plot of those episodes, isolated from the two slightly disjointed narratives of *The Day of the Scorpion* and *The Towers of Silence*, is consistent with that created by Scott, some sections had to be removed and some were replaced by more compacted versions of either events or dialogues. Therefore, in the present analysis the rhetorical operations referred to will be mostly detraction and substitution.

The two novels use an omniscient narrator; third person limited narrator (mainly Sarah Layton and Barbie Batchelor being the characters from whose perspective we view the events) as well as first person narration in letters written by Barbie. There are extensive sections providing background information about

the characters and their family history; they are presented in the form of flashbacks. This information in the serial is either discarded or squeezed into a more efficient form which can be included in conversations which take place in the novel. In the screenplay the elements of the plot are organized chronologically, but there are a number of instances when the voice-over and flashbacks are used as an equivalent of Scott's narrative disjunctions.

A scene which, despite being based on dialogue present in the novel, was much shortened is Hari Kumar's interview by Captain Rowan and an official for the House and Law department. The scene in *The Day of the Scorpion* takes more than 60 pages and contains a detailed account of Merrick's abominable behaviour during the interrogation of Hari back in Mayapore. The film includes only the most significant elements of the interview, i.e. the description of Hari's being tied to a trestle and the moment he realizes that Daphne must have died, and that it took place in childbirth.⁹⁶ One of the reasons for which the interview is much shorter in the serial than in the novel is the fact that some of the information provided by Hari has already been used in the second episode of the serial, during the actual interrogation by Merrick. The scene in episode five is of high dramatic intensity and short enough not to exhaust the audience. Surprisingly, this scene is intersected with a cheerful conversation taking place – presumably simultaneously – at the grace-and-favour bungalow in which the Laytons live, between Mildred and some of her Pankot friends in which she describes the incidents that took place during the wedding. This interruption results in some loss of the dramatic impact it could have otherwise had. Dyer interprets that cross-cutting as a way to stress “white women's contemptibly empty lives” at the end of the British rule in India. “The seriousness and intensity” of Hari's interrogation “contrasts with the brittle snottiness” (Dyer 1997:199) of the scene involving Mildred.

Some scenes which refer to sex, a taboo subject on television, were not included in the serial. Although the serial was shown in the evenings, it still was targeted at quite a general audience.⁹⁷ Susan's miserable honeymoon is not presented; we only hear Mildred's remarks suggesting Teddie must have been rather inexperienced. In the book the readers witness that disastrous “experience.” Sarah's seduction by Jim Clark in Calcutta takes over fifteen minutes in the serial, but the actual act is restricted to the initial kiss and then Sarah's being woken up by her lover with the bad news about Aunt Mable's death. However, the producers decided to include the sex scene which Barbie witnesses, involving Mildred and Captain Coley. This scene, quite graphic (as it actually is in the novel as well) led to a number of protests from the audience.

As in the case of the first episodes, the information and the commentary about the political situation in India, which in Scott's novels is provided by the omniscient narrator, appears to some extent in the newsreel clips. In the episodes discussed

⁹⁶ That scene can be considered as one of the most moving moments in the whole serial, expressively enacted by Art Malik.

⁹⁷ DVD edition is rated “15.”

the newsreels are fewer than in the first three hours of the serial, but still we are provided with some documentary material about the formation of the Burma Arkan Front, about Indian soldiers being decorated at Buckingham Palace, an account of the fighting in Imphal and of D-Day, as well as of the Viceroy's visit to Burma and the end of the war in Europe resulting in POWs being released. That selection creates a context for the events taking place in the episodes, as, for example, Teddie Bingham is killed in Imphal, D-Day is celebrated during Sarah's first visit to Calcutta, and episode nine ends with Sarah's plans for welcoming her father in Bombay, after his release from the prison camp.

A Division of the Spoils

The closing novel, *A Division of the Spoils*, continues the story of Sarah Layton but introduces a new character, Sergeant Guy Perron: another upper-class character and a historian by profession. He befriends Sarah becoming at the same time a member of the intelligence service commanded by Merrick, whose treacherous nature is revealed to its full extent. Merrick is finally murdered, presumably in an act of vengeance for his mistreatment and abuse of Hari Kumar and six other men falsely accused of the rape of Miss Manners. One part of the novel is devoted to the situation MAK and his son Sayed find themselves in at the threshold of political change. The novel ends in 1947, with the division of India and with a sectarian massacre taking place on the train in which Sarah Layton, Guy Perron and Ahmed Kasim (killed in the massacre) are travelling. The novel includes multiple instances of retelling parts of the plots, particularly so in the case of Hari Kumar's unfortunate lot.

The narrative structure of the novel is simpler than in the case of the three earlier ones; hence very small alterations to the plot were necessary. There are a few flashbacks, but most of them were preserved in the serial's narrative in the form of visualisations of the stories retold. Scott again uses different types of narration, introducing two sections in which he departs from the third person narrator to give voice to the main character of the novel, i.e. Guy Perron, and in another section to Sarah Layton. Large sections of the novel are written in a dialogue form, and most of that dialogue has been transferred almost directly to the serial.

In the case of the last novel, the number of plot elements removed in the process of adaptation is lower than in the first three. *A Division of the Spoils* has its own plot which turned out to be sufficient for the five episodes into which it was adapted. This was possible due to the fact that part of the novel retells events included in the previous texts, and could be simply removed from the serial at no loss. When compared with the first three novels, the fourth has more objective and at times journalistic narration, which found its reflection in the way the episodes of the serial relate to the sections of the book.

All the stories that Perron learns about from other people in the second part of the novel, titled "Pandora's Box" and set in 1947, are presented in the form of

scenes with a voice-over narration. There are five flashbacks of this kind: Susan's story of accidentally seeing Merrick dressed in Pathan clothes; Nigel's story of Merrick killing the snake found in the bathtub; the story of how Merrick's body was found; and two stories told by Bronowsky, one about the ride Sarah, Ahmed and Merrick took during which Merrick fell off his horse, and the other which makes the circumstances of his death clear. The fact that the stories are dramatized makes Tim Pigott-Smith appear on screen in the middle of the last episode, which consolidates the overall plot. In the same way Hari Kumar is present throughout the serial. Just as in Scott's text, Kumar's story reverberates throughout the serial, amplified by the frequent showing of his photograph (which is found in the file Perron reads having received it from Nigel), and the reappearance of Art Malik on the screen, either in Perron's memories from Chillingborough which they both attended, or in a scene illustrating Perron's reading of Hari's article in *Ranpore Gazette*. The image of Hari in his Ranpore room closes the final episode.

The serial renders most of Scott's dialogue, and so most of the scenes are rather static, showing the main characters involved in conversations. There are, however, a number of scenes that become extremely powerful in the serial, taking advantage of the visual nature of the medium. The sequence of scenes connected with the journey from Mirat to Ranpore, during which the train is attacked and all Muslim passengers, including Ahmed Kasim, are slaughtered, is probably the most memorable. The claustrophobic space of the train compartment, hosting the Layton sisters, aunt Fenny, little Edward, the ayah, Ahmed Kasim, Guy Perron and an annoying English couple called the Peabodys, becomes the scene of unspeakable drama. The scene is filmed as close as possible to the way Scott describes it, i.e. we do not really see the carnage, until it comes to an end. The camera is with the characters, inside the compartment, with the noises coming from outside and with a feeling of helplessness when Kasim decides to go out and sacrifice himself to save further trouble for his companions. The image of the train entering the station in Premanagar, with the dead bodies hanging out of its windows, stays with the viewers, as do Sarah's words: "After 300 years of India, we've made this whole damn bloody senseless mess." They appear in the novel, but are accusatory toward the Raj in a different context. They come from her letter, written after the carnage, retelling the dramatic moments from her perspective, thinking of the reasons why Ahmed was the direct target of the attack:

[...] it was all so senseless. Such a damn bloody senseless mess. The kind which Ahmed tried to shut himself off from, the mess the *raj* had never been able to sort out. The only difference between Ahmed and me was that he didn't take the mess seriously and I did. I felt it was our responsibility, our fault that after a hundred years or more it still existed. (*Division* 1976:592)

The above example shows how Scott's text was condensed in the serial. There are several examples of such condensation, not always enhancing the dramatic effect, or altering the message, as happens here; in most cases the modification consists simply in shortening the dialogues to make them sound natural in the televisual context.

It has to be stressed that *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) is, just like other classic serials, based on dialogue, and it is much more about people talking than about people doing. Large sections of what can be called action are narrated in the form of flashbacks. Dyer calls the serial's action "a combination of soap opera talk and Chekhovian drama," consisting of "dialogue, looks and meaningful silences" (1997:202). Dyer also discusses the story as being held up by constant and quite repetitive talking about the past, and makes the connection between the serial and soap opera, where, as he says, "such repetitive talk is common" and "it both acts as a recapitulation for viewers from episode to episode and, in soap operas especially, allows for the dissection of emotional responses to events" (1997:202). Dyer's impression only confirms that Scott's narration matches the conventions employed by a television serial/soap opera. What Dyer does not admit is the fact that the repetition in the serial results to a large extent from the repetition present in the novels, accounted for earlier in this chapter. Televisual as it might seem, the frequent recapitulation comes directly from Scott and has its justification in the fact that the four novels were originally published over the period of nine years.

Not unlike other classic serial, *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) does not really depend on cliff-hangers. Only the first episode, intended to attract the audience to watch further episodes, ends at a suspenseful moment, showing Lady Chatterjee on the stairs of McGregor House, puzzled due to Daphne's disappearance. Other episodes end in ways which, as Dyer puts it, do not really "generate much sense of anticipation of what is going to happen" (1997:203). They rather end in ways closing the story of a given episode, e.g. Episode 5 ends with Susan lying in bed after being informed about her husband's death; the final scene of Episode 7 is that of Sarah heading towards her train on the way back to Pankot; Episode 8 ends with Susan's attempt to kill her baby in the ring of fire, but we see the ayah saving the baby; Episode 9 ends with Barbie finding herself in what seems to be her final destination after her rickshaw accident, i.e. the mission hospital, refusing to speak; Episode 10 shows, at its end, Perron coming back for the night to the military base. The remaining episodes close with images that have some symbolic functions in the serial, which will be discussed in the next subsection.

Besides the recurring visual motifs to be discussed in the next subsection, there is also a phrase repeated by four female characters in the serial, i.e. Daphne, Edwina Crane, Barbie Batchelor and Sarah Layton: "There is nothing I can do," which Dyer (1997:200) calls "the leitmotiv phrase of the series." That phrase is used for the first time by Miss Crane, after the assault, when she is holding the head of her dying Indian colleague. Daphne uses it twice: after the rape, when she tells Hari to say he was not with her during the evening, and then again, at the beginning of Episode 3, when she talks to Sister Ludmila, not knowing where Hari is, and not being able to make anybody tell her anything concerning his case. Barbie utters the phrase when referring to the conflict which she believes she is the cause of – that between Mable and Mildred concerning Rose Cottage. Sarah uses the

same words after the massacre in which Ahmed Kasim is killed, and none of his white English companions are able to prevent the slaughter. The sentence expresses helplessness but, in the case of Daphne, Sarah and Edwina, also a feeling of guilt for not preventing the suffering of their Indian friends and lovers. Dyer even argues that the serial “constructs white femininity in terms of not doing” (1997:201), which is most conspicuous in that very phrase.

There is one more recurring motif which we should discuss briefly, and to which Dyer also points in his discussion of female characters in the serial. It is the use of silence. Silence is what Daphne imposes on Hari by asking him not to reveal the truth of their meeting. Silence is what Susan falls into when she breaks down after the attempted infanticide. Barbie refuses to talk after the rickshaw accident; instead she writes on slips of paper. Lady Manners remains silent and invisible during Hari’s questioning which her actions have led to. Afterwards we see her a few more times, but never hear her speak. Besides all that, there is the constant, silent presence of Indian servants and ayahs, who hardly ever produce any sound, but are conspicuously within the frame. The silence either signifies withdrawal and suffering, exceeding the power of words, or the silencing and marginalisation of those who do not belong to the dominant group. Silence is either an escape, or the result of oppression and it becomes more conspicuous in the adaptation where both image and the sound are the means by which the message is conveyed.

The characters

The four novels present a plethora of characters, and so does the serial. The producers took a certain risk as far as casting is concerned, as a large number of the cast consisted of actors who were little known to the television audience. The serial features two stars, i.e. Peggy Ashcroft and Eric Porter, but the younger generation actors who play characters crucial for the plot, like Susan Wooldridge, Art Malik, Geraldine James, Charles Dance and Tim Pigott-Smith, all with significant theatre experience, were yet to be tested in a longer television format in which the faithfulness of the audience is vital. Those particular leading actors were all in their thirties, rather than in the twenties that Scott’s characters are, which seems consistent with the general tendency observable in the classic serial not to cast very young actors in the main parts. Reference to the risk connected with employing unknown faces, taken by Granada, is made in Pigott-Smith’s, Malik’s, James’ and Dances’ commentaries appearing in Special Features of the 2008 DVD edition. Inglis, in his article devoted to *Brideshead Revisited* (1981), refers to *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) and praises the cast, mentioning “strong and upright pentameter-pouncers of the Royal Shakespeare Company” (including Tim Pigott-Smith and Charles Dance) (2000:180). Such clear diction resulting from theatre training and experience has been a characteristic feature of the acting style in classic-novel adaptations, as it has been stated earlier here.

All the main characters play the same narrative functions in the novels and in the serial; their actions lead to the same consequences. However, the villainous nature of the “black characters” is stronger in the television production, which, as Shubik commented bitterly, results from the fact that “most TV audiences enjoy clear-cut villains and heroes about whom they are not required to make subtle intellectual judgements” (2000:252).

In the novel, the first description of Daphne Manners (Susan Wooldridge) comes from Lady Chatterjee, who describes Daphne as: “good-natured but inept. She was big and rather clumsy. She was always dropping things” (*Jewel* 1976:71). Sister Ludmila’s description of Daphne is provided further on and is similar: “[...] big, with the northern bigness of bone. I would not call her pretty. But there was grace in her. And joy. In spite of certain clumsiness” (*Jewel* 1976:139). Daphne Manners, as portrayed in the serial by Susan Wooldridge, meets the characteristics, being tall and far from graceful or beautiful. Daphne’s nervousness is mentioned, manifested through the way she blinks while speaking. The character’s clumsiness and short-sightedness are a slightly comic element, as they are in the novel, preventing Daphne from falling into the category of a romantic heroine. Most of the characteristic traits of the protagonist created by Scott are preserved, including Daphne’s use of self-deprecation. Most of the information about Miss Manners provided by Scott was in one way or another incorporated into the serial narrative, including her being more determined than Hari to establish their relationship on a more intimate basis. In the novel, Lady Chatterjee says: “It worried me a bit, the way Daphne seemed to take to him, worried me because I couldn’t be sure whether he felt quite the same way about her” (*Jewel* 1976:107). This reserve is reflected in the serial as well, although Hari’s running across the river and his behaviour afterwards show a more open interest in Daphne than the novel suggests.

Daphne and her actions cause all the trouble the other characters will be sorting out to the end of the serial. She remains, however, “the most engaging, tough-minded and courageous character,” as Dyer (1997:198) puts it. She is also one of the tragic characters: a victim of rape, who loses her lover and is fully conscious of her responsibility for his helpless lot. In the painful circumstances she desperately wants to believe that the baby conceived on the night of the rape, the baby she sacrifices her own life for, is Hari’s. Wooldridge’s Daphne is convincing, both in her hysterical despair, and in her final resignation.

Daphne’s partner, Hari Kumar (Art Malik), emerges in the first two episodes of the serial as a memorable victim-hero, whose tragic lot will be referred to a number of times in the remaining twelve episodes. It is so despite the fact that the viewers gain less insight into Hari’s family history than the readers do. In the novels, we gain no insight concerning Hari’s feelings towards Daphne, there is no access to any information in this respect coming directly from him. The novels provide a full account of Daphne’s experience, as well as Sister Ludmila’s and Lady Chatterjee’s impressions of Hari and Daphne’s relationship. In the serial, Hari’s behaviour in the

presence of either Daphne or Merrick had to be to a large extent constructed anew, and much more depended in this case on how Art Malik chose and managed to convey Hari's emotions. It has to be admitted that in the serial Hari gains more of the features of a tragic romantic hero. The serial includes a scene, not mentioned in the novel, in which Hari asks Daphne to give him one of the photographs of herself, which she plans to send to Lady Manners. Hari receives the picture, frames it and places it in his room, which later on will evoke further suspicions in Merrick during the arrest. Such a sentimental act, in an obvious way suggesting Hari's attraction to Miss Manners, was not Scott's invention. It does result in making the tragic love story, understated in the novel, more stereotypically romantic.

The last long appearance of Hari Kumar takes place in Episode 5, during a questioning carried out by Nigel Rowan (the scene is discussed in more detail above), which, as we find out later, leads to Hari's release. He, however, remains a phantom-like figure, haunting Merrick, and disquieting Guy Perron, who used to know him in their school years, and who gradually learns about Hari's tragic lot in India. In such circumstances Malik appears a number of times in the final episodes, either in Perron's dramatized memories of Hari playing cricket at Chillingborough, or as a "passer-by" in an Indian reality in which he does not fit. Hari is also present in the final scene of the serial, shot in monochrome, aesthetically integrated with the preceding newsreel, which presents Nehru speaking to the people on the day of India's independence. The monochrome scene shows Hari writing in his room, with Guy Perron's business card tucked behind the frame of the radio set and Daphne Manners' framed photograph. A freeze-frame image of Hari closes the scene. Brandt refers to this moment in the serial as follows:

By the change to monochrome, hitherto associated with the old newsreels, Hari is, as it were, reintegrated into the country's history. Hari Kumar has shed the persona of English-educated Harry Coomer. This alienated and persecuted Indian has become – whether happily or not – part of an event larger than his personal fate. (1993:210)

The monochrome image closes Hari's story for the viewers, as if symbolically moving him into the past. His beloved is dead, but so is Merrick, Hari's personal oppressor, whose punishment was eagerly awaited by the viewers. For the viewers the story is over.

As it is clear from our discussion above, Daphne and Hari's story involves directly the main villain, both in the books and in the serial, namely Ronald Merrick (Tim Pigott-Smith). In the serial, however, this character is much more openly villainous, which stems, among other things, from the structure of the serial, which is, as has already been stressed, chronological. In the first novel, Merrick is only talked about by other people; he does not speak for himself; in his case there is no first person account of in any of the novels. It is interesting to see how the construction of that character, central to the story, differs in the film and in the serial. In the novels, Merrick's suppressed homosexuality is revealed at the very end of *A Division of the Spoils*, and we gain the final insight into the

reasons for Merrick's behaviour, which we have witnessed from the very beginning of the first novel. The serial, in a way much more obvious than the novel, shows the encounters between Merrick and Kumar in such a way as to foreshadow the revelation of Merrick's homosexuality in the last of the fourteen episodes. In every scene in which we see Hari and Merrick, the latter is staring at the former intensely. When he sees Hari for the first time, the latter is half-naked, washing himself by the water pump at the Sanctuary (the scene in the novel is described by Sister Ludmila). When Hari is arrested after the rape he is interrogated naked, and whipped in Merrick's presence. This scene is not included in the first novel; it is retold by Hari when he is interviewed by Nigel Rowan in *The Day of the Scorpion* after a year of his imprisonment. During the scene of Merrick's interrogation of Kumar, the former talks about their relationship being based on fear ("Contempt on my side and fear on yours") and not to be forgotten. There is a shot with the two men facing each other; they are the same height and Merrick is staring at Hari's lips. His voice is stern, but his body language suggests physical attraction. There is another puzzling scene when Hari is tied to his bed and Merrick brings him water. Merrick says there is no love between two human beings, only power and fear. Hari is humiliated by being reduced to his animal need to drink and forced to say thank you to Merrick, who leans over the vulnerable Hari. These scenes are emotionally intense and present Merrick as a man who derives sadistic pleasure from exercising the power he has over Kumar. The relation between Hari and Merrick is presented in such a way as to give the viewers the impression that it is actually not Daphne that Merrick is jealous about and desires, but Hari. This idea is expressed by Dimitri Bronowsky in the last novel of the tetralogy. In the audio-visual version of the scenes, *it shows*. In the first novel, interpretation of Merrick's behaviour comes from Daphne, Sister Ludmila and Lady Chatterjee, and none of them suggests Merrick's possibly sexual interest in Hari. All of them view Merrick's hostility as resulting from his "grammar school boy" background and Hari's upper-class upbringing or from his being appalled by Daphne's mixing with an Indian. The serial *shows* much more of Merrick's "dark nature."

The information coming from Hari in the second novel is partially incorporated into the scene of the interrogation presented in the second episode of the serial. Hence, the viewers learn how perverse Merrick's behaviour can be much earlier in the serial than the readers do in the novels. In this way a mystery surrounding Merrick is lost. The viewers are much more certain about his villainous nature when he appears again in the serial, this time as an unexpected roommate of Teddie Bingham in the 18th minute of Episode 3. Actually, the way Merrick's presence and identity are revealed to the viewers and to Teddie creates a thriller-like suspense, intensified by the music.

The second and the third novels of the tetralogy create a more complex image of Merrick. Although the readers can ascertain his evil nature from Hari's account of the interrogation, the plot which develops in the present, shows Merrick first

as a colleague of Bingham helping him to arrange his wedding, and then as a war hero, who tries to save Bingham's life, and becomes seriously injured in action. In the serial, the information about Teddie's death comes at the end of Episode 5. In Episode 6 Sarah visits Merrick in Calcutta, realises how serious his injuries are and listens to his story, which is presented as a dramatization with Merrick's voice-over narration. Merrick recovers, but from Episode 8 he appears with an artificial arm that he is learning to use and a badly scarred face, the horrifying sight of which seems to be intended to match his nature, which has been clear from the beginning of the serial.

The Merrick of the last five episodes is, however, even more complex than he had been until Episode 10. On the one hand, he is a great manipulator, and loves to control people and their lives, and is hated by those who realise that they are pawns in his game, like Perron and the soldiers from Pankot Area HQ, or even Sarah, when she discovers he wants to marry her sister. The same Merrick, however, is nice towards Sayed Kasim, one of the most important former INA members and turns out to be a very good step-father to little Edward; his marriage with Susan is, from Susan's perspective, a happy one. Merrick, as Count Bronowsky puts it, has his qualities, which turn out to be useful in maintaining peace and quiet in Mirat. Merrick remains, however, haunted by the memory of Hari Kumar, and becomes finally a victim of his own suppressed homosexuality and the contempt he has for everybody else. Merrick can be perceived as a personification of the Raj, whose fate, as Boyer puts it, "[...] illustrates this final failure of imperialism. Merrick's struggle with his latent homosexuality becomes an allegory of British failure to accept Indians, even completely anglicised Indians, as equals" (1985:75).

Merrick is described by Daphne as: "fair-haired and youngish and has blue eyes and is really awfully good looking but there was and still is [...] a distinct reservation [...]" (*Jewel* 1976:99). This description does not exactly match Tim Pigott-Smith, who in 1984 was 38 years old, apparently with not such good looks. Good looking or not, Pigott-Smith plays an extremely convincing villain. As Brandt, referring to the actor's own words, notes:

Tim Pigott-Smith had years of stage and screen experience behind him; but his sharp portrayal of the sinister battle-scarred soldier-policeman [...] made him so highly bankable that he was immediately inundated with offers to play more one-armed sadists. (Brandt 1993:200)

This humorous comment illustrates one of the problems Pigott-Smith had following the serial's popularity – he was widely recognised in the street and encountered hostility from viewers who were unable to separate television fiction from reality. The fact that a large number of viewers identified Tim Pigott-Smith with Merrick resulted in a number of verbal attacks on the actor. As Naughton ironically puts it, Pigott-Smith's agent was "forced to hold photo-sessions of client plus wife and kids, and issue assurances to the effect that in real life he is a kind and thoughtful soul, very kind to animals, and with many Indians counted among his wide

circle of friends and acquaintances” (1984b:32). Although after over twenty-five years, Merrick seems to be an overdrawn character and there are moments when Pigott-Smith’s acting style seems slightly grotesque, back in the early 1980s it was perceived as less so, and Merrick appeared as a dreadfully convincing revengeful sadist. Pigott-Smith’s acting talent has been frequently praised by the critics, as the part he played also presented a severe physical challenge – from episode eight onward he acts with an artificial left arm and a scar covering half of his face, impairing his facial expression.

As it has been already stated earlier, the third episode of the serial introduces new characters who become central characters to the end of the production. One of them is Sarah Layton (Geraldine James), whose sensibility filters most of the events concerning the Laytons the two middle novels, i.e. *The Day of the Scorpion* and *The Towers of Silence*. She remains one of the main characters in *A Division of the Spoils*, present throughout the novel, but her role is supporting those played by Perron, Rowan and Colonel Layton. As Dyer (1997:199) notes, Sarah “is a character who listens more than she does.” It is true that not much happens to her, as she is prevented from making life-changing decisions by the necessity of taking care of her family members. Geraldine James has the seriousness, the integrity and the righteousness which characterise the novel’s Sarah. The function the character plays in the novels has been fully preserved – the television Sarah is the pillar against which her mother and sister lean during the absence of Colonel Layton: helpful, responsible, sober and sane. She also keeps an awkward distance towards Guy, which both in the novel and in the serial bothers and puzzles him. Sarah is more ambiguous in the serial, as in the novels large sections are devoted to her thoughts and feelings. Among those most significant for the Sarah of the novels is her feeling of remorse due to the abortion she had after one night spent with James Clark in Calcutta. That abortion is understated in the serial and the viewers never gain any further insight into Sarah’s personal drama.

When cast as Sarah, Geraldine James was little known, and originally was considered for the part of Daphne Manners. She appears in the largest numbers of scenes, but she is not necessarily the strongest member of the cast. The way she delivers her parts of the dialogues sounds artificial at times, and this is even more striking as she frequently appears opposite much better performers, such as Dame Peggy Ashcroft. She also seems a little too old for the part.⁹⁸

Sarah’s sister, Susan Layton (Wendy Morgan), is a character that becomes more interesting as her plot develops. In the novels a lot of information about Susan comes either directly from Sarah, or from the narrator. The younger of the Layton sisters comes across as a rather passive character, into whose thoughts we are able to gain

⁹⁸ In fact James was over 10 years older than her character and eight years older than the actress playing her two-year-younger sister. Judy Parfitt, playing Sarah’s mother, is only fifteen years older than James, which shows and is at times disrupting – certain inexperience, justified in the early twenties, is not so when shown by a woman in her early thirties.

only very limited insight. She is the more attractive of the two, and the one who always seems to get what she wants. However, as it turns out, that seemingly shallow and clearly beautiful girl suppresses frustration, which leads first to a failed marriage, then to attempted infanticide, and eventually severe depression and withdrawal. Wendy Morgan is excellently cast and she carries all the weight of Susan's emotional problems. Susan is involved in fewer conversations than Sarah, but she becomes a tragic character, as the plot develops and we are provided with a number of emotionally intense scenes with Susan as the central figure. The first such scene takes place during the reception at the club in Mirat, following the wedding ceremony. The Nawab, who comes to the reception, is initially refused admission, as the MPs are ordered not to let Indians in. The problem is eventually solved and the Nawab does come in, but Mildred, expected to apologise for the incident and to express gratitude for allowing the hastily arranged wedding to take place in his princely state, is too drunk and too conceited to act appropriately. Susan saves the day by showing respect to the Nawab, in the serial in a much more humble manner than the novel suggests. In the adaptation Susan is also much more enthusiastic about the wedding than in the novel, and the statement she eventually makes about not really loving Teddie comes as a much greater surprise in the serial than it does in the novel, where the lack of affection is overtly suggested by the narrator.

Susan stays in the serial to the end of the last episode, remaining a slightly detached figure, constantly in need of being taken care of, which is skilfully used by Merrick, who uses her vulnerability to make her marry him and to climb up the social ladder in this way. Her striking naiveté is displayed in the dinner scene, when Perron congratulates her on the engagement, and then again, in an excellent scene after Merrick's death, when she is bothered by the fact that her husband's artificial arm has not been found among his personal belongings. Susan is another tragic pawn in Merrick's game, which she does not realise, while to everybody else it seems tragically apparent.

Dame Peggy Ashcroft, the most acclaimed member of the cast, received the part of Barbie Bachelor, who emerges as a major character in the third of Scott's novels. In the serial she first appears in Episode 3, but Episodes 5, 7 and 9 are focused on her. Peggy Ashcroft was one of the few actors who were actually familiar with Scott's text prior to the commencement of shooting, and who volunteered for the part. She was also one of the two most acknowledged and recognised of the actors to be employed in the production, Eric Porter being the other. She was a star, and the performance she gave as Barbie was acclaimed by the audience as well as by the critics, who praised it for being: "unsparing, compassionate [...] with harsh, thickening modulations through chokings of shame and cloggings of bronchitis" (Robinson 1984:198), while a Medical Briefing in *The Times* praised "the authentic medical detain of Barbie's senility" (quoted in Robinson 1984:198).

Barbie is one of the most tragic characters in the Quartet, and the most dynamic, too, because she changes from a relatively well-off retired missionary

who serves as Mable Layton's companion, to a human wreck locked in an asylum, unable to speak, looking at the vultures flying over the Towers of Silence where the Parsees leave their dead. The novels contain a fair amount of information about Barbie's background, and a great deal of insight into her thoughts contained in the letters she writes. Most of the information could not be included in the television narrative, but the production does justice to the character by including all the major scenes and Ashcroft masterfully renders Barbie's devotion to Mable, her disillusionment with the role of the British in India and with the effects of her own work as a former missionary, and her despair in trying to deal with her sudden displacement after Mable's death. Barbie is involved in what I would consider the most memorable scenes in the serial: a visit to the club crowded with people to see the display of Susan's wedding presents, in which Barbie hopes to find the spoons she gave and she does not; a humiliating attempt to persuade Mildred Layton to bury Mable in Ranpur; and the final sequence including Barbie's dramatic ride in the rain in a rickshaw loaded with her trunk, followed by her subsequent decline into insanity. The aging missionary grasped the viewers' hearts and Ashcroft's performance was hailed at the time as one of the best ever to be seen on television.

Barbie interacts with two characters worth mentioning, i.e. Mable Layton (Fabia Drake) and Mildred Layton (Judy Parfitt). Mildred, Sarah and Susan's mother, is another villainous character, besides Merrick, who in the serial is more explicitly wicked than in the novel. Whatever has been suggested by Scott as Mildred's ill-will or disregard becomes, in Judy Parfitt's performance, more apparent, be it her patronising attitude towards Susan, or aggressive disdain towards Barbie. The novels stress Mildred's plunge into alcoholism, made far more apparent in the serial by the constant presence of a drink in her hand.

Mable, the old Mrs Layton who inhabits Rose Cottage, is Colonel Layton's stepmother. This character is one of those few whose general depiction in the serial deviates visibly from the literary counterpart. Scott's Mable is reserved, even cold; a characteristic which is frequently stressed. The adaptation includes most of the scenes and dialogues in which Mable is involved in the novel, but in the way Fabia Drake delivers the text, her smile and body language have nothing of the suggested coldness or detachment. She is warm and supportive towards those she clearly loves, i.e. Sarah and Barbie. She possesses the proper level of dignity suggested and expected of Mable when she goes to the Mess, and the shapeless casual look the novel's Mable has while working in her rose garden. Mable in both literary and film narratives represents the Old Raj with "its mission intact," as Moore puts it (1990:97).

A character, who is rather uncertain about that mission is Guy Perron (Charles Dance), a Cambridge-educated historian, eccentric enough to remain a sergeant, who appears in the last of the novels and in the final five episodes of the serial. He becomes, however, another of their memorable characters, together with Hari Kumar and Ronald Merrick. He is the person who manages to put together the

pieces of Hari Kumar's story to satisfy his, and the readers'/viewers' curiosity. Perron is also the only character in the novel with some comic undertones, amplified by Dance's performance. His ironic detachment makes even the villainous Merrick look more grotesque than scary. The serial places greater stress on a relatively feeble romantic attachment which develops between Perron and Sarah Layton, with him being more attracted to her than vice versa, and with a subtle love scene between the two.

Perron brings to Scott's novel some comic relief. He is supposed to be eccentric – the most ostentatious sign of it being his consistent rejection of promotion – and capable of delivering a certain slightly detached, ironic commentary. The most spectacular scene in which Perron's comic potential is used is the one in which he is left by Merrick in the company of Suleiman "The Red Shadow," Merrick's servant. "The Red Shadow" is not easy to get rid of, which was Perron's initial plan. When dismissed, he takes advantage of Guy being in the bath, and tries to steal some money from the clothes he finds in the room. Guy hears the thief, gets out of the bathtub and chases "The Red Shadow" out of the house, calling him names. The scene is comic both in the novel and in the serial, where Suleiman's behaviour seems overdrawn, but his grotesqueness is balanced by Dance's performance amplified by his physical condition (Dance is over 190cm tall).

Charles Dance, whom the media called during the serial's broadcast "the thinking woman's crumpet,"⁹⁹ is probably the best actor from the younger generation that gained popularity thanks to the serial. His artistic output seems to confirm that, as he has appeared in a wide variety of films since the mid-1980s, both British and American. He was originally auditioned for the part of Nigel Rowan, but fortunately for everybody he got the part of the most likeable character in the serial, which paid him off.

The last character I would like discuss here is Count Bronowsky played by another, besides Peggy Ashcroft, well-recognised actor, namely Eric Porter. Porter's Bronowsky borders on the grotesque, being a mysterious White Russian émigré who serves the Nawab of Mirat first as an advisor, later as his Chief Minister. In a white suit, lame, with a black eye-patch, speaking with a strong foreign accent, Bronowsky would have been utterly grotesque had he not been likable in his slightly ironic demeanour and insightful comments. Eric Porter's performance is excellent, stealing every scene in which he finds himself, be it with Ahmed Kasim, the Nawab, Merrick or Perron. One of the most fascinating scenes is that in which Bronowsky, during the wedding reception at the club in Mirat, in a conversation with Merrick, discloses the latter's connection with the Mayapore riots, and manipulates Merrick into a statement which reveals both his and Bronowsky's homosexuality. Bronowsky functions as a clever commentator, and just like the character in the novel, Eric

⁹⁹ The original phrase was "the thinking man's crumpet," which was used first with reference to TV presenter Joan Bakewell.

Porter's Bronowsky reveals his wit in numerous conversations, preserved in the serial in their original form. The Count also plays the role of an informer for Guy Perron when he arrives in Mirat in 1947: on the one hand, providing him with some insights about the political situation, and, on the other, giving him a detailed account of the circumstances of Merrick's death.

One of the undeniable advantages of Granada's *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) was the fact that Indian characters were played by Indian actors, which was not a general practice at that time – *vide* Attenborough's *Gandhi*. There are three Indian characters in Scott's novels who are of significance comparable to that of English characters. It is not exactly so in the serial. Hari Kumar, whose role has been discussed above, remains central. It is not so in the case of Ahmed Kasim and his father, Mohammed Ali Kasim "MAK." Ahmed (Derrick Branche) moves to the background, being overshadowed by the people he is in the company of, mainly Count Bronowsky, and somehow the potential chemistry between him and Sarah Layton cannot be felt. The part of MAK (Zia Mohyeddin) has been significantly reduced in the serial, but the viewers are aware of his being imprisoned by the British, and of his other son's joining the INA. Another Indian character who becomes memorable, though, is the Nawab, appearing in the two lengthy scenes in Episode 4, and then briefly again in Episode 14, with all the expected dignity and class.

There are two female Indian characters in the first two episodes, whose role is significant for the story. One of them is Lady Chatterjee (Zohra Segal), Daphne's hostess, whose presence in the novel is more conspicuous. Scott describes her as "overwesternised," but "getting the best of both worlds" (*Jewel* 1976:33). In the novel she becomes one of the narrators in Part 2; in the serial she remains important, as she holds the main function of the character, i.e. of Daphne's protector. The other female character is Hari's Aunt Shalini (Kamini Kaushal), a gentle and hospitable person, who turns into a tragic figure when Hari is imprisoned. Similarly to the character of Lady Chatterjee, Aunt Shalini's part is reduced in the adaptation, but her role in the plot remains the same.

The serial, much more strongly than the novels, indicates the omnipresence of Indian servants in the households of English characters, which resembles the way the two serials discussed earlier exposed the presence of servants in the 19th and early 20th century upper class households. Most of the scenes show the characters in domestic settings, usually talking, so servants are simply in the background, which in the serial sometimes becomes the foreground, as the camera frequently follows them, which has been already discussed here in the section devoted to the plot of the first novel.

The visuals

The serial uses a number of key images more frequently and conspicuously than any other adaptation discussed here, as that production creates its unity through the reoccurrence of symbolic images, which include: the allegorical picture titled

The Jewel in the Crown, the lace with a pattern resembling butterflies caught in a web, the statuette of Shiva dancing in the ring of fire, and fire itself. These images, present in the novel, become more conspicuous in their visual form in the serial.

The images of fire are present from the first episode to the final image, being the background of the closing credits. In the first episode it is directly connected with Edwina Crane, whose car is burned after she and her Indian colleague are assaulted, and who commits suicide by setting fire to the garden shed she locks herself in (the burning shed's image is the final image of Episode 3). When Hari gets drunk in his frustration, his new Indian friends burn his topee, which he calls "the symbol of his English shame." Ronald Merrick is scarred by the fire which starts in the jeep attacked by the Japanese (the burning jeep is the background of the closing credits of Episode 6). Susan, in the stupor she is in after the deaths of her husband and her step-grandmother, places her baby son in a ring of fire in an attempt to "set him free" (the ring of fire with the baby in it, as Susan sees it, closes Episode 8). Fire destroys Hari Kumar's files, as his case is closed: Perron reads them and is instructed by Nigel to destroy them (the image of the burning file ends Episode 12). Fires start in Mirat in the days preceding India's independence in the last episode of the serial, and in the foreground of the fire in one of the shots we can see the statuette of dancing Shiva, identical to the one we could see in the first two episodes at the Sanctuary. Sister Ludmila explains then to Daphne that Shiva is dancing in a circle of cosmic fire: "The circle of creation and destruction, of dark and light. And wholeness." As Brandt explains: "We are reminded that the god is implicated in the eternal round of creation, preservation and destruction in which all human affairs, not only Empires but everything else as well, are but transient matters of the moment" (1993:208). The fires of Mirat signify the end of the Raj, but the new beginning as well. Ironically, the production of the serial was at a certain moment interrupted by a fire which destroyed the Manchester studio where most of the interiors were shot, consuming all the decorations and props, including Merrick's artificial arm.

Another symbol used a number of times in the serial is the lace which Aunt Mable used for Sarah's christening gown, which becomes Susan's baby's christening gown as well. The spare part of the lace is given to Barbie, who uses it as a shawl. After Barbie's death the lace is returned to Sarah, and the image of the lace held in Sarah's hands ends Episode 11. The lace has little butterflies embroidered in such a way that they look as if they are caught in a web. That interpretation of the image the lace creates is provided by Barbie, once she gets the lace, and she passes that interpretation on to the Layton girls, "infecting" Susan's imagination. The lace, on the one hand, represents heritage, which becomes displaced; on the other hand, a number of the characters in the serial, like Barbie, Susan, or Hari could be identified with the symbolically entrapped butterflies.

Another image that plays a symbolic function in the serial is the picture titled *The Jewel in the Crown* representing Queen Victoria during a fictitious visit to India, surrounded by Indians paying homage to her. There are two copies of the picture in

the serial – one belongs to Edwina Crane, the other to Barbie – as the picture was used by the missionaries as a piece of imperial propaganda. The picture is seen for the first time during the assault on Miss Crane, when it falls out of her luggage and is lying in the rain. She later shows the picture to Daphne, explains the allegory and makes a comment about “the promise not fulfilled.” The picture appears again in Episode 3, thoroughly explained by Barbie, at first with the enthusiasm of the former missionary remembering the way she used it when working with children, then at the end of the same episode, after Edwina’s death, commented upon with bitterness. Barbie presents the picture to Merrick, accidentally encountered at the moment she comes to collect her belongings at the end of Episode 9. She refers to the scene in the picture as “unfulfilled hope.” The picture is eventually presented to Susan’s son, once he becomes Merrick’s stepson, and it is seen again in the boy’s bedroom. He shows it to Perron, once more explaining what it represents. The final image of the picture makes up the background of the final credits, but this time the picture is consumed by fire, symbolically marking the end of the Raj with all its promises, fulfilled or not.

The serial was shot on film and on location. The Indian locations in Scott’s *The Raj Quartet* are fictitious. In the first novel, most of the events included in the main plot take place in the city of Mayapore. In the serial, the scenes taking place in the city are shot in two locations: Udaipur and Mysore. As has been previously indicated, the interiors were created in the Granada studio, Botany, in Manchester. India is not a picture postcard in the whole series, and neither was Scott’s vision of India intended to be so. In the novel, we find descriptions of the streets of the poor part of Mayapore, which Hari abhorred. In the serial, such images are reduced to a few scenes only (Daphne’s trip to Aunt Shalini’s flat, her cycling through the city, Sister Ludmila’s collecting the sick and the dead in the streets). Even the visit to the temple, which Daphne makes Hari organise, presented from Daphne’s perspective, seems to be more an anxiety-evoking incident than an inspiring experience. Scott de-romanticizes India on the verge of political change, and the way the setting is presented in the television serial seems consistent with the novelist’s intentions. Simon Hoggart, a television critic writing in 1984 for *New Society* commented upon the locations in the serial as follows:

There was a handful of beautiful landscapes, but almost none of the usual screen clichés: few teeming bazaars, horsemen thundering across empty plain, temples in the moonlight. Instead, the action takes place in dingy offices, cells, claustrophobic sitting rooms. It is about a society turned in on itself, fearful as its old certainties give way to doubts. (quoted in Moore 1990:213)

Nevertheless, there are moments in the serial when the televisual narrative takes advantage of beautiful locations and stylishly designed interiors. In the later episodes we can admire two such locations, i.e. the hill station in Pankot, shot in Simla, and the princely state of Mirat with its absolutely breath-taking Lake Palace, filmed in Udaipur. As Scott’s locations are fictitious, one admirable fact is that the producers managed to find locations so close in appearance to those

described in the novels. Episode 3 begins in Kashmir, another place of outstanding beauty. However, it is Episode 4 that would probably win a competition for the most visually stunning. What contributes to this is certainly the Lake Palace, which we can see a couple of times from the shore as well as from the inside, as one of the chambers constitutes the background for the conversation between Count Bronowsky and the Nawab, with fantastic windows, richly decorated walls and stylish furniture (as Morahan admits in the commentary, that *had to* be filmed in India, not in the Manchester studio). The same location is used in Episodes 13 and 14, when we return to Mirat, this time together with Guy Perron. Another charming location in the serial is that of Rose Cottage, with the mountain view and the patio on which a number of scenes take place. Pankot is praised by Scott on several occasions and the photography of Simla does justice to the text, if not surpasses it.

Despite some visually attractive locations and scenes, the serial, just like Scott's novels, does not focus on the visual, but on the drama taking place in the characters' lives in the dynamically changing political circumstances. The interiors are convincingly propped, reflecting the social status of the inhabitants/users, be it the Governor's hill palace guest house, Nawab's palace, Hari Kumar's Mayapore flat, or the mission hospital. Among other interesting interiors are those of trains: in two cases we have special coaches – in Episode 8 it is a private coach owned by the Nawab and in Episode 11 it is the Governor House coach. In the former we have a chance to see the luxurious, richly furnished living-room space, when Count Bronowsky invites Sarah for a drink; in the latter Rowan, Perron, Merrick and Gopal (Rowan's formal companion on that mission) travel to Pankot, and a long conversation between the first two takes place in one of the single berthers Guy is accommodated in, with excellent camera work reflecting the limited space of the compartment.

The costumes in the serial attracted less attention than they typically would in a classic serial set in the more remote past. Still, as the actors stress, from their perspective, the production *was* a type of costume drama. Besides the omnipresent uniforms we have dresses and hats reflecting the fashion of the 1940s, and Indian costumes supposedly reflecting the social status of the characters.

The overall image of India which emerges from the serial (and which, I would insist, is consistent with the image Scott presents) is more frightening than encouraging. Geraldine James, commenting on some of the episodes in the special features of the DVD edition, wonders at one moment to what extent the image of India in the serial can be perceived by the viewers as attractive. Undoubtedly, some ravishingly beautiful places are shown, but the serious mood of the serial, and the way in which it ends, make a strong impression; though far from a favourable one. For the British the serial was a journey into the inglorious times when the Empire was falling. For foreigners, who watched the serial all over the world, it presented both a certain image of the British in India, and of India itself. Scott, and the serial

after him, provide an interpretation of the situation at the beginning of India's independence, comparing it to Pandora's box. Dyer provides a bitter interpretation of that comparison: "India is a country of endemic, atavistic violence no more than kept at bay under the Raj; the failure of the Raj is the failure to change this, to civilise Indians out of their lethal tribal and fundamentalist loyalties" (1997:196).

Denis Forman ends his Introduction to *The Making of The Jewel in the Crown* hoping that the serial would "do justice so far as television can to Paul Scott's *Raj Quartet*" (1984:9). I believe it does, although there are some inevitable "losses," as pointed out by critics like Moore (1990:211), who complains about the loss of: "the texture of testimony, its intimation of character, the doubts about the truth and reality of observations," as well as major reductions being made in the subplots related to the political and military issues:

[...] in the serial the Indian Army is largely silent, its main spokesman, Brigadier Reid, reduced to a walk-on. As an agent of continuity, Merrick assumes a more central role in the serial and his methods assume greater emphasis. Robin White's voice, that of the liberal member of the ICS, is muted, though Mabel Layton and Lady Manners do express his viewpoint. Perhaps the most serious loss is the reduction of Kasim's role, as symbolic of nationality aspirations for united India. (Moore 1990:211)

The serial gained and maintained a faithful audience to its very end, despite the fact that the characters who seemed to be central to the story, i.e. those involved in "the Manners case," faded into the background, with the obvious exception of Merrick. However, it seems that the first three episodes not only exerted sufficient influence on the audience to make them watch the whole series, but also Hari and Daphne's story seems to be better remembered than other characters' appearing in the serial. A simple example can be provided with reference to a review published on screenonline.org.uk, authored by Naman Ramachandran, who summarizes the whole serial as follows:

Critics and commentators heralded the programme as evidence of the rebirth of quality drama on British television. [...] The production's success owes much to its careful rendering of the three main characters. Ronald Merrick as played by *Tim Pigott-Smith*, [...] Hari Kumar (*Art Malik*) and the naïve and curious Daphne (*Susan Wooldridge*).¹⁰⁰

We could conclude that either the reviewer was ignorant enough not to have watched the whole serial before reviewing it; hence he does not refer to any other "main characters," or, as I would argue, the emotional intensity of the first three episodes and the tragic love story contributed to Ramachandran ignoring the remaining part of the plot together with other interesting performances, including that of the renowned Peggy Ashcroft playing Barbie Batchelor.

The production proved to be more popular than Scott's novels had ever been, bringing Granada more revenue than expected. As Peter McLuskie in his review

¹⁰⁰ The italics come from the original text.

of the whole serial for the Museum of Broadcast Communication webpage rightly notes, although the television adaptation was a more conventional version of the story and Scott's narrative did become "flattened out," the production managed: "to hold on to some of the formal complexity of the novels" (McLuskie). It is striking, while examining the serial from the perspective of the history of the genre, how serious the subjects it touches upon are. If in *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) it was the marital rape that moved the audience, here, in 1984, we have multiple rape, attempted infanticide, tortures, murder, and a massacre, and first of all the painful history of the decline of the British Raj and the resulting partition of India. There were critics who saw the serial as another soap opera in exotic (rather than period, in this case) decorations, but the gravity of the historical circumstances makes such a statement virtually impossible to defend. History is a character in this production, more than any other discussed here and makes this production unique.

Middlemarch (1994)

George Eliot (1819-1880) and her novel

Mary Ann Evans began her literary career under the penname George Eliot in 1857, publishing “The Sad Fortunes of the Rev. Amos Barton” in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*. In 1859 she published her first novel, *Adam Bede*, and her next two novels followed during the ensuing two years, namely *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and *Silas Marner* (1861), establishing her reputation as that of a leading novelist. Her next work, *Romola*, was launched in instalments in 1862 in *Cornhill Magazine* and published in a single volume a year later. Similarly, *Middlemarch*, which appeared as Eliot’s sixth novel, was first published in instalments (five bi-monthly and three monthly – see Armitt 2000) between December 1871 and December 1872, to appear eventually in a single volume in 1874. As Armitt notes, such serialisation resulted mainly from economic reasons: “Eliot wished to reach as broad an audience as possible, and serialisation was the best way to do it” (2000:10). The reviewers contemporary to Eliot stressed that publication in parts contributed greatly to better apprehension of the text (see Armitt 2000). The same form of publication was used again for *Daniel Deronda* (1874-76), her last novel.

Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life, called by Virginia Woolf “the magnificent book [being] one of the few English novels written for grown-up people,”¹⁰¹ is rated high among Eliot’s novels. Jan Jędrzejewski (2007) while discussing it in the broader context of the development of nineteenth-century fiction, states that it:

[...] combines the subtlety of psychological insight and the acuteness of the observation of the mores of modern society that characterise the works of Jane Austen with the understanding of the processes of history that underlies the novels of Sir Walter Scott, and it brings together the scope and power of vision typical of the works of Dickens, the domestic realism of Elizabeth Gaskell, the easy, relaxed storytelling manner of Anthony Trollope and the symbolic intensity of the novels of the Brontës. (2007:68)

The critical response, both contemporary with Eliot, and recent – as academic interest in that particular novel has not ceased – concerns both the structural and

¹⁰¹ The quotation belongs to the most famous, and most frequently quoted, appraisals of the novel, and comes from Woolf’s article on George Eliot written for *Times Literary Supplement*, November 20, 1919, pp. 657-58 (see *George Eliot, Bloom’s Classic Critical Views*, 2009).

narrative complexity of the text, the interplay of the characters, and the realism with which the manners and customs are represented. Eliot is also praised for the psychological credibility of the characters and the disillusionments they experience. As Henry James puts it in his early review:

The author has desired to be strictly real and to adhere to the facts of the common lot, and she has given us a powerful version of that typical human drama, the struggles of an ambitious soul with sordid disappointments and vulgar embarrassments. (1873/2000:581)

Eliot has also been rated highly by the critics for the way she presents the political history constituting the novel's historical background, and handles the subject of social and scientific reforms.

Mary Ann Evans died in December 1880 as Mary Ann Cross, having married John Walter Cross half a year earlier. As Harold Bloom states in the biographical note included in *George Eliot, Bloom's Classic Critical Views*:

At the time of her death, George Eliot was widely regarded as the greatest contemporary English novelist; soon after, however, her reputation began to decline only to be revived by subsequent generations of critics and readers once again attuned to her prodigious talent. (2009:2)

From today's perspective George Eliot's reputation as one of the leading Victorian novelists is unquestionable. Her popularity with the readers in the second half of the 20th century increased greatly due to television adaptations of her works. Besides *Middlemarch* (adapted in 1968 and 1994), the BBC produced *Adam Bede* in 1991, *The Mill on the Floss* in 1978 and 1997, *Silas Marner* in 1985 and *Daniel Deronda* in 1970 and 2002.

Armitt (2000) argues that the original serialised publication of *Middlemarch* led to focusing on suspense and plot, and postponed deeper reflection over the issues touched upon by Eliot into further reading of the novel in one volume. In other words, the initial publication functioned the way a television serial or a soap opera does nowadays – caught the readers' interest, engaged them emotionally to read on and wait for further developments of the plot. Publishing in instalments prior to a single-volume publication made *Middlemarch* “both popular and ‘serious’” (Armitt 2000:16). One of the reviewers of the period quoted by Armitt claims that the readers admitted finding pleasure in “gossiping about the characters during the intervals between parts as compensation for this mode of publication” (quoted in Armitt 2000:16). It seems, then, that the television serial into which the novel was adapted by the BBC was for the “Study of Provincial Life” the form more natural than in the case of other texts discussed here earlier.

Adaptations

The 1994 adaptation of *Middlemarch* was the second in the BBC's history – the first was made in 1968 in seven 45-minute episodes, adapted by Michael Voysey, who stood behind a number of the early 1970s classic-novel adaptations, including Gaskell's *Wives and Daughters* (1971) and *Cranford* (1972). The 1994

serial consisting of six episodes, each about an hour-long, had the budget of 6 million. The original broadcast took place between January 12 and February 16, 1994. It was the BBC's successful attempt to produce a classic serial in a way which would make it comparable with the two 1980s Granada's productions we have discussed earlier. As Nelson (2000:275) points out:

The production by the BBC at a time when its charter was under review, and when the justifiability of its very independent existence as an institution had been called in question by government ministers, might appear to bear the traces – if only of guilt by association – of serving to (re)construct and popularize a national heritage tradition allegedly inscribed in literary and dramatic high culture.

Apparently, by “upgrading” the style of the classic serial generally identified with “quality television” the BBC tried to defend its position as the broadcaster fulfilling its original educational mission and meeting the highest production standards. However, as in the case of *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) and also of *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984), a number of reviewers referred to the similarities between the serialised *Middlemarch* and soap operas like *Neighbours*, *EastEnders* and *Dallas*, which in Bernard O’Keefe’s¹⁰² opinion only proved that Eliot’s novel rendered into a television serial in the eyes of the media became “a debased form of soap opera” (see Armitt 2000:15). It seems that any classic serial in which the main plot or subplots focus on domestic issues, on family drama or complicated love affairs has to face an accusation of being soap-opera like.¹⁰³

The 1994 serial was directed by Anthony Page, while the screenplay was written by Andrew Davies, being his first major classic serial adaptation, to be – as we know – followed by many more. In an interview included in “The Making of *Middlemarch*”¹⁰⁴ he expresses the following opinions concerning the problems arising in the process of adapting a well-known text:

What happens to the script after the actors get hold of it? It’s very difficult when you got a classic novel like *Middlemarch*, because they all got their own copies, and all the actors come along and they say: “Oh, there is a small wonderful bit here, why don’t I get to say it, because my character says it in the book?” So there is a certain amount of that, that you have to resist, because you are trying to distil the essence of the book into its essentials. You can’t have all the good lines that are in the book.

The cast of the serial was well selected, but did not include any established stars, although a number of actors were already quite accomplished. Out of the young actors Rufus Sewall’s career seems to have been most advanced by this particular production. The serial’s reception was enthusiastic, and revived the audience’s interest in the classic serial, which stimulated the BBC for further investments in

¹⁰² O’Keefe’s opinion referred to here was expressed in his article titled “The Soaping of *Middlemarch*” published in *The English Review*, vol. 5, 1994, p.8.

¹⁰³ Amusingly, over time the soap-opera quality of a classic serial became an asset and started to be used in the marketing strategies of some of the serials – e.g. *Bleak House* (2005) – see Chapter Seven.

¹⁰⁴ The material is included in the 2012 DVD edition of the serial.

the genre, leading to subsequent adaptations of Jane Austen's *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

The general critical reception of the serial has been positive. As MacKillop and Platt (2000:90) put it:

By taking so impressively serious a work as *Middlemarch* and *making its difficulties apparent*¹⁰⁵ (at least in part) the BBC has set a new industry standard, making the format available again and restoring the possibility that television may interpret texts more dense, and more complex than *Poldark*¹⁰⁶ and its kind.

Also Nelson notes, among the issues that *Middlemarch* raised in 1994 was that of “the capacity of ‘serious’ television drama to succeed aesthetically or commercially in the (post)modern production context” (2000:267). In Poland the serial attracted very little attention, being shown in the late 1990s in the morning hours on week days, which suggests that Polish television had already assumed the classic serial's place being among the very niche programs not attractive for prime-time audience. However, the Polish DVD edition of the serial was released in 2008, being part of the BBC series issued by Best Film Co. under the title “Najsłynniejsze Ekranizacje Kostiumowe”¹⁰⁷ (“The Most Famous Television Costume Drama Adaptations”).

It seems that there have been some serious plans to make a feature film adaptation of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. In April 2007 Sam Mendes was announced to direct a feature film, adapted by Andrew Davies (again). It seems that the project was suspended, if not completely abandoned, although James Hall wrote in February 2012 in *The Telegraph* that Heidi Thomas had submitted her own adaptation of the novel and the production, still to be directed by Mendes, should start in 2013. It remains unknown at the moment whether it has actually started, or if it ever will.

Middlemarch (1994)¹⁰⁸

The plot and the narrative structure of the serial

The novel is set in the years preceding the First Reform Bill of 1832 (most likely between September 1829 and May 1832, as the critics analysing the historical context suggest, see e.g. Beaty 2000:593) and focuses on the life stories

¹⁰⁵ The italics are used in the original.

¹⁰⁶ *Poldark* is a romantic 29-episode saga based on Winston Graham's novels set in late 18th-century Cornwall. It was broadcast in 1975 and 1976, becoming very popular, both in Britain and abroad. Interestingly enough, a recent 6-part remake is planned by BBC1 (see Methven 2013).

¹⁰⁷ The series included also *Vanity Fair* (1998), *Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1996), *Mayor of Casterbridge* (1978) and *Lorna Doone* (1996).

¹⁰⁸ Considerable sections of the analysis which follows appeared in print in an earlier version in my 2014 article “George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1994) as an example of the British classic television serial of the 1990s” [in:] Malinowska, M., Rokosz-Piejko E.(eds.) *Podkarpackie Forum Filologiczne*, Seria: Literatura i Kultura, Jarosław, Wydawnictwo PWSTE, pp. 93-104.

of a number of characters living in the town whose name gives the novel its title, and in the neighbouring estates, i.e. Tipton, Lowick and Freshitt. The novel covers four main story lines. The first one involves a nineteen-year-old idealist, Dorothea Brooke, who marries Edward Casaubon, a scholar more than twice her age. That marriage turns out to be a failure, despite Dorothea's devotion, and ends with Casaubon's death within not more than two years. Dorothea and Casaubon's story directly involves one more character, Will Ladislaw, Casaubon's second cousin, young, disinherited and attracted to Dorothea strongly enough do detest her marriage from its very beginning. The second story line is that about Tertius Lydgate, a young and ambitious doctor, who comes to Middlemarch with the plan to build a specialised, model fever hospital to treat the poor there. However, his plans fall by the wayside and ambitions fade, as he becomes attracted to, and marries, a local beauty, Rosamund Vincy, a highly selfish and materialistic young woman. The third story line involves Rosamund's brother Fred, and his gradual reform from a wasteful young man constantly in debt, to a responsible farmer and surveyor (despite his Oxford education and his father's plans to make him a clergyman), which allows him to finally win the heart of Mary Garth, his childhood sweetheart. The fourth story line focuses on Nickolas Bulstrode, an affluent and very influential banker, who, as the story unfolds, is forced to withdraw into oblivion by the truth about his past misdeeds revealed by John Raffles, a man who comes to Middlemarch to blackmail Bulstrode. The four plots are intertwined and interconnected by the social and political events which take place in Middlemarch and its vicinity, as major changes and reforms are inevitably approaching.

Middlemarch is a relatively long novel (the number of pages, depending on an edition, varies between 700 and 800) and is told by an omniscient narrator, providing not only an insight into the characters' thoughts and feelings, but also passing judgements and opinions. Most of the narrator's commentary has been omitted in the adaptation, although some of the emotional states of the characters are reflected in their behaviour on screen, or remain in the form of voice-over flashbacks, used in a few scenes to be discussed below. As we have already mentioned, the serial consists of six episodes, the first of which, introducing the characters, is longer by half than the remaining five (the total length of the serial is 375 minutes, as stated in the DVD edition).

The structure of the novel and the way in which the serial creates its plot have been presented in detail in Appendix 6. Figure 2 below shows a simplified version of the structure, listing numbered elements of the novel's plot and the order in which they appear in the serial's plot. The sections in bold type are those whose order is identical with that in the novel. The letter "N" stands for the scenes which are not as such present in Eliot's text. The table illustrates the extent to which the main elements of the novel's plot have been reshuffled in the adaptation.

Figure 2. Elements of the novel's plot as presented in the serial's structure:

Episode 1	6, 1, 11, 2, N, 16, 8, 9, 10 , 3, 10, 7, 4, 5, N, 13, 18, 17,
Episode 2	19, 20&22, N, 21, 23, 24 , 26, 25, 27, 25, 28, 29
Episode 3	30, 31, 32, 33, 34 , N, 35, N, 36, 38, 39, 40 , 42
Episode 4	41, 43, 44 , 53, 45, 53, 49, 48, 52, 53
Episode 5	54, 46, 54, 50, 55, 57, 58 , 51, 59, 52, 60
Episode 6	61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68,70&71 , N, 72

Although the serial includes almost all events of the four interconnected stories, the plot is structured differently and a significant rearrangement of its elements has been introduced, resulting in a faster pace and greater dynamics of the narrative. The novel focuses on Dorothea's story for its first nine and a half chapters and only then introduces Tertius Lydgate, Bulstrode and the Vincys, while the serial presents Lydgate and Dorothea at its very beginning, cross-cutting the scenes involving their lives, and in the very first episode Bulstrode and Fred Vincy mark their presence as well. The novel devotes most of its space to Dorothea, including her thoughts and emotional states, while Lydgate's problems constitute the second major story. The other two subplots, i.e. of Nickolas Bulstrode and Fred Vincy cover much shorter sections of the novel. However, the serial makes the latter two subplots more significant, as they take up a larger percentage of the overall time than they do in the book – most of Dorothea's and Lydgate's thoughts, taking considerable space in the novel, are not disclosed to the viewers.

If we refer to Wysłouch's terminology mentioned earlier, the basic rhetorical operation carried out on the plot of the novel is permutation, or inversion if we apply Hendrykowski's term. There is also some condensation of events; e.g. the two visits which Ladislaw pays to the Casaubons in Rome are reduced to one, but that single event contains most of the elements present in the two recounted in the novel. There are – as the table above suggests – a few scenes which do not appear in the novel in the form we can find them in the serial. These are not, in most cases, new elements added to the plot, but rather illustrations of what is either part of the backstory (e.g. Fred's playing billiards) or of what is mentioned by the narrator (e.g. Lydgate's wedding or the Lydgates' visit to Quellingham). There are two scenes, which are new, although they logically fit into the story. One is Dorothea and Casaubon's engagement party, not found in the novel, but useful in Episode One as an introduction to the connections between individual characters invited by Arthur Brooke, and foreshadowing the host's political connections and his forthcoming political campaign. The other new scene shows the opening of the new fever hospital, which serves the same purposes, as it again presents the web of interrelations in the Middlemarch power game and signals Brooke's lack of political experience. All these operations do not distort the chronological development of the novel's plot, which in the serial remains the same.

The adaptation skips the “Prelude” included in Eliot’s novel, the omission of which MacKillop and Platt (2000:76) call “serious” as that short introductory passage:

[...] guides our subsequent reading, setting the grave, solemn tone which ensures that we do not feel somehow cheated by the final fate of the leading characters. The sense of wastage at the end of the novel does not take the reader by surprise.

The “Prelude” sets the connection between Saint Theresa and the novel’s characters, Dorothea in particular, those “later-born” Theresas who “found for themselves no epic life wherein there was a constant unfolding of far-resonant action; perhaps only the life of mistakes” (Eliot 2000:3). After such an introduction the reader, unlike the serial’s audience, expects the failures the main characters will have to face.

The opening scene of the serial shows Lydgate’s arrival in Middlemarch, which Nelson (2000) compares with the iconography of a Western, as Lydgate appears: “[...] as the pioneering individual, the outsider riding into town to make his mark” (2000:271). Lydgate’s becoming acquainted with Middlemarch is cross-cut with the scene introducing Dorothea horse-riding with her sister. The scene ends with Dorothea announcing her refraining from further riding, as despite deriving apparent joy from it, she finds it a futile occupation. The serial then proceeds to show Lydgate meeting the people he will be working for and expressing his plans for the fever hospital. The scene in which he is looking at the hospital plans while talking to Mr Bulstrode is cross-cut with that in which Dorothea is working on her plans for the cottages she would like to have built for her uncle’s tenants. Lydgate and Dorothea, two idealists leaning over their plans, introduce us into the serial in which failed hopes for making the world a better place will be one of the main themes. Such cross-cutting of the stories of those two might also suggest – to an audience possibly unfamiliar with Eliot’s novel, but familiar with the conventions of film love plots – that the two are meant for each other, as both are ambitious, with clear aptitude for altruism and dreams to do something meaningful. A knowing audience, familiar with the novel’s characters’ further fates, will not be misled by such an introduction, though. It has to be stressed, however, that the suggestion that the two characters could have formed a happy, well-matched couple, does come from Eliot.

As Nelson (2000) rightly notes, Lydgate’s story is more absorbing than Dorothea’s in the serial, while in the novel it is the opposite. He attributes that to the fact that television drama is rather action-driven; hence Dorothea’s contemplations, taking much of the novel’s space, are reduced to what she formulates in a number of dialogues. Her capacity for action is limited due to the gender role ascribed to her as a woman in the 19th century, while Lydgate is mobile and active, as an ambitious man could have been back then, and still can be nowadays.

Individual untitled episodes are structured in such a way as to constitute certain unities encapsulating parts of the story and to raise the audience’s interest at their ends. The first episode introduces all the principal characters, includes

Dorothea and Casaubon's wedding and their leaving for the honeymoon. The episode ends with both Dorothea and Lydgate suffer their first disappointments. Dorothea is pictured in the museum hall alone, slowly moving out, deserted, with her facial expression suggesting that she realises how low on the priority list of her husband she is, and how little chance for establishing emotional and intellectual links between the spouses there is, while Lydgate – initially planning to act as his conscience dictates him – is manipulated by the town's petty political games into voting the way Bulstrode wants him to. The final image is of Lydgate sitting at the voting table, realising that his ideals have just been crashed against the wall whose existence he was warned about. In other words, the opening episode not only introduces the main characters, but involves them in a number of incidents engaging for the audience, to signal at its end the defeats awaiting both Dorothea and Lydgate.

All the remaining episodes end with the failure of one or both of the principal characters. The final scene of Episode 2 belongs to Lydgate, and is that of his unplanned proposal to Rosy Vincy, which in a number of earlier conversations he firmly stated he was not considering, as his ambitions concerned his medical work and research. Unlike in the case of most romantic stories, the proposal the viewers witness on the screen is unlikely to lead to a happy life together of the two seemingly in love, as they come from and will remain in, different worlds, which the viewers are already aware of. Although the dramatic end of Episode 3 shows Dorothea finding her husband's dead body in the garden, the pattern of the previous episodes is maintained, because Lydgate is seen in the earlier scene, with Rosamund expressing her dislike of her husband's profession. Episode 4 finishes with Lydgate again, not only realising how serious his financial problems are, but also losing his unborn child, due to Rosy's miscarriage after a riding incident. The closing scene shows Lydgate on the sofa, looking sorrowful. His situation is hopeless also because once more his wife acted against his advice, taking the riding exercise, and the lack of understanding and communication in his marriage become increasingly apparent to him. In Episode 5 the final statement is that of Rosamund: "What a mess you've made! I hate your stupid experiments!" when she leaves the devastated Lydgate alone in the room. Dorothea's plot ends earlier in that episode with Ladislav saying – as it seems the final – good-bye to her, leaving her devastated and helpless, misunderstood by Will.

The relationship between Ladislav and Dorothea develops in the serial the way it does in the novel, but because there is some reduction of the scenes involving the two, it is rather Dorothea seen by Ladislav than Ladislav seen by Dorothea that we see in the serial. In rendering Will's interest in Dorothea the serial uses conventions its viewers are already familiar with. As Caughie (2012:65) puts it: "Reading the romance through signs and gestures which are unacknowledged or misunderstood by the fictional characters is one of the skills we have honed from our viewing of everyday popular television," and adds that as viewers we

possess: “[...] familiarity with the convention of meaningful but silent looks which we have learned from popular fiction on film and television.” As MacKillop and Platt (2000:84) note, Ladislav “*lurks*, shaman-like, watching, waiting, knowing and frowning.” That impression arises from the fact that we see Ladislav meet Dorothea for the first time at Lowick, then we witness him spotting Dorothea in the gallery, being enchanted by her beauty, and the next time we see him he is already in a way plotting to see Dorothea alone – he is waiting outside their house for Casaubon to leave, and then enters, as if he was unaware of his cousin’s absence. Ladislav’s actions are condensed in the serial, as in the novel he plans to see Dorothea alone only when he visits the Casaubons for the second time – his interest in Dorothea has some time to grow; in the serial it is more sudden.

The scene of the final reconciliation between Dorothea and Will is one of the few examples in which the adaptors altered considerably Eliot’s idea. Instead of a longer, dramatic scene, with a thunderstorm in the background, in which both characters express their feelings towards each other, and Dorothea finally renounces her fortune to be with the man she loves, in the serial we watch a short, silent scene, in which Ladislav approaches Dorothea working in the garden (cutting dead heads of daisies), and they kiss, as any star-crossed lovers would, keeping to the conventions of a film or television love story. Actually, the way in which Will Ladislav is rendered by Sewall makes the character much more masculine and more openly Dorothea’s admirer, making the story of their love much more attractive for the television audience, relieved eventually at what can be perceived as a happy ending for the two.

The final scene of the serial provides space for the explanation and clarification of Dorothea’s plans, as she is shown walking with her sister, Celia. That scene – in terms of its informative load – is a combination of the information provided in the novel in the Dorothea-Ladislav scene, and the scene which follows, in which her relatives express their outrage at the decision she has made. The episode – and the serial – closes with Judi Dench’s voice-over narration rounding up the rest of the protagonists’ lives. The text is an abridged version of George Eliot’s “Finale” to the novel, reduced to the facts closing the plots of the Lydgates, Dorothea and Ladislav, and Fred and Mary. The condensation makes Lydgate’s lot even more ironic: “He built up a successful practice, alternating between London and a Continental bathing-place. He always regarded himself as a failure.” Eliot in the novel goes on, to explain: “[...] he had not done what he once meant to do” and elaborates more on his financial situation which finally satisfied his wife, whom he “opposed less and less” (Eliot 2000:685). Having described the comfortable material status the Lydgate family achieved, Eliot concludes: “In brief, Lydgate was what is called a successful man” (Eliot 2000:686). The serial’s commentary, despite being more economical, conveys the message to the viewers, who, having seen Lydgate lose his much treasured independence and give up both his scientific and charity-work plans, understand perfectly well why “developing a successful practice” would not make Lydgate a successful man in his own eyes.

In the interview included in the aforementioned “The Making of *Middlemarch*” Andrew Davies calls the process of adaptation of Eliot’s text: “distilling the essence of the book into its essentials.” The classic-novel adaptations, as has been stressed a number of times here, are renowned for their faithfulness to the source text. Hence, there are few elements of the novel’s plot which do not appear in the serial. The only major detraction takes place in the subplot about John Raffles and his connections with other characters, namely Joshua Rigg, whose stepfather he is in the novel, and Will Ladislaw, with whom he meets to provide the young man with insightful information about his Jewish maternal grandparents’ misconduct and Bulstrode’s depriving Will’s mother of her inheritance. The fact that Will’s mother was Bulstrode’s unknown stepdaughter is omitted in the serial; hence there is no connection between Bulstrode and Ladislaw, and the scenes involving the two do not appear. That does not really change much in the viewers’ reception of Bulstrode, but deprives Ladislaw of one more “foreign” element in his genealogy and does not show his proud rejection of the money which was earned in an indecent way.

The characters

George Eliot, similarly to other nineteenth-century novelists, populated her novel with a wide range of varied characters, most of whom can be found in the serial as well. Very few of the minor ones (e.g. Farebrother’s mother or Mr Cadwallader) have been reduced without causing any major alterations to the plot. The analysis below has been limited, as in the case of other serials discussed here, to those characters whose televisual depiction illustrates some of the points in my discussion of the way classic serial adaptations deal with the source texts.

Dorothea née Brooke, primo voto Casaubon, secundo voto Ladislaw (Juliet Aubrey) remains central in the serial and, as has been already stated earlier, her story is – unlike that in the novel – from the very beginning cross-cut with the story of doctor Lydgate. Just as it is in the novel, Dorothea’s plot is involving and dramatic up to the moment of Casaubon’s death, after which it loses its momentum. Dorothea is an idealist, a young woman dreaming of doing something that could make the world a better place, and while being beautiful, she is far from focused on her attractiveness.

Dorothea is an idealist whose hopes to make the world a better place fade. Her plans for new cottages for the tenants are only partially carried out by Sir James, and her plans to build a commune in Lowick are entirely unrealistic, while her hopes to help Casaubon create a work of grand scientific significance are entirely shuttered. In Eliot’s novel the readers have access to Dorothea’s thoughts and feelings through the third-person narration. As that insight is lost in the serial, the actress’ facial expression has to reveal Dorothea’s feelings, and in most cases it does, as Aubrey’s performance has the intensity and gentleness required for Dorothea.

The soothing effect of the happy ending which crowns the Dorothea-Ladislaw love story is to some extent diminished by the serial’s final voice-over commentary.

The audience is not provided with any information about the successful family life of the couple, present in Eliot's "Finale;" the information about Dorothea is limited to the following information:

She had no dreams of being praised above other women, feeling that there was always something better which she might have done, if she had only been better, and known better. Her full nature spent itself in deeds which left no great name on the earth. But the effect of her being on those around her was incalculable; for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts and on all those Dorotheas who live faithfully their hidden lives and rest in unvisited tombs.

The passage above is a combination of a few lines deriving from Eliot's "Finale." What is skipped here – with regard to Dorothea – is information about her support for her husband's political career, "giving him wifely help" (Eliot 2000:686), and about the love of the two "stronger than any impulses which could have marred it." Excluding that, as well as information about Dorothea's motherhood, leaves the audience with a feeling of melancholy stronger than the novel evokes, despite ending with exactly the same words. Eliot's "Finale" and the evaluation of Dorothea's achievements leads to more general conclusions, as the novelist ends the last-but-one paragraph with the words: "But we insignificant people with our daily words and acts are preparing the lives of many Dorotheas some of which may present a far sadder sacrifice than that of the Dorothea whose story we know" (Eliot 2000:688). The serial never reaches beyond the story told the way Eliot's narrator does, but presents individual life stories, leaving reflection to the viewers.

Although in the novel Eliot constructs Edward Casaubon (Patrick Malahide) as unlikeable from his very first appearance, Dorothea's attraction to the knowledgeable clergyman twice her age is explicable. The way Malahide interprets this character makes the viewers pity Dorothea, and the make-up designer made him entirely unattractive, looking sickly and pale. With no access to Casaubon's thoughts, it remains unclear why he proposes to Dorothea. He neither allows her to help him with his book (not until the last days of his life), nor does he indulge in the physical side of the relationship – in the serial we witness one scene in which Dorothea tries to kiss him, while in bed, and he turns away from her. The novel does not really refer to the physical side of the marriage, either the Lydgates', or the Casaubons', unlike in the serial, in which the sterility of Casaubon's marriage is contrasted with the passion Lydgate feels for his beautiful wife.

There are scenes in the serial in which the adaptors use audio-flashbacks to show the characters reflection upon the past events. One such instance involves Casaubon being upset by his wife's insistence on the completion of the book he is working on. The sight of Casaubon sitting in the library with a troubled facial expression and hearing Dorothea's hasty words in the form of voice-over seems to reflect the doubts he has about the significance of his work. That scene covers in a condensed form the passage in the novel in which Eliot reveals Casaubon's self-doubts evoked – or actually unexpectedly reinforced – by Dorothea's questions

resulting from her “desire to enter into some fellowship with her husband’s chief interests” (Eliot 2000:168). Surprisingly, however, he finds them accusatory:

[...] this cruel outward accuser was there in the shape of his wife [...] who, instead of observing his abundant pen scratches and amplitude of paper with the uncritical awe of an elegant-minded canary-bird, seemed to present herself as a spy watching everything with a malign power of inference. (Eliot 2000:167).

The hostility and irritation which Casaubon shows towards Dorothea results, to a large extent, from his lack of confidence in the value of his work, while Ladislaw’s burgeoning friendship with Dorothea is an additional impulse for Casaubon’s treating his wife coldly. That latter reason in the serial becomes more apparent, as the contrast between the sickly Casaubon and the youthful Ladislaw is visually striking.

There is a short scene in the serial, set in Rome, which characterises Casaubon’s interests and constitutes another condensed element intended to show the lack of understanding between Dorothea and her husband. Walking with his newly-wed wife along the hall in the Palazzo Doria-Pamphili Gallery, Casaubon stops to explain a sculpture showing Apollo:

The cult of Apollo was linked with that of Bacchus and inspired the appalling excesses of the bacchanalian revels. Note how the male and female principles are combined. The ancients believed that this combination served as an inspiration to the arts and music.

In the middle of that speech Dorothea walks away to the next sculpture, asking Casaubon to look at it. He approaches the statue and says briefly: “A common theme in 4th-century Athenian sculpture. Cupid and Venus. Almost certainly an inferior copy of a Greek original.” The way in which Casaubon’s attention is drawn by Apollo rather than Venus might suggest his aesthetic interest in a male, rather than a female body, as well as his disregard for physical pleasures and love symbolised by Cupid. That commentary comes from the adaptors, not from Eliot, but it nicely confirms the incompatibility of the spouses clear to everybody else but Dorothea.

Tertius Lydgate (Douglas Hodge) is undoubtedly the central character of both the novel and the serial, but his role in the televisual narrative seems to have increased. Unlike Eliot’s text, the serial opens with his approaching Middlemarch in a stagecoach, which shows: “[...] the contrast between the tradition of rural Britain and the accelerating process of modernity, represented here both by the railway and by the character of Lydgate, who, for the viewer who has read the novel, personifies that process” (Lothe 2006:184). MacKillop and Platt (2000:85) complain that Hodge’s Lydgate is simply “too likeable.” We know nothing about his past love affair, which Eliot gives as the backstory; he is, moreover, deprived of most of the snobbishness the novel’s character possesses. As MacKillop and Platt put it, the viewers perceive him as “a victim of provincial society rather than as a victim of self” (2000:86), because most of the criticism of his actions comes from the Middlemarchers, whom the viewers are led to perceive as backward and

greedy. In the serial Lydgate is even more conspicuously a male version of Dorothea – making mistakes, but full of ideals. What makes the two different are their ambitions – Dorothea wants to change the world and does not mind remaining invisible. Lydgate wants to change the world and be acknowledged for his effort. He undoubtedly is conceited and self-confident, but looking at him from the present-day perspective we see the progressive nature of his actions, foiled by the stubborn backwardness of other *Middlemarch* doctors. Because the serial was made for the late 20th-century audience, Nelson perceives the way in which Davies handles the Lydgate subplot as a commentary upon the then condition of the NHS: “There is resonance for Davies between Lydgate’s frustrated attempts to introduce a health service to *Middlemarch* and the erosion of Britain’s National Health Service in the 1990s” (Nelson 2000:266).

The serial starts with the promise of progress suggested by the railroad construction Lydgate sees on his way to *Middlemarch*, upon which he passes a comment “The future.” This first scene defines the young doctor as an agent of progress, and as we are to discover promptly – of medical reform. As early as at the 6th minute of the first episode we are acquainted with Lydgate’s plans concerning the new fever hospital and his medical research aimed at making *Middlemarch* a model town in providing medical care. Lydgate is, like in the novel, an advocate of progress, although in the serial the hostility he evokes in other doctors of the town is less obvious. There are signs of the envy the local doctors feel for him, especially after he manages to diagnose Fred Vincy correctly, but the ill feeling that grows is overshadowed by other issues.

As Lydgate’s plot is more foregrounded in the serial than it is in the novel, his failure in all spheres of his actions (marriage, finances, research and providing unpaid care for the poor) provide the most depressive commentary upon the human lot and high hopes. He comes to *Middlemarch* believing that he can turn the place into an experimental ground for the treatment of typhoid fever and cholera, while planning to devote his free time and energy to studying the primitive tissue. His plans are crossed by the financial demands of his snobbish wife and by the local network of liaisons and rivalries, and for this reason his defeat is more spectacular than Dorothea’s, because he ends up doing exactly what he was not planning to do – earning money as a doctor of rich people, neither helping the poor nor contributing to the development of medicine as science. The ironic commentary upon his life is included in both the novel’s and the serial’s finale.

In the serial Lydgate’s marital life is enriched with a certain sexual context. Lydgate is attracted to Rosamond and marries her for her beauty and charm, as he does in the novel, but the scenes which follow suggest a strong sexual attraction on Lydgate’s side, as if his desire for her could explain why he puts up with the self-centred snob she is. Consequently, Lydgate is presented as a man of passionate nature, in all spheres of life.

The way in which Lydgate's wife, Rosamund née Vincy, is played by Trevryn McDowell provides interesting material for contemplating the way in which an actor or actress creates a character. Rosy is a snobbish, decorative wife, who does not understand her husband's needs and ambitions, just the way he does not understand hers. However, the serial's Rosy exhibits more mischievousness than the novel's. The hard looks she gives Lydgate, the cold voice she uses and the aggressiveness with which she speaks make her highly unlikeable, while Lydgate is one of the characters the viewers sympathise with. Rosy seems dishonest and calculating when she is nice, and dangerous when she opposes her husband and acts behind his back. In the serial she becomes a villainous character responsible for Lydgate's downfall.

Another male character that undergoes modification in the adaptation process is Will Ladislaw (Rufus Sewell), as it has been already suggested in the previous subsection. MacKillop and Platt (2000:82) argue that the serial's Ladislaw is far removed from Eliot's character:

We think that the BBC missed the point about Ladislaw. He is after all a dilettante, a figure whose point of view is relative to the particular moment of the development. He grows up during the course of the novel. On the screen, however, he dominates: he is fully formed, glowing and glowering.

Interestingly, that "improved" Ladislaw would have been liked by Henry James, who in his otherwise very favourable review of the novel complained that Will lacked "sharpness of outline and depth of colour," was "a woman's man," "not the ideal foil to Mr Casaubon" (1873/2000:580). Ladislaw in Davies' adaptation and in Sewell's performance is self-confident and lacks that fickleness the novel's Ladislaw is characterised by. His political career which follows does not come as a surprise, as it does in the novel. In other words, the adaptation made Ladislaw more credible as a future MP, and as the man Dorothea can fall in love with and marry.

Ladislaw in the novel does grow and change more as his subplot develops. When in the novel Casaubon informs the Brookes about his cousin's situation, he mentions the fact that Will declined to go to university, although Casaubon was willing to pay for his education. In the serial Will hesitates about his future career, but his refusal to gain further formal education is not mentioned. When he turns to politics, Ladislaw sounds confident and competent, in contrast to Brooke. That is also significantly stressed by the scene in which Ladislaw makes an introductory speech before Brooke's, a situation not present in the novel. The novel's Ladislaw's involvement in politics is more accidental; in the serial he appears as having already well-formed views and ideas, which he attempts to channel through unfortunate Arthur Brooke not being capable of grasping them.

An interesting alteration which the character of Ladislaw undergoes is reduction of the aura of otherness which surrounds him in the novel. The fact that his grandfather was a Polish refugee is stressed, but it so mostly in the context of his grandmother's sacrifice. In the novel's Ladislaw is frequently referred to as

a “foreigner,” despite being born and brought up in England. Once his maternal grandparents’ inglorious past is revealed he is also referred to as a grandson of a Jewish pawnbroker. That latter characteristic is dropped entirely in the serial, because that element of Ladislav’s family history has been reduced in adaptation. So, in the serial Ladislav’s Polish roots as the source of otherness are significant, while his mother’s Jewishness – perceived in the novel as non-Englishness as well – is never mentioned. In other words, in the serial the reasons for which the 19th-century society would find Will entirely inappropriate to become Dorothea’s partner were more explicit than those for which he could possibly seem inappropriate to the 20th-century audience. The serial’s Ladislav’s main “faults” are his lack of steady occupation or source of money, and the fact that Casaubon becomes obsessively jealous about him. In the novel he is considered to be non-English, and hence not to be trusted.

Brooke (Robert Hardy) in both narratives becomes an object of ridicule, as his political career based on no ideas of his own is doomed to failure. He is not a bad man, but in his political campaign he becomes ludicrous, which is amplified in the serial. MacKillop and Platt (2000:83) characterise Brooke in Hardy’s performance, in a way which points out to its main characteristics:

[...] Robert Hardy’s nodding, grimacing, ‘y’ knowing Brooke provides much of the light relief in an otherwise austere production, but because he seems so idiotic and is so often seen as Ladislav [...] [the latter] acquires an air of gravity and political acumen by contrast.

Brooke in the serial is comic, no matter what the circumstances are. The idiosyncrasies of the character’s speech are foregrounded in Hardy’s performance and emphasize his intellectual emptiness. The scene which follows can be found in the novel, and includes Brooke and Ladislav speaking about the former’s political program. However, in the novel the discussion the two have is used as an introduction to a detailed character profile of Ladislav at that moment of his life and career and to the potential role Dorothea can play in them. In the serial the conversation presents Brooke as a man uncertain of his political ideas, and Will as an energetic advocate for the reform, in its full scope, including riddance of pocket boroughs, because, as he says at the beginning of Episode 4: “There are too many men in Parliament who bought their way in.” On account of that there is some foreshadowing of Ladislav’s future political career, as he continues: “If I could one day get a foothold there, then I would dedicate my life to changing all this moribund cruel complacency!” The serial makes Will more radical in his views, and foregrounds the political issues, which take up a larger section of the overall story than they do in the novel, devoting more space to Dorothea, as it has been mentioned above.

Another problem with Hardy is that he does have a collection of villainous characters in his portfolio (the production which preceded *Middlemarch* was an episode of *Inspector Morse* in which he played a vicious character), which imposes

certain expectations upon the audience, not able to perceive Brooke as entirely benevolent. Hardy does give Brooke with some suspicious aura, besides his obvious self-absorption and certain hypocrisy leading him to run for Parliament on a Reform ticket, being at the same time a shrewd landlord whose tenants suffer immense poverty and discomfort. No matter how we evaluate Brooke, Hardy does make this character come to the foreground and be more noticeable (despite being less likeable).

Although Brooke is entirely grotesque in his political plans, the seriousness of the Reform, or the need for it, is never ridiculed in the serial. An attempt is made to provide a convincing image of the stir that the reform causes among the lower classes. Episode 4 starts with a presentation of a poster encouraging electors to vote for Arthur Brooke, followed by an image of a lower-class speaker advocating the necessity to give the right to vote to the poor:

Why should rich landlords living high in their grand houses represent us at Parliament? We never see 'em from one year's end to next unless they come to see us hang for sport [...]. The tide is turning for all you fine Tory gentlemen, and one day you'll be swept away on it.

The last words are addressed to Mr Hawley and Dr Wrench, who listen to the agitated speaker, and conclude that he seems to be speaking of revolution, which – fortunately – will never happen in England. There is no such scene in the novel, although it does reflect the idea of the “new political animation” which, Eliot (2000:378) suggests, could be observed in *Middlemarch*.

Fred Vincy (Jonathan Firth) and Mary Garth (Rachel Power) are the characters Eliot seems to favour. Fred is the only character who develops, improves, finds his place and marries the woman he loves without suffering too much. In the serial, however, there is something in that character that does not draw attention to him, nor does it make the viewers await impatiently a resolution of his problems. Out of the four parallel stories in the serial, Fred's is the least dramatic and not very engaging. There is something off-putting in the way Fred awaits Featherstone's death and inheritance, and without the commentary which Eliot's narrator provides about young Vincy's being sorry for the dying man it is difficult to see Fred as much more than just a selfish young man.

Mary Garth, Fred's beloved, has caused problems to Andrew Davies in the process of adaptation, or at least he claims so in the interview included in the DVD edition of the serial. He expresses his dislike for the novel's character as such:

She's always right, she's such a good girl. She's always telling other people how they ought to be [...] And you think, “What a pain the arse she is.” I found it a bit hard to write her, because of this, because I thought I wouldn't like her very much in real life. But I wrote her as best I could, and tried to make her as nice as I could, and tried to write in a subtext in everything she says to Fred [...] like underneath she's saying, “I love you, just try to get your act straight and I'll do anything.” They just cast a young actress [...] who's just so lovely, all the problems disappear.

This comment illustrates the way in which the screenwriter claims his rights to a character, as well as how he sees the role of an actor/actress in the process of

making the character. Mary Garth does appear as a likeable, level-headed character, both in the novel and in the serial, despite having her part significantly reduced in the latter. The way in which the actress delivers the parts aimed at making Fred Vincy a better person does convey the message Davies intended – Mary would like Fred to be a valuable individual, precisely because she loves him. The Garth family members in general, and Caleb Garth (Clive Russel), the father, in particular, are the only characters in the novel, and consequently the serial, who are near-ideal – righteous, honest, hardworking – and never make mistakes. The final voice-over commentary being a fraction of Eliot’s “Finale” presents only Fred Vincy and Mary Garth as a couple who eventually succeeded – although moderately – in all their endeavours.

Mary Garth and Fred Vincy’s plot involves also Peter Featherstone of Stone Court, performed in the serial by Michael Horden. Despite being a peripheral character Featherstone manages to dominate the scenes he is in. On his death bed he surprisingly emerges as a highly comic character, unlike his counterpart in the novel, who is rather pathetic. The wig and the manner of whinnying make the character grotesque, but also evoking in the audience more emphatic feelings than the crowd waiting for his departure to a better world. It is interesting to see how the adaptation derives humour from the scenes taking place at the Stone Court, with the relatives competing at Featherstone’s death bed for his attention.

A character whose presence is conspicuous in the serial is Mr Hawley (Colum Convey), an opponent of Bulstrode, who becomes also Lydgate’s enemy, because after the critical voting for Rev. Tyke the doctor is perceived as a man who serves Bulstrode. In the serial Hawley plays the same narrative functions he does in the novel, i.e. he hinders the actions of Bulstrode, Lydgate and Brooke, criticises those characters – either openly or behind their backs – and eventually leads to the revealing of Bulstrode’s misdemeanours and depriving him of his position. However, because the number of background characters is reduced in the serial, Hawley solely personifies both the criticism that comes from the Middlemarchers towards change and newcomers (Lydgate and Ladislaw), and the opposition that exists against Bulstrode’s attempts to take control of the town’s affairs. The way this character is created in the serial, and the manner in which Convey handles it makes him seem villainous despite being morally right. The negative emotions which Hawley evokes result first of all from his acting against Lydgate, with whom the audience identifies and sympathises. Hawley appears on the screen either to make a critical comment, or to confront his opponents, and it is difficult not to conclude that it is envy that drives him, not a real urge to restore the moral order.

Similarly to the servants in *Brideshead*, the “downstairs” people in *Middlemarch* are in the background only. Eliot’s narrative does reflect her sensitivity to the plight of the poor, but does not really indicate her interest in the lives and personalities of the servants working at Tipton or Lowick. The adaptors took no liberties in this respect, limiting the servants’ presence to that which was necessary.

The visuals

As it has been already mentioned here, *Middlemarch* (1994) becomes the milestone in the history of the BBC, the way *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) was for Granada, being shot entirely on location and on film. Eliot's novel is set mostly in the provincial town whose name became the title of both the literary text and the serial. Besides the town with its streets, market, and some of houses, a number of events vital for the plot take place in private estates located in the area. Stamford, Lincolnshire, became Eliot's Middlemarch, while a number of country houses located mostly in Lincolnshire played the novel's stately homes: Culverthorpe Hall, Grantham, became Arthur Brooke's Tipton; Walcot Hall was used as Sir James Chettam's Freshitt Hall, Grimsthorpe Castle, represented the Lydgate family's home at Quallingham, Stragglethorpe Hall played Stone Court, while Brympton d'Evercy, Yeovil, Somerset, impressed the viewers as Casaubon's Lowick.

The town Lydgate comes by stagecoach to is very busy despite its small size. As MacKillop and Platt (2000:76) notice: "The main street teems with market traders, carriages, and townsfolk milling about. We are on Planet Past where towns are always 'bustling'." Stamford, appropriated to look properly nineteenth-century, appears entirely credible, both in outdoor and in indoor scenes. There are no long shots of Stamford/Middlemarch, hence the impression the viewers occasionally get is slightly claustrophobic – the crowded market, the narrows streets, the rooms inside the town building are far from spacious. Those shots are contrasted with the way in which the stately homes are presented. The largest number of decorative shots involve Lowick and Tipton, both possessing beautiful gardens, the former having also a lake. The beauty of both locations is unquestionable, and it seems natural that they were listed as attractions to visit in the post-broadcast months.

Similarly to *Brideshead Revisited* the serial has one Italian location. In the case of *Middlemarch* it is Rome where Dorothea and Casaubon spend their honeymoon. The first shot of Rome resembles the opening panoramic view of Oxford in *Brideshead* – the shot is long, the roofs of the Eternal City are lit by the orange light of the dawn. The following shot, however, shows Dorothea coming out of a house in Via Della Pace, and taking a stroll with Casaubon along the street which is full of various types of vendors and begging children. When the two get out of the busy street, they start sight-seeing, which ends in Palazzo Doria-Pamphili Gallery, where Dorothea is deserted by Casaubon, who departs to check some documents in the Capitoline Library. The shots are less decorative than could be expected and the overall impression the Casaubons' visit to Rome creates is rather unfavourable, because the spouses realise for the first time how different their interests are. The image of Rome is not shown as seductive and romantic, because the whole trip is disappointing for both Dorothea and Casaubon.

There are a number of rural scenes in the serial filmed, according to the information found in IMDb webpage, in Somerset and Dorset, in other words in Southern England locations, so characteristic for the classic serial as a genre. The

opening and the closing scenes show a dirt road across which a herd of sheep is led, and which De Groot calls “a Constablesque pastoral landscape with sheep” (2009:188). A similar opinion is formulated by Nelson, who states that: “[The] visual imagery of the countryside [...] evokes the ‘Englishness’ of Constable [...]” (Nelson 2000:276). It is *Middlemarch*/Stamford, however, that is the dominant location in the production, and the shots in general focus more on action than on exploring the beauty of the setting.

It is worth noticing that the serial takes advantage of the solution used earlier in the productions shot outside the studio, like *Brideshead*, i.e. showing conversations between characters – male in particular – while the persons involved are in motion, usually walking. Authentic locations made that possible – the characters take walks along the streets of *Middlemarch*, such as Lydgate does while changing locations, and quite naturally they do not walk alone, but in the company of others, with whom they talk. Such scenes provide a natural setting for numerous dialogues in the serial and add to the impression of realism of the production. That marks also a clear departure from the theatrical mode the early classic serials exhibited and makes the production much more cinematic.

Middlemarch presents a cross section of an English town’s society and the characters come from different social strata. Costumes – especially those of the ladies – are to mark the class distinction and suggest their owners’ vanity, or lack of it. The most conspicuous in this respect are the dresses and hairdos of Mrs Vincy and Rosamund representing the aspiring middle class. Dorothea, on the other hand, is devoid of vanity, wears no jewellery, her dresses are plain, and her hairstyle less sophisticated than her sister’s or Rosy’s: she wears her hair in a simple bun, never with corkscrew curls on the sides the other two women have. In that simplicity she gains a natural, contemporary look, making it easier for the 20th-century female viewers to identify with her. In the serial Juliet Aubrey has occasionally that kind saintly look that Dorothea should have – Naumann, the young German painter who meets her in Rome dreams of painting her as a Madonna. The costume designer equipped Aubrey with a poke bonnet, whose gathered lining gives the impression that she has a radiant halo around her head, making her look like a saint.

The interiors of the houses in which the characters coming from different social classes live are decorated, propped and lit to reflect the inhabitants’ level of affluence. Tipton and Lowick are contrastive, despite being similarly spacious – Tipton is bright, with pastel-colour walls and plenty of light inside, while Lowick is supposed to reflect Casaubon’s austere life, and it does so with its grim stone walls and dark wood furniture. The other two houses which are juxtaposed are the Vincys’ and the house Lydgate buys for Rosamund when they get married. In the former the rooms are significantly smaller, cluttered with furniture and overdecorated, while the rooms at the Lydgates’ are more spacious, brighter and tastefully furnished. Stone Court, Mr Featherstone’s house eventually bought by Mr

Bulstrode is an interesting location – being Mediaeval, with little windows, hence with very little natural light inside, it creates an atmosphere appropriate for old Mr Featherstone’s deathbed scenes. All the interiors are reconstructed meticulously, be it a manor house or a humble abode of the Garths. The period detail is there, but its aim is to increase the realism of the production, not impressing the viewer aesthetically. Most of the shots are wide-angle ones, there are not too many close-ups, hence the near-authentic background is vital.

Despite some necessary abbreviations and condensations introduced, the BBC’s *Middlemarch* (1994) remained a coherent narrative, doing justice to Eliot’s main plots and most of the subplots. As Lothe notes, the adaptors managed “to present, and in some cases intensify, many of the observations and reflections that Eliot makes her narrator share with the reader” (2006:181). The serial created a story relatively dynamic, not overtalked or theatrical, shot on location, but without excessive exploration of the beauty of the landscape, estates or costumes. It was the novel’s realism that resulted in the relatively little space devoted to the presentation of attractive locations and props, because besides the upper classes we see the life of tenants, patients from the fever hospital, and various middle-class Middlemarchers.

The role of *Middlemarch* (1994) in the history of the classic serial is also worth emphasising. In the way in which Andrew Davies handled Eliot’s text we can see, from today’s perspective, traces of what was yet to come in his future adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* (1995), *Vanity Fair* (1998) or *Bleak House* (2005): increased dynamics of narration; providing female characters with more contemporary temper; sexualising the characters (moderate, though, as the medium requires); or foregrounding male characters in originally female-centred stories. Such modifications caught up with the audience mostly because Davies managed to find balance between adherence to the source text and the “upgrading” of what he found to be too slow-paced or potentially unappealing to the contemporary viewers. Not only did the audience accept Davies’ approach enthusiastically, but so did the BBC management, commissioning him to adapt more of the classic novels. As Giddings summarises the accomplishments of Davies: “[...] he more or less single-handedly revived the classic serial with *Middlemarch* and *Pride and Prejudice* [...] demonstrated the art of translating fiction into the language of television [...] using literary works to create television drama” (Giddings 2005). Actually, it is *Pride and Prejudice* (1995) that facilitated the development of the classic serial as a genre, contributing to its aesthetics style, and, as my research shows, that adaptation seems to be the classic serial most frequently written about.¹⁰⁹ More innovations, however, came with the 2005 adaptation of Dickens, which the next chapter focuses on.

¹⁰⁹ It was the very abundance of publications devoted to that particular production that prevented me from including its analysis in this study, as I have a feeling that very little may be yet added to the present discourse.

Bleak House (2005)

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) and his novel

Charles Dickens requires hardly any introduction. Nevertheless, it is vital for my further analysis to set the novel, whose adaptation is to be discussed here, in a wider literary and historical context.

Bleak House was Dickens' ninth novel, launched when his reputation was already well established. His career as a novelist started in 1836 with the serialised publication of *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*; the text was planned to be published in instalments, which is reflected in its form: collection of loosely-connected adventures. His only publication which preceded *The Pickwick Papers* was a journalistic collection titled *Sketches by "Boz,"* published earlier in the same year. The serialised novel brought Dickens popularity and the reputation of "a humorous novelist with a keen eye for detail and an ability to create memorable characters" (Allan 2004:46). Between 1837 and 1852 when the publication of *Bleak House* began, seven new novels by Dickens saw the light of day, proving what a prolific writer he could be, and those were *Oliver Twist* (serialised February 1837 – April 1839), *Nickolas Nickelby* (serialised March 1837 – September 1839), *The Old Curiosity Shop* (serialised April 1840 – February 1841), *Barnaby Rudge* (serialised February-November 1841), *Michael Huzzlewit* (serialised January 1843 – June 1844), *Dombey and Son* (serialised October 1846 – April 1848), and *David Copperfield* (serialised May 1849 – November 1850).

Bleak House was originally published in 19 monthly instalments, each of 32 pages,¹¹⁰ the last one of double length, with illustrations by Hablot Knight Browne "Phiz," with whom the novelist had been cooperating since the publication of *The Pickwick Papers*. The publication started in March 1852 and finished in September the following year. Its initial reception was mixed – the novel was called both the best and the worst of Dickens' texts published to date.¹¹¹ The criticism focused on "exaggeration, distortion and improbability" (Allan 2004:46) and on the lack

¹¹⁰ In the table in Appendix 6, chapters have been shaded in sections reflecting the original instalments' content.

¹¹¹ See, for example, a review published in *Bentley Miscellany* in October 1853 (quoted in Allan 2004:60).

of a well-constructed plot. As Allan notes, the critical opinions of the reviewers contemporary to Dickens resulted to a large extent from the fact that they expected realism, which the novelist was refraining from, indulging in his natural inclination for creating grotesque characters who act in exaggerated ways in situations not always well-grounded in what the readers might consider as everyday reality. *Bleak House* was also much more serious than Dickens' earlier publications. The first complete edition, in one volume, was published in 1853 and marked an increase in the sales of Dickens' novels, which continued with his subsequently published texts. The early reviews were not very enthusiastic; they focused on the plot, characters, the issue of morality and of social realism.

Bleak House, similarly to Dickens' other novels, reflects the author's social criticism, this time aimed at the ineffective British judicial system, Chancery lawyers in particular, and the plight of the working class. Moreover, the novelist mocks mercilessly middle-class women misunderstanding the aim of charitable activities and all kinds of snobbish aspiring social-climbers. As Allan stresses, *Bleak House* was "the most topical of novels [...] offering a direct and explicit critique, to call for remedial action" (2004:21).

In the novels which followed *Bleak House*, Dickens continued to address serious subjects and never returned to the lighter, humorous tone of his early works. He continued publishing in instalments, and in 1854 *Hard Times: For These Times* appeared between April and August, then *Little Dorrit* was serialised between December 1855 and June 1857, *A Tale of Two Cities* between April and November 1859, *Great Expectations* between December 1860 and August 1861, *Our Mutual Friend* between May 1864 and November 1865, and his final novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, left incomplete, was serialised from April to September 1870, with the final instalments published after Dickens's death in June that year.

The critical reputation of Dickens' works, *Bleak House* included, declined in the years following his death, because when contrasted with the writers of the end of the 19th century, like George Eliot or Thomas Hardy, he appeared "to be a decidedly superficial, even naïve, writer [...] lacking the seriousness of a proper novelist" (Allan 2004:50). In the 20th century other critical voices appeared (one of which was that of George Bernard Shaw), appreciating Dickens' role as a social critic and a reformer. In this context *Bleak House* appeared as one of the most important texts in British literary history. Generally, 20th-century criticism focused on the novel's two social themes, i.e. the abuses of the law in the Court of Chancery and the suffering of the poor, as well as on the complexity of the narrative method, with particular attention drawn to Esther, both as a character and as a narrator. Both feminism and psychoanalysis provided tools for a new reading of Miss Summerson and the way she perceives and presents herself in her self-deprecating narrative.¹¹²

¹¹² See e.g. Valerie Kennedy's "Bleak House: More Trouble with Esther?" (*Women Studies in Literature* (1979) and a collection of essays edited by Jeremy Tambling *Bleak House* (1998).

Adaptations

Dickens' prose is said to be cinematic, which has been stressed in numerous publications devoted to film adaptations, beginning with the famous 1944 essay by Sergei Eisenstein "Dickens, Griffith and the Film Today." Although both Dickens' long novels and short fiction seem to be favoured by adaptors reaching out for nineteenth-century fiction, *Bleak House* is not among the most popular. Its only feature film adaptations were silent ones, focusing on some of the novel's subplots only. The first was a very short silent film from 1901 titled *The Death of Poor Jo* and directed by George Albert Smith. Two longer silent films, both titled *Bleak House* and focusing on the subplot of Lady Dedlock, were released in the 1920s: the one from 1920 (6-reels long) was directed by Maurice Elvey and the other from 1922 (3-reels long) was directed by H.B. Parkinson. Although the multiplicity of subplots has so far discouraged adaptors from rendering the novel into a feature film, there have been three television adaptations, all produced by the BBC. The first one, made in 1959, consisted of 11 half-hour episodes and was adapted by Constance Cox (one of the co-adaptors of *The Forsyte Saga* (1967)). In the next 26 years the novel did not attract television producers, despite the fact that other of Dickens' texts were regularly re-adapted. One of the reasons for such neglect was the seriousness of *Bleak House*, its strong social criticism and relatively little humour, so characteristic of the earlier picaresque texts. However, an eight-part television adaptation was made by Arthur Hopcraft, with 50-minute episodes directed by Ross Devenish, and appeared eventually in 1985. The serial was a costly one, as it was shot entirely on film. As Giddings and Selby stress: "the fog and confusion of London [...] the grime, squalor and [...] the stink of Victorian London was all there, on screen" (2001:76). The main asset was the cast, as in most classic serials. Lady Dedlock was played by Diana Rigg,¹¹³ a star back then due to her memorable part in the 1960s *The Avengers*, while Denholm Elliott and Peter Vaughn, both famous for their film and television work, played John Jarndyce and Tulkinghorn, respectively. The 2005 adaptation which followed is frequently evaluated with reference to the 1985 production, whose reception and critical evaluation were very positive.

When the BBC decided to readapt that particular novel, it was Andrew Davies who was entrusted with the task of adapting it for the 21st-century audience. This decision was not surprising, because in 2005 Davies' reputation as that of a highly gifted adaptor of classic novels was already well established. He had not, however, until then, adapted any of Dickens' novels, surprising as it seems, although he had collaborated with producer Nigel Stafford-Clark adapting two of Anthony Trollope's novels into television mini-series: *The Way We Live Now* (2001) and *He*

¹¹³ Interestingly, the producers of the 2005 adaptation made a similar decision and cast a popular television series star in that part. In the case of the DVD editions of both serials the faces of the actresses playing Lady Dedlock are foregrounded, as those of the most recognisable performers in the productions.

Knew He Was Right (2004). “The great mystery is why Davies has never been asked to dramatise a Dickens before. They are made for each other,” as Andrew Billen (2005) notes in his flattering review of the first episode for the online edition of *The New Statesman*.

In Britain the serial, produced in High Definition format and consisting of 15 episodes, was originally broadcast twice a week since October 27, 2005, at 8 p.m. immediately after *EastEnders*, and was, from the very beginning, marketed as “a nineteenth-century soap-opera,” which seemed questionable, or even controversial, to many. The marketing strategy seems to have been based on the assumption that Dickens’ *Bleak House* could be compared to a soap opera and its aim was to win an audience younger than that which was typical for the classic serial. As Davies admits in the Press Pack material, the broadcast was planned early enough “for older primary school children to watch.” Stafford-Clark explains the decision made about the half-hour format as resulting from the plan to leave the viewers “wanting more”:

What you get in half an hour is a bit like how you feel watching an episode of *24* [...]. You get that feeling of: “Is it over already? I want to see the next episode!” That’s exactly what we want, because with this the pace of it is fast and more akin to a contemporary show. (The BBC Press Pack 2005)

The idea behind this particular production was to adjust its pace, multiple storylines and cliff-hanger endings to those of popular drama. The cast selection indicates the same philosophy of the producers, as besides the theatre actors characteristic for the classic adaptations such as Charles Dance or Anna Maxwell Martin, it included also Gillian Anderson, an American actress known well for her leading role in *X-Files*, comedian Johnny Vegas and Charlie Brooks known from *EastEnders*. The DVD edition (2006) advertises its contents as “fast-moving, gripping television” with “the murder mystery, the love story, the comic genius and the tantalising scandal of the novel, but stripped of its sentimentality [...]”. It is a rare example in the history of the classic serial of stressing the televisual qualities of the production based on a classic novel, as well as the way in which the source text has been modified to become recognisable as a “gripping” television drama. Kleinecke-Bates (2009:113) calls it “a shift in representational emphasis” – from adaptation to television drama. What is stressed in the case of this production, then, is not its faithful rendering of the classic novel, not the superb acting, but “mystery,” “love story,” “comic genius,” and “scandal” – all those being supposedly most attractive for the 21st-century television audience.

As Geraghty (2012) rightly notes, the reasons for the above mentioned marketing strategy and the visual concept can only be understood in the context of the time of production. In 2005 American new generation serials had already established a standard against which the classic serial was perceived as old-fashioned. It was also the moment when the Corporation’s Royal Charter was to be renewed, hence as Geraghty puts it: “It was [...] particularly important at this time that the BBC demonstrate that it was both popular with the licence-paying public and doing

something different from its commercial competitors” (2012:13). In marketing the new serial, the BBC focused on the obvious status of Dickens’ prose as being both educational and entertaining, on its assumed affinity to soap operas and on the new high technology solutions to be used in this production. *Radio Times*, however, promoted the serial by providing some scholarly commentary by John Sutherland before each episode. Sutherland published also a guide to *Bleak House*, which appeared the same year as the broadcast.

The marketing strategy applied by the BBC, which emphasized the fact that what Dickens was writing in his times was an equivalent of contemporary soap operas, was poorly received by both reviewers and academics. One of those who rejected that perspective on Dickens’ prose was Robert Giddings (2005), who devoted an article to providing evidence that the original target audience was not, contrary to what the BBC marketing specialists aiming at winning young audience claimed, a nineteenth century equivalent of contemporary soap-opera devoted fans. Numerous generic dissimilarities between a soap opera and Dickens’ *Bleak House* have been stressed in the reviews, and over time more and more publications stressed that the unfortunate comparison was mainly a justification for the transmission time and an attempt to catch younger audience, customarily watching *EastEnders*. White (2010:235) notes also that the way *Bleak House* (2005) was marketed “has foreshadowed the growing castigation of period drama as reductionist and, ultimately, worn out, both as television (and film) genre and in its treatment of classic novels.”

As Geraghty in her 2012 book devoted to the serial notes, the corporation did achieve its aim in terms of viewing figures and general critical reception. The serial’s average audience was about 6.6 million and on most days it won its timeslot. In 2006 it won two BAFTA awards – for the Best Drama Serial and Anna Maxwell Martin for the Best Actress – and in 2007 two Emmys (out of ten nominations): for Outstanding Cinematography (Kieran McGuigan as Director of Photography) and Outstanding Makeup (Daniel Phillips).

The serial was broadcast in the United States in January and February 2006 by PBS, divided into six, not fifteen, instalments. Its broadcast in Poland, very early on Saturday mornings, passed with no advertising, but the production exists on the Polish market as a DVD edition.

Bleak House (2005)

The plot and the narrative structure of the serial

Bleak House, which was advertised by the BBC during the 2005 serial’s marketing campaign as “a skilfully crafted thriller and passionate indictment of the legal system” (BBC Press Pack 2005) is a long and complex text with about twenty major characters and numerous minor ones, and with the narration divided

evenly between Esther Summerson, one of the main characters (33 chapters), and an omniscient narrator (34 chapters). At the core of the novel there is the legal case Jarndyce and Jarndyce, which has been held in the Court of Chancery for years, and which is eventually resolved, while all the money the beneficiaries hoped to receive has been consumed by the legal costs. There is a connection established between the case and most of the characters in the novel, who are at the same time directly or indirectly involved in the process of solving the mystery surrounding the death of a copyist known as “Nemo” and the murder of Mr Tulkinghorn, a lawyer. At the same time Esther tells the readers the complicated story of the discovery of her own identity. Her narrative concerns other characters as well: two young cousins, Ada and Richard, she becomes a companion of; her guardian, John Jarndyce; her grotesque suitor Mr Guppy; her future husband Mr Woodcourt and a number of lower-class female characters she helps.

The first major difficulty any adaptors would find in the case of this particular novel is its double narrative structure and lack of one main plot. The omniscient narrator gives a sometimes ironic, sometimes sympathetic view of what happens in some of the locations, while Esther, the other narrator, provides her version of the stories she either participates in or knows about, and the two accounts hardly overlap. In the 2005 adaptation it was Esther’s story that Davies decided to weave the serial’s narrative around: “The spine of this story has to be Esther’s journey of discovery and self-discovery, which is bound up with Lady Dedlock’s secret” (Davies quoted in Giddings 2005). The central theme remains the machinery of the law and its destructiveness, but the serial begins and ends with Esther, and the centrality of her character is apparent: all the other subplots exist, because they are – in one way or another – related to her story. As Davies has explained, his “main concern was to keep focused on the central plot, so that the whole audience can follow along” (Davies, *An Interview for PBS*). This central story covers Esther’s climbing up the social ladder – from an orphan born out of wedlock, deprived of any family or money, to the position of a doctor’s wife with her own estate, however modest, and confirmed genteel roots on both her mother’s and her father’s side. This plot starts with her reminiscences of a miserable childhood in the house of her rough godmother, and ends – the way Davies likes to end his adaptations of novels with romantic plots – with a kiss of the newly-weds. So, that very spine of the story which Davies found and used can be read as a romantic melodrama, although the romantic element is of a rather moderate character. However, unlike Davies’ *Pride and Prejudice* (1995) or *Middlemarch* (1994), *Bleak House* (2005) is not built around the romantic narrative; love interest constitutes only a subtle subplot, but its climax closes the serial. It has to be stressed that, as in any story that Dickens came up with, in *Bleak House* we have a plethora of other characters with their own stories, which contributes to the rich and vibrant world we are drawn into. The table below presents the length of the central plot and of major individual subplots within the episode structure.

Figure 3. The central plot in the serial and the subplots, as they develop
– and end – in the serial’s episodes:

	Episodes															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
The central plot: Esther’s rising from obscurity and disgrace to respect and marital happiness	The secret of Esther’s parentage															
		Esther and Woodcourt’s love story														
	Lady Dedlock’s secret and its consequences															
	The mystery of Nemo’s identity															
Other subplots																
The mystery of Tulkinghorn’s murder																
George’s story – life in debt and reunification with his mother																
Ada and Richard’s coming-of-age, love and marriage story		Richard’s career alterations										Richard’s obsession with the court case				
Caddy’s story																
Jo’s misery																

Esther’s story is a combination of two separate ones: her search for identity, i.e. the urge to discover who her parents are, and her search for a place in the social structure, eventually found through the marriage to doctor Woodcourt. Lady Dedlock and Nemo/Captain Hawdon as Esther’s parents are part of her story, although two separate subplots develop around them. Lady Dedlock’s conflict with Tulkinghorn revolves around the secret of her past disgrace, while the latter’s determination to reveal the truth about the real identity of the dead Nemo leads to the involvement of a number of characters of various significance to the subplot, ranging from Krook, through Snagsby and Smallweed to Sergeant George. All the subplots listed in Figure 3 as “other” include Esther as one of their agents, since she acts as a helper to the characters on whom those subplots are centred. In Davies’ screenplay Esther plays her role in all of them by being directly present and helpful (e.g. providing support for Caddy, taking care of Jo, or providing Inspector Bucket with some information while he is solving the murder case). Dickens’ subplots not related to Esther, like e.g. Mrs Snagsby’s jealous spying on her husband or the relationship between George and the Bagnets, have been reduced in the adaptation (see Appendix 7).

All that in the novel is seen through Esther’s eyes, or through the eyes of the third-person narrator who is also far from detached objectivity in his frequently ironic attitude to the characters described, in the serial is presented by the camera

without reflecting the difference in the perspectives. Dickens' social critique becomes less obvious, as the plot foregrounded – and the number of mysteries to be solved – engage the viewers more. In Dickens' text the problems are real, only the characters are grotesque. The novel was topical, as it was aimed at criticising the present state of affairs, raising people's awareness of the existing injustice and the abuse of power. A serial made in the 21st century depicting the 19th-century problems cannot play the social function the novel did; it can either present a vision of the historical past, or focus on the plot and the interplay between the characters. This particular adaptation does the latter, assuming that it can be made attractive for the contemporary audience. The mysteries to be solved and secrets to be revealed, the tension between Tulkinghorn and Lady Dedlock, as well as the budding love between Esther and Woodcourt overshadow the social problems. However, the destructive power of excessively bureaucratic procedures can be well understood and appear as topical in the 21st century as well.

Geraghty (2012) distinguishes two modes of narration in Dickens' narrative and preserved in the adaptation: a forward-looking one, which is that which can be found in a romantic love story or a bildungsroman, and a deductive one, characteristic of mystery or detective stories. The forward-looking mode of narration can be observed in the way Ada and Richard's coming-of-age story is told, with the two encountering a series of problems through which Richard is eventually defeated, while Ada matures. The same mode of narration is applied in the story of Esther's personal growth and arriving at the safe harbour of marriage. The deductive mode is applied in solving the numerous mysteries, all of which evolve around and are related to Lady Dedlock and her downfall. The characters functioning as detectives include the detective proper, i.e. Inspector Bucket, but also the inquisitive others: first of all Tulkinghorn (whom Geraghty calls "the ruthless investigator that drives the story forward" (2012:57)) and Guppy, but also Krook and Smallweed. As Geraghty points out, Lady Dedlock's story includes elements of traditional melodrama, but in the adaptation the audience's interest is directed towards the detective work aimed at the discovery of the facts and connections, curiosity about which the serial raises in the audience. The predominance of the detective mode in the television narrative is also reflected in the suspense created by the cliff-hanger endings which outnumber those of reflective nature. Dickens' *Bleak House* was published in instalments which included from three to four chapters (see Appendix 7, the shadings in the left column indicate the original grouping of the chapters), and each instalment finished with a cliff-hanger to encourage the readers to wait impatiently for the development of the action. Davies' script does not follow slavishly the chapter pattern and out of 15 episodes only two – Episode 1 and 14 – end in the same way as the original instalments did, with the suspense created in the last scene of Episode 1 (Nemo's dead body found) and the heart-breaking scene of Lady Dedlock's death at the end of Episode 14. Other episodes have their own cliff-hanging endings.

The opening of the serial, aimed at “hooking” the viewers, establishes the pace of the narrative and introduces in its first six minutes not only the complicated character of the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case, which is shown as being heard in the Chancery, but also most of the characters involved in the intertwining plots, i.e. Esther, Nemo, Jo, Guppy, Tulkinghorn, Lady Dedlock and Sir Leicester, Mr Snagsby, Ada and Richard, Mr Gridley, Miss Flite and Mr Kenge. This accumulation of characters is the adaptor’s invention, as in the novel their appearance is gradual. In those first minutes we also have a flashback showing Esther’s childhood and her unknown parentage. The scenes are short, cross-cut, and signal the following issues: the subject of boredom in Lady Dedlock’s life; Esther’s childhood trauma; Nemo’s legal writing and addiction to opium; the existence of conflicting wills in the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case; the miserable lot of little Jo; designation of John Jarndyce to the position of legal guardian of Ada and Richard, and Esther becoming Ada’s companion. This amount of information can be overwhelming and confusing at first; only later, knowing the further lots of the characters, can we appreciate the condensed form of the introductory minutes of the episode. It seems, however, that the novel can give a similar impression at first. J. Hillis Miller, analysing Dickens’ text, notes that “[t]he world of *Bleak House* at first seemed to be a collection of unrelated fragments plunged into an ubiquitous fog” (1958:172). At the beginning of the serial that impression of fragmentation is much stronger, only the fog is not there and the pace at which the seemingly unrelated scenes are presented is rather dizzying. Davies explains his decision to begin the serial in such a way as follows: “Novels often have leisurely openings: a TV drama needs an arresting opening [...] Inventing scenes like this, and making them seem an integral part of the book, is one of the great joys of adaptation” (Davies 2011).

The pace of the narrative slows down, however, in the seventh minute, from which time we have a number of longer conversations – first between Guppy and Esther, in which he explains where the problem with Jarndyce and Jarndyce is, then at the Lord Chancellor’s, during which an order is prepared for John Jarndyce to become the legal guardian of Ada and Richard. The scenes which follow present briefly, but relevantly, Mrs Jellyby and her children, as well as Krook and his lodgers. A scene of particular significance is that in which Tulkinghorn visits the Dedlocks with the legal papers in which Lady Dedlock gets upset at seeing the handwriting she apparently recognises. The scene suggests the hostility Lady Dedlock feels towards Tulkinghorn and Charles Dance’s performance, limited to his facial expression and tiny gestures, conveys the disgust he feels for her and the curiosity her reaction to the letters arouses in him. The serial becomes a combination of fast-paced editing, short, dynamic cuts, and extreme close-ups that are very expressive in HD technology, reflecting the actors’ ability to render their emotions and feelings through facial expression. In the first one-hour episode of the captivating narrative we have all the principal characters introduced, the main conflict (Tulkinghorn-Lady Dedlock) signalled, and the first mysteries

opened – those of Esther’s unknown parentage, and of the connection between Lady Dedlock and Nemo.

The remaining episodes, all 30-minute long, consist of relatively short scenes, cross-cut with those set in other locations, but the pace is not as hectic as that which the beginning of the serial seemed to impose on the production, although it remains faster than in other classic-novel adaptations. Unlike in the 1994 adaptation of *Middlemarch*, where a significant number of plot elements have been rearranged, in *Bleak House* (2005) Davies does not diverge much from Dickens’ sequences, but frequently divides some of the events into two or three short separate scenes, and introduces modifications consisting mostly in some condensation of the dialogues.

There are some elements added in the serial, and these include a subplot of Nemo’s/Captain Haddon’s downfall in the first episode. It is part of the backstory, which is incorporated into a few separate scenes. The first one allows for the only, accidental, encounter between Esther and her father, both unaware of the connection between them when they bump into each other in the street. We can see Nemo at work, copying legal papers, and then spending the money thus earned in an opium den. In the serial at least he has a face, a degree a life of his own and some human qualities, which Dickens did not give him. Another invention of Davies – an ingenious one, in my opinion – is Tulkinghorn’s clerk, Clamb, who becomes a device at first for making possible the articulation of Tulkinghorn’s thoughts, and then for Inspector Bucket to have somebody to talk to and to interrogate. Clamb softens slightly Tulkinghorn’s profile, as the two seem to function well together. The presence of the clerk was criticised by members of the Dickens Fellowship, whose joint secretary, Selma Grove, stated in an interview: “Dickens specifically makes the point that Tulkinghorn does not have or need a clerk because he keeps all the secrets of the great families himself. This is an outrage and they shouldn’t be calling it *Bleak House*” (quoted in Marre 2005). For a less orthodox audience, however, Clamb fits the picture well, showing submissiveness towards Tulkinghorn and restrained terror after his death, and bringing slight comic relief with the way he shows his reluctance to follow Inspector Bucket’s orders during the investigation.

There are modifications to the central plot, which result from the fact that the story told by the camera reveals more than Esther’s narrative does. And so, the attraction Woodcourt feels for Esther and her interest in him become apparent in the adaptation much earlier and quite openly, while in the novel both are rather well hidden in Esther’s self-conscious narration. She mentions the name of Woodcourt as late as the end of Chapter XIV, while in the serial the young surgeon’s presence is much more conspicuous, as is his interest, or even his affection for Esther, which the novel’s Esther is too shy to admit. Episode 3 ends with Woodcourt’s decision to join the navy for financial reasons, and the way he says goodbye – theoretically talking to both Jarndyce and Esther, but in practice addressing his farewell speech and expressing regret directly to Esther – reflects his emotional attachment to the girl, while her reaction indicates that his affection is reciprocated. It has to be stressed,

however, that Woodcourt does not emerge as a typical romantic hero, although in the adaptation he gains more romantic qualities – the glances he exchanges with Esther and the way he looks at her suggest first his interest, then devotion. But the story of their courtship is an undercurrent – the emotional mainstream is John Jarndyce’s developing affection for Esther and her being unaware of it.

Davies openly admits inspiration drawn from the 1985 television adaptation of the novel. The dramatic solution he borrowed from Hopcraft is that which follows Jo’s death. Dickens’ narrator expresses some angry thoughts concerning social injustice, which in the 1985 adaptation are articulated by Jarndyce, who turns away from Jo’s deathbed, but does not look at the camera:

One stroke of genius in the 1985 version was Hopcraft’s inspired idea of putting Dickens’s words on the death of Jo into Jarndyce’s mouth: “Dead, your Majesty [...] and dying thus around us every day!” I couldn’t think of anything to equal it, so I included it, as an act of homage to Hopcraft (who died very recently) and, of course, to Dickens himself. (Davies quoted in Giddings 2005)

The words in the 2005 adaptation still sound accusatory, but are expressed less aggressively than in Hopcraft’s version.

The final scene is one of those new to the narrative – it is a dance at Esther’s wedding party. The pastoral character of this scene matches in its mood that of the last chapter of the novel, in which Esther tells the readers about her marital happiness. The ending does not show the wedding as such, but part of the reception, and the final shot is that of Esther and Woodcourt’s kiss, filmed with a camera that circles around them. The ending, then, the final image, brings us closer to Davies’ adaptations of Jane Austen’s novels, closing with a romantic note, much more romantic than Dickens’ ending has, and reflecting – or actually illustrating – the happiness Esther finds in her life at the end of the novel.

The characters

The BBC Press Pack specifies forty principal roles in the serial. Some of them are those of fully developed, complex characters, like Esther, Lady Dedlock and Tulkinghorn, but there are also one-dimensional characters, typical of Dickens, slightly or strongly grotesque, very characteristic, like Guppy, Miss Flite and Smallweed. The numerous characters could be grouped according to the functions they play in the narrative (see Geraghty 2012), or according to the setting they are associated with (Chesney Wold, Bleak House, Tom-All-Along’s, Krook’s Rag-and-Bone shop; while the Chancery is the setting in which most of the characters’ lots cross). Both the novel and the serial present a cross-section of British Victorian society, at the very bottom of whose structure there is “the world of extreme poverty” (Dyson 1969:250) represented by the brickmakers, Nemo, Neckett and his children, Guster (not present in the serial) and Jo. The next stratum is that to which Miss Flite, George, Phil and the Bagnets (absent in the serial) belong: poor, in debt, but maintaining some dignity. The lower-middle-class world has its representatives in the Snagsbys (of reduced role in the serial), Guppy, Tony Jobbling (not present

in the serial), the Smallweeds (reduced to Mr Smallweed and his granddaughter only in the serial), Skimpole, Mr Turveydrop and the Jellybys. Boythorn and Jarndyce are upper middle-class with inherited wealth, Mr Rouncewell is a self-made successful businessman (with his role diminished in the serial), and at the very top of the social structure we have the Dedlocks of Chesney Wold. In the adaptation, the class status is signalled through the dwellings and their décor, the costumes, and the manners the characters display.

The characters – and the subplots they are involved in – that have been reduced in the adaptation include the Bagnets (George's friends), Volumnia Dedlock (Sir Leicester's cousin), Guster (the Snagsbys' maid), Tony Jobbling (Krook's lodger taking Nemo's room) and Mrs Smallweed and young Smallweed. Partial reduction is also applied to a pompous preacher, Mr Chadband, and his wife, who have a chance to speak a number of times in the novel, and who in the serial appear in only one short scene, remaining nameless. Mrs Snagsby, who in the novel has her own subplot, spying on her husband, in the serial appears only as an insignificant background character, while Mr Rouncewell's son, does not appear in person, but the viewers know that he exists, as his love for Rosa, the Dedlocks' maid, is an indispensable element in the process of Tulkinghorn's discovery of Lady Dedlock's secret. The functions of those characters significant for the serial's main subplots are taken over by others (e.g. in the novel it is Mrs Bagnet who fetches George's mother to help him, in the serial it is Esther together with Jarndyce), while the overall narrative structure of the serial remains coherent, despite being devoid of minor events brought forth by Mrs Snagsby's jealousy or Mr Chadband's narcissism. For the viewers superficially familiar with Dickens' novel those reductions do not cause any information gap; the narrative closes seamlessly over the elements which were removed from the plot in the adaptation. Naturally, some of the more orthodox admirers of Dickens' fiction, having their favourites among the plethora of background characters, complained.

Esther's centrality to the serial's narrative has been already stressed, but the way that this particular character has been modified in the adaptation requires special attention. The novel's Esther had been an emotionally deprived child who grew into a shy, modest woman, with very low self-esteem. A number of critics found her both as a character and as a narrator hardly bearable and not well constructed, calling her: "insipid, one of Dickens' flat, non-comic good characters, innocent of imaginative life, more of a moral signpost than a person" (Harvey 1965:226). There were, however, others who appreciated Dickens's consistency and insight into the mentality of a young woman who is "emotionally starved," being brought up in the conviction that it would be better had she never been born. The portrait was called "accurate and acute" in depicting Esther's excessive self-criticism and self-abnegation, constant craving for others' good opinion (see Storey¹¹⁴ 1987:22).

¹¹⁴ Storey is referring here, most of all, to Q.D. Leavis' opinion.

Most of these characteristics disappear in the adaptation, as we do not have Esther's narrative voice in the serial. As Davies explains: "To use an Esther voice-over would make it even more difficult to make her appeal to the audience" (quoted in Giddings 2005). We see her in action only, and although she does have her moments of flashbacks which suggest the trauma of her lonely childhood, deprived of love, and evoking in her the feeling of guilt for the very fact of her existence, at the same time her voice, her poise, her composure in difficult situations in which she can be of help, give the impression of her being a strong person others willingly rely on. Davies openly admitted in a number of interviews that Esther posed a problem for him, and he did not really like her. It would be virtually impossible to transform her into a *Lizzy-Bennet*-like character, but he did make the serial's Esther a character much easier to identify with for the contemporary female audience. She is much more self-confident, critical of those who in her eyes deserve criticism and her role as a helper for the weaker ones is more understandable. Davies explains his understanding of Esther as follows:

To most modern readers, Esther's self-regarding, coy, and disingenuous presentation of self is distinctly off-putting, I think [...] Esther is a severely damaged child – she's been told, in so many words, that she's her mother's disgrace, and it would have been better if she had never been born. So she starts the story with a pretty low self-image. But she quite quickly realises that she's useful, intelligent, practical, and has more common sense and judgement than most of those who surround her, even Jarndyce. So I worked on that – her sharp insights, her refusal to be taken in by the Skimpoles of this world, her quickness to see practical solutions, and spiced up her empathetic and loving nature with a bit of spikiness. (quoted in Giddings 2005)

Anna Maxwell Martin's Esther is anything but stupid. She is alert, questioning, pragmatic and dismissive of fools, such as her suitor Guppy, and critical of hypocritical parasites like Skimpole.

Although the way Anna Maxwell Martin handles the character is admirable, there are some problems which were caused by the decision to cast her. As the producer admits, Maxwell Martin got the part because of her acting skills, as did Gillian Anderson, cast as Esther's mother. What was disregarded was the required resemblance between the two characters, which is stressed a number of times in the novel, as it is in the serial. Numerous characters meeting Esther have the feeling she reminds them of somebody else, while Guppy seeing Lady Dedlock's portrait recognises Esther in it. In the case of the two actresses there is not only absolutely no similarity between the two, but also there is only a nine-year age difference between them. These facts create a dissonance in reception when we see the two together, or when the similarity between them is talked about.

Gillian Anderson's Lady Dedlock is overwhelmed with sadness, even when she calls it boredom, while Dickens' Lady Dedlock is, first of all, bored. We do not really have any emphasis on her being a woman of fashion, which is the case in the novel, suggesting her vanity. The cold bleakness of both Chesney Wold and the Dedlocks' London house give an impression of being abodes of deeply

unhappy people, existing in a world somehow isolated from anybody else, unlike in the novel, where Chesney Wold is full of people, since the Dedlocks have an intense social life. There is less spite in the representation of the Dedlocks in the serial than we can find in Dickens' text, and less overt criticism of the rich of the world: the irony in the accounts of the fashionable society Chesney Wold represents is not present in the adaptation, and Sir Leicester is not the buffoon he is in the novel.

Lady Dedlock's body language is limited to her facial expressions, as she is very static. Anderson's blue eyes, which the camera focuses on so frequently, are filled with melancholy, except for the moments when they are steel cold in conversations with Tulkinghorn. Anderson convincingly expresses all the different feelings: the restrained anxiety in the scenes with Guppy, the fear and disgust in the scenes with Tulkinghorn, haughtiness in the scenes with her servants, resignation in the scenes with Sir Leicester and sheer despair and longing in the scenes with Esther. One of the marvellous moments is the one in which the overexcitable Guppy is contrasted with Lady Dedlock going through a range of conflicting emotions and reflecting them in her facial expression only, as that is the moment of illumination that Esther is the daughter she thought was dead. However, the scenes with Charles Dance playing Tulkinghorn are the most interesting that Lady Dedlock appears in, as the tension between the two is rendered through their interplay, while the astonishing physical contrast between them, with Dance's over 190-centimeter-tall Tulkinghorn hovering over Anderson's slender, 160-centimeter-tall Lady Dedlock, is willingly explored by the camera.

Tulkinghorn is a villain of Dickens's novel, punished for his excessive self-confidence and enjoyment found in controlling other people's lives. Charles Dance was an interesting choice for the part, as he is younger than the novel's character seems to be and brings with him the memory of his earlier performances, some of them being of quite romantic heroes. He also played a villain, Ralph Nickleby, in another adaptation of Dickens' prose – in *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* (2001). Davies, in his commentary for the DVD edition, admits that he felt some sexual tension in the consistency with which Tulkinghorn pursued Lady Dedlock. Dance, however, perceives the character as a misogynist, and possibly a suppressed homosexual, who finds fulfilment in life by manipulating and controlling others. It seems that Tulkinghorn has no practical goal in pursuing Lady Dedlock; in the serial, however, the pleasure he derives from exercising power over Lady Dedlock is much more apparent than it is either in the novel or the 1985 adaptation.

There are some unquestionably positive characters in Dickens' narrative, and one of them is certainly John Jarndyce (Denis Lawson). He is a marvellous character in both the novel and the serial, although his role is auxiliary. He is the embodiment of goodness, lack of selfishness and forgiveness. Lawson – to Davies' delight – managed to make Jarndyce also somehow potentially attractive to Esther,

making her decision to marry him not look like a form of sacrifice. There is some energy about him, besides the goodness and tenderness, which makes the viewers willing to accept him as a potential husband of the protagonist. The close-ups of Lawson's face reflect very early in the production the interest he takes in Esther. The viewers see what the girl seems not to notice, and as he appears to be an extremely good man, we tend to sympathise with him: "Jarndyce's realisation that he has made a mistake, and that he must relinquish Esther, is perhaps the most poignant moment in the story" (Davies quoted in Giddings 2005). In Lawson's case, similarly to Anderson's, the HD technology helped to emphasise in the close-ups the expressiveness of the eyes. There are numerous scenes, especially those involving John Jarndyce and Esther, as well as Ada, in which the viewers receive the signals about the characters emotion through tiny grimaces or meaningful looks, which are subtle but highly communicative. Looks and glances are vital for communicating the growing affection, and in those close-ups in this production they work better than ever in a television costume drama.

Ada (Carey Mulligan) and Richard (Patrick Kennedy), the two young wards whose legal guardian John Jarndyce becomes, are present in the serial in all the episodes (Richard dies in the last but one), as their subplot is parallel to Esther's, involving her directly due to her being Ada's companion. Ada becomes a much more interesting and independent character in the serial, she gains her own identity and she grows: "In the book, Ada has no character at all to speak of – but we decided to build from her affectionate and tactile nature – her love for Richard is a full-on teenage passion, fully reciprocated by him" (Davies quoted in Giddings 2005). Richard required – from Davies' point of view – less modification: "Richard, of course, is no problem at all – perfectly realised in the book, his heart-breaking decline is as instantly understandable to a modern audience as it was in Dickens' time" (Davies quoted in Giddings 2005). The viewers sympathise with Ada, who in Mulligan's performance is moving in her resigned loyalty to the man she loves and whose inevitable decline she observes.

Inspector Bucket (Alun Armstrong) is an interesting character because of the way he develops and due to the fact that he is the first police detective in English fiction. We perceive him at first as a villain, tracing Jo with whom the viewers' sympathy rests. However, as the mysteries deepen and multiply, Bucket emerges as a man of reason, justice and goodness, who manages to find the culprit and releases the innocents. He develops into a more interesting and complex character than he seems at the beginning of the novel. When he comes to investigate the case of Tulkinghorn's murder he feels at home in the victim's office, takes over his desk, drinks his wine, and despite the gloomy circumstances his conversations with Clamb and Smallweed have some comic undertones resulting from Bucket's ironic detachment. The same irony can be felt in his interrogation of "Sir Leicester Dedlock; Baronet," with an intentional pause between the name and the title, making the latter sound lightly offensive. There is a certain grotesqueness in the

make-up and costume design for him, also in the angles from which he is filmed, but the final, overall impression remains positive and assuring.

Undoubtedly one of the pleasures that come from reading Dickens and watching adaptations of his texts is that of getting acquainted with background characters highly memorable for their grotesqueness usually reflected in one or two characteristic, exaggerated forms of behaviour, gestures or consistently repeated phrases. Such characters appear also in *Bleak House* and the make-up and costume designers made some of them stand out even if their actual appearance is brief. Two of the minor, but memorable characters are Old Mr Turveydrop (Matthew Kelly), and Mr Bayham Badger (Richard Griffiths), who bring comic relief in those few minutes we can watch them on screen. There are others, more developed, but also bearing the characterising Dickensian hyperreal aura around them, and those include Guppy, Smallweed and Krook.

It is worth mentioning that the main characters in the 2005 production have been cast as if to be markedly different from those from the earlier adaptation. Davies admits that what he disliked about the 1985 production was the small physical difference between Ada and Esther, and hence in his adaptation the two girls are markedly different, both in the physical appearance and the way they are handled by the actresses. However, in the case of some of the background characters, those who, as Geraghty puts it, “often derived believability from the highly unrealistic exaggeration and repetition of some key physical attribute or phrase which has the cumulative effect of lending the character a quality of intense, if narrow, life” (2012:64), it is actually difficult to interpret them in a variety of ways. Comparing the two adaptations it seems natural to conclude that while complex characters leave more space for the adaptor’s and the actors’ interpretation, the one-dimensional ones are adapted and performed in a very similar way.

Mr Guppy (Burn Gorman) became “everybody’s favourite character” as the director and the producer admit in the commentary for the DVD edition. This character is both comic and pitiful, as he is in the text as well, but Gorman’s performance made this character stand out even more than Guppy did in the 1985 production. Although his behaviour is frequently exaggerated and his feelings for Esther turn out to be superficial once her face becomes disfigured, his clumsiness and constant finding himself in trouble make the viewers sympathise with him and await his appearances, the last of which ends with a charming glide out of the room in which his final proposal is rejected. Despite his serious narrative functions Guppy is a comic character.

Another character who – despite being quite mischievous – brings comic relief into the story is Mr Smallweed (Phil Davis). This villainous, greedy debt collector appears in Episode 5, when he is brought to Tulkinghorn’s office. The scenes involving both Tulkinghorn and Smallweed are excellent, as the two create a marvellous contrast in style, class, colour, register and lexicon. In the

later scenes Smallweed is accompanied by his granddaughter, Judy (Loo Brealey), responding wilfully to his order “Shake me up, Judy!,” aimed at making the partly paralysed man more comfortable in the sedan chair used for transporting him. The exclamation, due to its repetitive nature, becomes a comic element, awaited by the audience, once the couple appear on screen.

Unlike in the other productions discussed here, in *Bleak House* (2005) “the downstairs people” are not only visible, but also have their private life and problems, which obviously results from the contents of the source text and from Dickens’ interest in the life of the lower classes, not from any revolutionary approach to adapting a nineteenth-century novel. Among these characters we can find the Dedlocks’ housekeeper, Mrs Rouncewell (Anne Reid), and two lady’s maids, Hortense (Lilo Baur) and Rosa (Emma Williams). All three women have small subplots of their own. There is also Mercury (Richard Cant), the footman in the London home of Sir Leicester Dedlock, about whom the viewers do not learn much, but whose presence is vital in solving the mystery of Tulkinghorn’s death. Cant’s performance in the short scenes with Guppy and Bucket makes Mercury a memorable character in his interaction with the two men, towards whom he clearly feels disgust. He is there not only to open the door – he has an opinion of his own and – when given a chance – he expresses it, either verbally or with his body language.

The visuals

Dickens’ fiction has never tempted its adaptors to indulge in the visual beauty of sets and costumes. The settings of his stories are frequently literally bleak and even if a location is an upper-class estate, its descriptions infrequently indicate the beauty the viewers could be impressed with. Nevertheless, historical locations are vital for any costume drama, and such were used in the production we are discussing here. The Press Pack lists the authentic locations, which is clearly aimed at promoting visits to the place, some of which belong to the National Trust.

The producers wanted to find a location which could be used for multiple settings, and Balls Park, just outside Hertford, had all they needed for the interiors and its exterior was used for that of Boythorn’s House. Another important location was Cobham Hall in Kent, as it became the exterior of the Dedlocks’ home, Chesney Wold. Ingatestone Hall in Essex, a sixteenth-century manor house played the exterior of Bleak House. However, in most of the scenes the beauty of neither the exterior nor the interiors is ever really exposed. The exteriors are usually presented in short shots, with the view frequently obstructed by tree branches, hence the conventions of “heritage shots” are manipulated and we cannot make an accusation of overfetishising objects of the past, as the viewers are “thrust [...] into the setting rather than offer[ed] a distant view allowing us to admire their period detail” (Geraghty 2012:86). In the interiors, the focus is always on the characters, not on the background against which they appear.

The serial's editing is perceived as its major innovation and by some of the critics as its major weakness. As White puts it: "the notion of 'energy' forms a vital element of the editing and visual style" of the adaptation (2010:238). The camerawork includes abrupt zooms, frequently accompanied by unsettling sounds and so-called "breathing camera."¹¹⁵ The use of light and colour is much "bolder" than in any other of the productions discussed here, just as Dickens is further from realism than were other writers whose works have been discussed earlier. This "fast and self-conscious editing which draws attention to itself through camera angles, extreme close-ups, and sudden cuts which give the impression of hurry and confusion and frustrate the viewer's desire to linger and see" (Kleinecke-Bates 2009:115) marks a significant novelty in the genre. The props are there, stylish as they should be, but the viewers have hardly any time to admire them. There are moments when we have the detail exposed, like for example in the legal documents in which Nemo's handwriting is studied by Tulkinghorn, which were created on some stunning decorative paper. There is also a visual element which plays a consolidating function in the narrative stretching through the fifteen episodes. These are Lady Dedlock's letters, which in the adaptation become foregrounded and keep reappearing more often than they do in the novel. Their significance is already suggested by the opening credits, in which the letters, bound up with a ribbon, can be seen as the final and central image. Their silent presence attains its visual, symbolic form, as that of the element which symbolically unites Lady Dedlock with her former lover and her thought-to-be-dead child. The letters change hands as they move from Nemo to Krook, then Smallweed, Tulkinghorn, Inspector Bucket, Smallweed again and eventually Sir Leicester Dedlock, baronet, which leads to Lady Dedlock's flight and demise. Whenever the letters appear in the frame, the camera focuses on them in a quick zoom, stressing their significance.

The costumes are period ones, but most of them are rather simple. Even in the case of those more elaborate ones the camera does not expose their richness. That also results from close-ups – in most cases we do not really see much more than the face, neck and shoulders. As the camera focuses on her eyes most of the time, the dress is not really there to impress the viewers visually. Esther's and Ada's dresses are simple, as their financial standing is rather low. It is also significant that these characters wear the same two or three dresses throughout the story.

The camera work that is unusual for costume drama is most conspicuous in the dialogue scenes. Characters involved in a dialogue are not only shown from different angles, but also partly obscured by some elements of the frame that are in the foreground, but on which the camera is not focused and which thus remain blurred. Those might be decorative glass elements, as is the case in Chesney Wold,

¹¹⁵ There are observable movements of the hand-held camera, resulting from the breathing of the camera operator.

or some pieces of furniture, or tree branches if a given scene takes place outdoors. In Geraghty's opinion:

The production team does not feel constrained by the visual conventions of the classic serial and crucially it attempts to tie its use of technology to the generation of intimacy and emotion and an emphasis on rendering performance and feeling. (2012:106-107)

Geraghty cites opinions expressed by the reviewers, many of whom have felt the self-conscious visual style was quite "modish" and the "snappy" editing made the story difficult to follow, but stressed that the production had its assets and could be "enjoyed despite rather than because of" that visual style (see Geraghty 2012:108-109).

The use of light deserves a more detailed discussion. There were complaints from the viewers of excessive darkness, but the same accusation can be thrown against the 1985 adaptation. The darkness results partly from the fact that large sections of Dickens's text are set at night, in scarcely lit places – the slums, Tom-All-Along's being the best example. But besides that darkness imposed in a way by the source text, black background is frequently used in the close-ups, those of Tulkinghorn in particular. Most of the interiors, except for Bleak House and Boythorn's estate, are not well-lit, which contributes to the overall impression of gloom. The interiors of law offices, like Kenge and Carboy's, or Mr Vholes', are cluttered, with piles of paper taking up most of the space. The Chancery is dark, with only the faces of the people gathered there visible. The places where poverty-stricken characters live, i.e. Tom-All-Along's, or the brickmaker's place, are so dark that the interiors are scarcely visible, which contributes to little empathy being evoked in the audience. Krook's place is dark as well, but lit well enough to show the cluttered space and the mess its owner lives in. While analysing Dickens' text J. Hills Miller states "The world of the novel is already, when the story begins, a kind of junk heap of broken things. This is especially apparent in the great number of disorderly, dirty, broken-down interiors in the novel" (Miller 1958:158). The serial visually attempts to render the world Dickens created. Krook's Rag-and-Bone shop is one of these disorderly places, the Jellybys' is another, and so is the room in which Richard Carstone eventually lives.

The sets are designed to create a specific atmosphere at each of the different settings: of gloom (Chancery, Krook's), of coldness, sterility and boredom (Chesney Wold), and of warmth and friendliness (Bleak House, Boythorn's estate). The use of colour and light is the most apparent when we contrast the way Bleak House and Chesney Wold are presented. In the former the light is soft and warm, and so are the colours. Chesney Wold is always shown in the shades of cold blue, never in full light, with no fireplace, or direct light. The exposition of that setting is one of the most apparent differences between this production and its 1985 predecessor, in which the grandeur of the place was presented in long, wide shots, and there was no symbolic light and colour play used.

The camera work has drawn the attention of numerous critics and reviewers, with some of them finding in it explanation for the lack of fog, omnipresent in Dickens' descriptions of all the London settings and entirely absent in the serial. Dan Hill provides the following analysis of the way in which the scenes are filmed to create a similar claustrophobic feeling in the recipient:

[...] the unusual camerawork might be fulfilling the same foggy function. In scene after scene of Andrew Davies's adaptation, the camera obscures; framing locations such that characters were pushed to sides of the screen; filmed through doorways; shot over the shoulder of other characters; seen obscured through blurred whiskers. Candlelight and dark wood interiors, wine glasses and books, as well as the abundantly fertile paper undergrowth of legal chambers, provided numerous opportunities to crowd the actors - such that the overall effect was as oppressive as the absent fog, everyone hemmed in by circumstance and their surroundings, conveying a sense of gnawing claustrophobia. (Hill 2006)

Other critics have referred to the frequent presence of rain as a potential equivalent of the fog. As Billen (2005) notes, not without certain irony, that: "Instead of 'fog everywhere,' the meteorological conditions have worsened to a mini Katrina. There is rain everywhere, slashing, lashing, bouncing off the top hats, steaming off the horses, reflecting off the streets." It is true, though, that there are relatively few sunny days shown, and those are when Jarndyce, Esther and Ada are in Bleak House and also when they are staying at Boythorn's. There are several outdoor scenes of almost pastoral character, with the characters resting on the grass or strolling, and those scenes are in contrast with the London scenes, either dark, or in blue-grey light. The streets of London are muddy, the light is grey-blue, the traffic - both horse and pedestrian - is heavy enough to give an impression of a crowded place.

Visually *Bleak House* (2005) refrains from the heritage aesthetics - if we have a carriage, it is in a hasty drive, not a leisurely one, there are no long shots of the landscape accompanied by background music. The use of music is also far from what the audience of costume drama would expect: it appears mostly to increase the suspense. We either have dialogues or disquieting non-diegetic sounds. However, despite the general withdrawal from the heritage aesthetics and refraining from the traditional in the classic serial indulgence in the beauty of the sets, in *Bleak House* (2005) there are scenes, whose picturesque quality has to be acknowledged. The best example is the scene of Lady Dedlock's confession made to Esther. It is a heart-breaking scene at the end of Episode 8, much more painful and moving than that in the 1985 adaptation. The setting is the Ghost Walk, which as such does not really seem to have the atmosphere Dickens gives it in the novel, but frames the reconciliation scene with its wildly growing plants. The two women sit in the centre of the frame, one in a pale blue, the other in a grey dress, with the only two similarities between them stressed, i.e. the same eye and hair colour. When the confession is made, the two women, crying, hug in a way in which they seem to become one body with Lady Dedlock's head, against the green and grey

background. The final scene of Episode 14, being also the last scene in which the two women meet, gives us a parallel image, but this time in the rain, in front of the gates of the burial ground where Lady Dedlock dies – in the serial her death takes place in her daughter's arms. As in the previously described scene, the final image shows the two women in the centre of the frame, this time the angle is from above them, as they cuddle on the ground, the two dresses melting into one wet folded purple and blue background, this time with Esther's body and Esther's head dominating. Some light shines through the bars of the gate, adding to the melancholy beauty of the image.

The critics stress also the fact that the serial cuts itself off from the realism dominating in the classic serials of the 1990s. However, as Giddings rightly points out, Dickens' "realism" has always been quite idiosyncratic:

It has long been my opinion that British TV versions of Dickens err on the side of worthy, social realism. They miss the real essence of Dickens's fiction. He used his creative imagination to portray the real world, that we are conditioned to see as a rational and reasonable place, as it really is – a grotesque parody of reality. He puts before us a dream-like melodrama, a mixture of the phantasmagorical and sentimental, the grotesque and the comic – all at once. It is not "realism". It is a unique hyperrealism, as convincing, comic and frightening as our dreams. The disturbing thing is that as often as not we find the apparently implausible, exaggerated and distorted visions in Dickens's world are securely based on realities - realities we had not truly perceived before. (Giddings 2005)

In the context of televised Dickens, Giddings praises the 2005 adaptation as "the best attempt at something truly 'Dickensian' that [he] ha[s] ever seen on the small screen."

Bleak House (2005) was formally revolutionary within the classic serial genre, as for the first time in the history of the genre the audience's attention was drawn to the form rather than the content, and the formal transparency, so characteristic for costume drama, was refrained from. That, however, has not been repeated in a comparable scope in any classic serial afterwards. *Little Dorrit* (2008), which was Davies' next classic-novel adaptation, shows very little formal experimentation, when compared to *Bleak House* (2005), and seems aesthetically and stylistically closer to *Cranford* (2007). Its pace is much slower, there are no sudden zooms or breathing camera effects. Some unusual camera angles are used, however, particularly in the scenes that are intended to reflect their original Dickensian grotesqueness. The return to a more traditional form resulted in moderate critical attention drawn to the serial. *Bleak House* (2005) was controversial, but stood out; it was innovative and quite brave, while still telling a story recognisable as Dickens'. *Little Dorrit* (2008) was "brilliant, obviously," but the reviews showed some disappointment.

Conclusions

“Against those who understand the television classic novel as ‘aerosol version of great work’ constituting a ‘hollowing out of our common cultural heritage,’¹¹⁶ the makers of these serials, and some critical traditions, talk of an implied cultural continuity, of honest, professional and creative attempts at ‘getting it right,’ and of bringing high culture to a wider constituency, albeit in a modern, commercial form.”

Len Platt (2008:17)

Although television adaptations have frequently been considered to be of lower quality than feature films produced for the cinema, due to being less visually attractive and addressed to a wider and more varied audience,¹¹⁷ which contributes *per se* to their lower level of sophistication, they seem – due to their much less limited length – to be an ideal medium for novels to be adapted into, especially if we consider fidelity as a vital criterion in evaluating adaptations. In this sense, the classic serial becomes an ideal form in which a literary classic can return, metamorphosed, into cultural circulation. Its popular reception has changed significantly over the decades: once loved by the audience, both at home and abroad, it is at present struggling to maintain its long-enjoyed high-quality reputation. The classic serial is also troublesome as the subject of scholarly interest: too literary to be fully appreciated as a television product by media studies and too televisual to attract the attention of film studies. As an adaptation of a literary text, though, it remains of interest to literary studies specialists, growing out of the 19th-century literary tradition as much as it does of the radio and television conventions.

The early adaptations to the form of the classic serial were intended to provide easier access to canonical texts through television, a transparent medium used for transmitting the contents of the literary text. Over the decades of its existence, however, the classic serial’s own attractiveness increased – first due to the lavish costumes, impressive even in black and white, and later even

¹¹⁶ The first of the two quotations comes from Brandt’s *British Television Drama in the 1980s* in which Jonathan Miller’s words are cited (1993:196), while the second is included in Lauritzen’s *Emma on Television* (1981) .

¹¹⁷ The television audience is stereotypically perceived as less demanding, more random, and the watching experience is more likely to be interrupted. However, the original broadcast of the productions analysed in Part 2, both in the U.K. and abroad, kept people at home, and persuaded them to ensure their viewing was not disrupted.

more so in colour, and since the 1980s thanks to the use of authentic locations rich in period detail, as well as presentation of charming shots of the English landscape. *Bleak House* (2005) brought about another turn – towards televisual self-consciousness. With HD technology used for the first time in a period drama and new, “snappy” editing, bringing the serial visually closer to the contemporary television serials, this particular production marked, seemingly, a new beginning in the history of the genre. However, it turned out to be rather a one-off experiment and the classic serial has returned to its more conservative style since then.

Whether stylistically traditional or innovative, the classic serial serves in all cases at least one common purpose – popularisation of a given literary text, which can either be well known, or might have been forgotten. It has been long agreed upon by both the critics and the audience that there is more to gain than to lose in having access to a television adaptation – either complementary to or instead of reading the novel. In the case of less-well-known texts, a successful serial leads to an immediate increase in the sales of the source texts. Two of the five productions discussed in this study are examples of refreshing the public memory of nineteenth-century masterpieces (*Middlemarch* and *Bleak House*), other two of bringing somehow forgotten texts back into circulation (*The Forsyte Saga* and *Brideshead Revisited*) and one of introducing an aspiring classic in the form of the classic serial (*The Raj Quartet* becoming *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984)). Although the status of George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* and Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House* is unquestionable, the source texts of the other three productions were not exactly perceived as classic at the moment of the serials’ broadcast, but were “upgraded” in this respect after the adaptations’ success: Waugh and Scott were actually canonised post factum, while Galsworthy’s novels climbed up the reading lists after a few decades of their existence in relative obscurity. In all three cases the serials’ popularity far exceeded that which the source texts had ever enjoyed.

The makers of classic serials are aware of the fact that for a vast part of the audience their productions are the channel through which the classic literary works become accessible. Some viewers will turn to the source texts after the viewing experience; some never will. It seems that television producers are conscious of the responsibility for the memory of the source text which stays with the audience. As Cardwell puts it: “If the public is to depend upon these representations of great literature for their educative and informative value, then the adaptations must provide a fair representation of the source novels” (2002:188). Hence, the people involved in the classic serial productions are determined, as were their predecessors, to stay as close as possible to the text, and the period detail. As Platt (2008:17) notes: “This is not simply a matter of respect for the master copy, as it were; it is also a question of responding to an imagined sense of relationship between the reader and the classic novel.” That

“faithfulness” is expected, as the writer’s name plays a vital role in the marketing process.¹¹⁸ It would frequently lead to what Leitch (2007:172) calls “fetishizing [...] the original text’s dialogue, which is replicated as fully and as literally as possible.” Nevertheless, Giles Cooper, a screenwriter for the BBC, points out that: “very few novelists write dialogue which can be put into the actor’s mouth untouched, however colloquial it may look on the page” (Cooper quoted in Lauritzen 1981:47). The screenwriter’s efforts are put into preserving as much as possible of the original dialogues, saving the most recognisable lines, and at the same time making the conversations sound natural in the televisual context.

Kerr complained in 1982 about the lack of significant formal differences between the classic serials, while in the source texts those differences are profound. From the 1982 perspective it could have seemed so, but as the selected examples discussed in this publication show, formal differences can be observed while studying the productions diachronically, the more developed the television technology is, the more conspicuous are the differences. Naturally, the further television develops its own language and the more technologically advanced it becomes, the easier it is to adjust the means available to find the way to reflect the character of the text adapted. The best example here is the 2005 *Bleak House*, in which an attempt was made at reconstructing Dickens’ world not so much through decorations, costumes and make-up, as through appropriate styles of camera work and editing. Actually, all the five serials crossed the existing generic boundaries, and contributed to the development of the classic serial as a television genre in their own ways: *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) in its length and thematic seriousness; *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) in its book length/adaptation length ratio, first of all, but also in the introduction of filmic solutions, heritage shots and general visual lavishness; *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) at multiple levels – locations, seriousness of the subject, historical context, length of the source texts. In *Middlemarch* (1994) and *Bleak House* (2005), both based on texts with adaptation history longer and richer than those of the three other source texts discussed in this study, and with an unquestionable status of “classic novels,” Andrew Davies showed greater freedom in plot and character

¹¹⁸ In the case of the classic serial the adaptors always use the same title as the source text, which is recognisable for the general audience; this very audience expects and assumes faithfulness to the plot, or characteristics and motivation of the characters, and any modification of those leaves such an audience with the feeling of having been somehow betrayed. Using a given title with a product which openly claims to be an adaptation, using the name of the source text’s author in the opening credits – as the classic serials do – results in some obligations. The opening credits of many of the classic serials, and DVD editions, once they appear, include the name of the novelist as that of the author. So, we can watch, e.g.: “*The Forsyte Saga* by John Galsworthy,” “*Middlemarch* by George Eliot,” “Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*” or “*Bleak House* by Charles Dickens.” In the case of *Brideshead Revisited* the DVD edition mentions Waugh on the back covers, but the opening credits state his authorship in the same format as in the former cases. The opening credits of *The Jewel in the Crown* start with the information: “Based on *The Raj Quartet* by Paul Scott,” but the DVD edition, as in the case of Waugh’s text, mentions Scott on the back cover.

modification in the adaptation process, and visual styles completely new to BBC productions were applied in both cases.

Despite a considerable degree of faithfulness to the source text expected from the classic serial, the adaptors do introduce modifications to the plot of the source text, as has been already indicated in Part 2. Those modifications consist both of some detractions, inevitable in most adaptations, and some minor additions, necessary for achieving coherence in the televisual text. The adaptations discussed also provide interesting illustrations of the way in which adaptations become interpretations, a certain reading, of given texts for the audience contemporary with the adaptor. The most apparent examples here are *The Forsyte Saga* (1967), where the female characters were foregrounded, while in *Middlemarch* (1994) and *Bleak House* (2005) the female protagonists appear as having more of the contemporary temper and decisiveness than those of the source texts exhibited. Davies, quoted in *The Making of Pride and Prejudice*, makes a comment which illustrates the approach to the source texts he as a screenwriter represents:

[...] what is the justification of spending money if you're just going to produce a series of pictures alongside the dialogue of the novel? You have to offer an interpretation of the novel [...] The novel is still there for anybody to read – and everybody has their own “adaptation” in a sense when they're reading it. (quoted in Birtwistle 1995:3)

We can see Davies' approach in his adaptations, when we contrast them with the source text, or carry out a comparative analysis of some of its protagonists as presented in the serial. However, the 1981 *Brideshead Revisited* is actually very close to “being a series of pictures alongside the dialogue of the novel,” which – as has been suggested in the analysis in Chapter 4 – works surprisingly well in the case of that particular text and that very serial.

There are critics who claim that an adaptation of a literary text is successful when it replaces the memory of the original text not only for individual readers/viewers, but also for a given community familiar with the text (see Ellis 1982). Evaluated in such terms the television serials discussed, especially the first three, score very highly among adaptations. It also seems that the key to success of any costume drama is the presentation of contemporary anxieties, fears and concerns in period costumes and setting, because only then can the audience be involved emotionally, and as the analyses have aimed to show, this was the case with the productions studied. Despite the modifications introduced at various levels in the process of adaptation, the classic nature of the source texts – understood not as their recognisability, but as the universality and openness to multiple interpretations – has been to a large extent preserved in the five serials which resonated so well with their 20th- and 21st-century audiences' sensibilities. For the television producers the classic status of the source texts had to find – and found – its reflection also in the supreme quality of the production, i.e. in high-quality acting, elaborate costumes, reconstructed historical setting, period costumes and props, and since the 1980s film technology and authentic locations used.

A good adaptation gives its source text a new life, stimulates the audience intellectually and emotionally and, in the case of the classics filmed as costume drama, provides some information about the past times. One of the features of television as a medium is its focus on contemporaneity and presentness, hence the classic serial clearly stands out in this respect, with its focus being on the past, and its faithfulness to the literary source resulting in a pace slower than in other television productions. This concentration on the past resulted in its opponents' insistence that filming the classics is an exercise in escapism from contemporary problems. Such an accusation stems from the assumption that the productions represent the past as more attractive than the present: an argument also frequently used in the "heritage debate." As Alan Clarke argued back in 2000, while discussing the representation of British history in film: "If we are coming increasingly dependent upon images of a cosy and secure past, it may well be that the present is unbearable or, at the very least, lacking in any crucial significance for us" (2000:77). The presently decreased popularity of costume drama might suggest, then, that either the present has become more bearable for the viewers, or simply the forms of escapism have evolved together with the development of the contemporary technology.

The fidelity to period detail is one of the classic serial's generic features, while its nostalgic mood is another. However, if such a mood is to be evoked, the vision of the past has to be presented as attractive, which brings us back to the assumption that the past recreated in the classic serial is more "aesthetic" than "historical." In such productions we frequently deal with a reinvention of the past, and a form of celebrating it. An accusation has been levelled against the classic serial that it presents a seductive image of the past, not really reflecting the historical reality. Platt is one of the critics who take up the subject of such (mis)representation of the past when it becomes "the historical setting" of a film or television adaptation of a literary text:

The historical setting of the novel [...] is a version of history, an interpretation of culture and society with its own emphases, distortion, gaps and inconsistencies. In aiming at a reproduction of the historical dimension, the television serial replicates not "history itself," as the makers often imply, but the past as it is thought to have been reproduced in fiction. (Platt 2008:18)

It is likely that examples could be found among classic serials, and in costume drama in general, for both representation of the novel's historical reality rather than a possibly realistic recreation of the historical past, and vice versa. These programs present a vision of the past, which we, the viewers, tend to accept as historical. As Platt puts it, in a classic serial we celebrate not the past, but "the modern, technological culture that can imagine the past so splendidly" (2008:19). As Cardwell (2002) mentions, and Monk's 2011 *Heritage Film Audiences: Period Films and Contemporary Audiences in the U.K.* also indicates, the costume drama audience – or at least some section of them – expects fidelity to the period detail, and complain if what they see does not meet their expectations. The audience "trusts"

adaptations of classic novels in the way they recreate the past and the makers of such adaptations are aware of their responsibility for aiming at possible accuracy.¹¹⁹ Most costume drama, despite sticking to the “period detail,” are not, and cannot be, entirely realistic – in most of them the “filth” is not there, the costumes are new and clean, the actors expose their white teeth and clean fingernails, while children dying of tuberculosis look quite well-nourished (see e.g. Jo in *Bleak House*). The costume, prop and make-up crews do their best to recreate the past, but they do it within the generic conventions, and make it match the contemporary audience’s expectations. It seems, however, something of a vicious circle – the adaptations shape our image of the past, but are influenced by what the producers believe the audience expects.

Out of the five productions selected for analysis here only *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) could be directly “accused” of presenting the past as “deceptively” attractive, although as Giddings and Selby notice, *The Forsyte Saga* (1967) also raised general interest in the Edwardian era, presenting that past period as a time when “peace, harmony, tranquillity, stability seem to have existed before the cataclysm of 1914” (2001:29). *Middlemarch* presents England on the cusp of change, but the viewers are led to believe that the reform and progress yet to come are not to be feared, nor the loss of the quality of life enjoyed at present to be regretted. *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) constitutes an interesting case, being categorised as a classic serial without entirely meeting the generic requirements.¹²⁰ It does, however, focus on the upper class members of society and presents the story from their perspective, making “a grammar school boy” the chief villain. It also shows the life of the British in pre-independence India as rather idyllic when contrasted with what they have to face and observe in the years of political upheaval marking the end of the Raj. So, despite presenting the British as becoming aware of their own misconceptions about India, most of the serial covers those very troubled years, which are far from “attractive,” and their presentation is equally far from being “rose-tinted.” *Bleak House* (2005) is an entirely different example in the group of adaptations selected for analysis in this study in terms of the representation of the past. Dickens’ texts, and adaptations of them, accordingly, are set in a past which is not nostalgically longed for, but in which social injustice can be observed and radical reform is sought. Those adaptations have always lacked the splendour so stereotypically assigned to the classic serial productions – Dickens’ texts are not about the pleasures of life of those of noble birth, hence neither is it so in their adaptations. Kleinecke-Bates suggests that “adaptations of Dickens’s novels and their depiction of the Victorian age, in particular Victorian London, have been influential in shaping how the period

¹¹⁹ Nelson (2008b:50) notices that: “[...] the accompanying ‘The making of [...]’ documentaries suggest, that there is considerable viewer interest in the crafting of the serials themselves, in how the illusion of historical reality, the conviction of authenticity, was achieved.”

¹²⁰ It is set in a past not too remote, not in England, and the author’s classic status is also somewhat questionable.

is imagined, and in fixing a notion of the Victorian age as a time of repression, anxiety and hypocrisy” (2009:117). Dickens’ past is not tempting, it is scary; it is interesting that the critics who complain about the classic serial’s idealisation of the past disregard the fact that a significant percentage of the productions in question are adaptations of Dickens’ texts.

Brundson (1990:85) refers to the classic serial as the epitome of “quality television” and specifies the following quality components: “literary source, the best of British acting, and money; representation either of upper-class life-style or of exotic poverty.” She also states that such productions “[j]ust like the National Trust and advertisements for wholemeal bread, [...] produce a certain image of England and Englishness which is untroubled by contemporary division and guaranteed aesthetic legitimacy” (1990:85). It cannot be denied that the serials used as export products, presenting what Butt calls “a marketable version of English culture” (2012:165), are responsible for creating an image of the British and their history with the privileged classes in focus, and this is precisely what has made some of their critics reproachful. Despite the fact that those exported productions include both strongly aestheticized adaptations of Austen’s or Gaskell’s texts, and those of Dickens’, Hardy’s or Eliot’s novels, the former seem to have overshadowed – at least for the critics – those latter ones and their more gloomy vision of bygone eras.

My examination of the genre leads to the conclusion that the poetics established for the classic serial in the 1990s, challenged by *Bleak House* in 2005, remains binding in the first decades of the 21st century, which productions like *Cranford* (2007), *Return to Cranford* (2009) and *Emma* (2009) confirm. The picture quality of the productions in question is certainly higher now than it was in the 1990s, there have been attempts made at reaching for some texts far beyond the canon (e.g. *Call the Midwife*), but no actual revolution has taken place. The question is whether the audience awaiting such productions would actually expect a revolution in a genre which seems so strongly connected with tradition. However, the number of classic serials produced has decreased. As Platt (2008:20) stresses, “the classic serial remains notionally intertextual with its prototype and in this sense performs the highly significant balancing act of reconciling modern technological culture with a more traditional privileging of the written word and the ‘literary.’” The “literary quality” of the serials in the genre, a feature it relies on, will, I believe, remain its asset, although the sector of the audience ready to appreciate that might actually be diminishing.

Cardwell insists that television adaptations of the literary works included in the canon “cannot be regarded as mere entertainment [...] [their] accomplishments are also measured with reference to these broader conceptions of television’s public role [...]” (2002:188). The role to educate, to inform, and to entertain, formulated for the BBC by Reith in the 1920s, has been reduced in recent years to the “to entertain” element, which can explain the reasons for fewer classic serials being made. In 2000, Buscombe rightly pointed out that:

British television is more than quality television, we have more than a model for public broadcasting, more than heritage television, more than serious information and educational television. For every *Brideshead* there is a *Benny Hill Show*, for every *Absolutely Fabulous*, there is an episode of *Teletubbies*. (2000:318)

Three years later Geraghty stated that: “in a multi-channel environment, quality drama becomes a product targeted at a niche audience” (2003:41). From the 2015 perspective that “niche” seems to have decreased significantly in size.

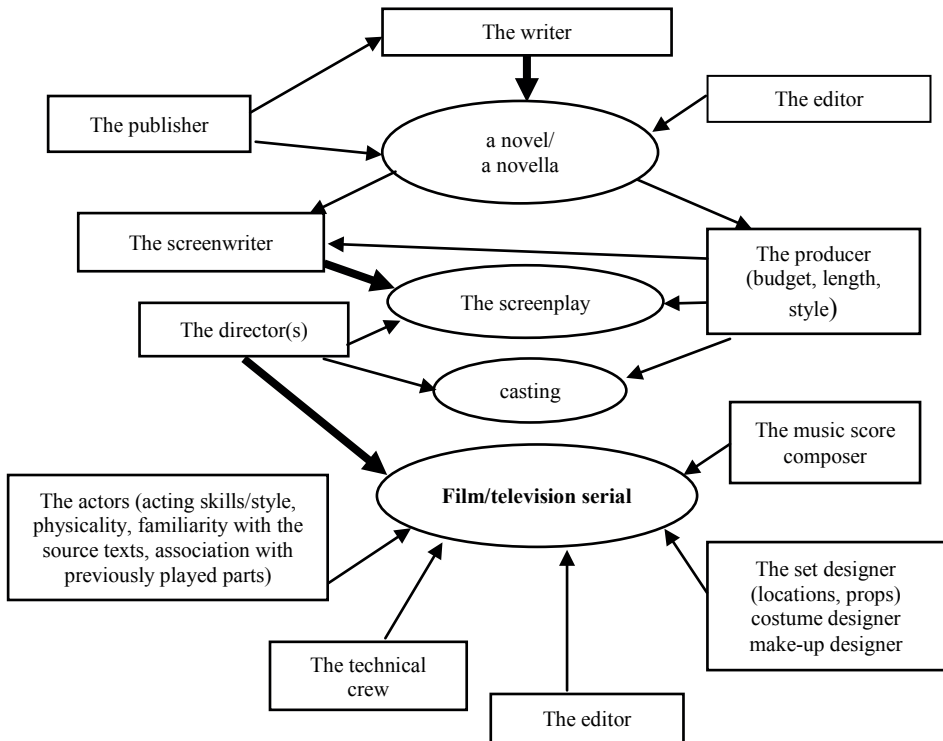
Whatever its present condition may be, the historical significance of the classic serial remains unquestionable. Although it has provided a relatively easy way into what Nelson calls “buying into cultural capital” (2008a:50), by watching rather than reading, it has still contributed to the dissemination of British cultural heritage, both domestically and internationally. Lauritzen back in 1981 writes about the impact of the classic serial on the book market, referring to the initial fear that “simplified versions of rich and complex works of fiction may deter a great many people from ever approaching the originals and hence lead to a general hollowing out of our common cultural heritage” (1981:8). The readership of the classics adapted increased, however, during the years of the growing popularity of the genre. The producers of the classic serials still notify publishers about their production plans in advance, so as to synchronise the broadcast with a new edition of a novel, frequently displaying in the graphic form of its covers significant similarity to the images used to advertise a given production, and provided with a vital phrase: “As seen on BBC/ITV.”

A study of this kind could have been expanded to include more productions, and the material for analysis has by no means been exhausted. It is to be hoped that more publications on the subject will follow, as the classic serial remains an interesting television product, however escapist – and old-fashioned – it may seem to many. Like Andrew Davies, I hope that some less frequently adapted texts will be reached for by the television companies, enriching the genre in the way the productions discussed here did in their time and providing interesting material for further studies.

Appendixes

Appendix 1. Contributors to the process of adaptation – a diagram

The simplified diagram below shows the numerous contributors to the process of adaptation, influencing its individual stages.



Appendix 2. The chronology of the novels and their subsequent television adaptations

The novels' titles	The setting (time)	The novels' first publication dates	Television adaptations' titles	The original broadcast dates of the serialised television adaptations
<i>Bleak House</i>	The early 1830s	1852-1853	<i>Bleak House</i>	1959 BBC
			<i>Bleak House</i>	1985 BBC2
			<i>Bleak House</i>	2005 BBC1
<i>Middlemarch</i>	The late 1820s, before 1832	1871-1872	<i>Middlemarch</i>	1968 BBC2
			<i>Middlemarch</i>	1994 BBC2
<i>The Man of Property</i>	1879-1887	1906	<i>The Forsyte Saga</i>	1967 BBC2/ 1968 BBC1 2002 ITV
<i>In Chancery</i>	1892-1901	1920		
<i>To Let</i>	1920	1921		
<i>The White Monkey</i>	1922-1923	1924		
<i>The Silver Spoon</i>	1923-1925	1926		
<i>Swan Song</i>	1926	1928		
<i>Brideshead Revisited</i>	1923-1938 1943	1944/1945	<i>Brideshead Revisited</i>	1981 ITV
<i>The Jewel in the Crown</i>	1942-1943 1968	1966	<i>The Jewel in the Crown</i>	1984 ITV
<i>The Day of the Scorpion</i>	1943-1944	1968		
<i>The Towers of Silence</i>		1971		
<i>A Division of the Spoils</i>	1945-1947	1975		

Appendix 3. *The Forsyte Saga* – the chronology of the events

The table below shows the chronology of the events appearing in *The Forsyte Saga*, both in the novels and the serial. Events constituting subplots involving out-of-the-family characters have not been included. The events listed below are only those, which appear or are discussed in the serial and are mentioned in the novels. The serial provides the dates in the form of a given year appearing on screen, the novels in several cases give months as well, in very few cases days, hence the dates in the left hand column are not always very specific. The underlined title of an episode indicates that the title is taken from the novels, where it is either used as the title of a given novel, or of a chapter.

Dates	Events	Novels	Episodes
1879 (1872 in the novel)	Winifred and Montague Dartie's engagement and wedding. Young Jolyon and Helene's love affair. Young Jolyon's elopement. Jolly Forsyte's birth.	The backstory of <i>The Man of Property</i> ; hints given about the dates	1. "A Family Festival"
			2. "A Family Scandal"
			3. "The Pursuit of Happiness"
			2. "A Family Scandal" not shown
1880	Val Dartie is born. Frances dies. Young Jolyon and Helene get married.		
1881	Soames starts courting Irene. Holly Forsyte is born.		3. "The Pursuit of Happiness"
1882	Soames and Irene's wedding		4. " <u>Dinner at Swithin's</u> "
1886 June	June gets engaged to Philip Bosinney; Irene and Bosinney meet. Old Jolyon and Young Jolyon reconcile.	<i>The Man of Property</i>	5. " <u>A Man of Property</u> "
September	Plans for the house at Robin Hill are born. Old Jolyon visits Jo and Helene. Aunt Ann dies.		
1887 April	The first conflicts about the house, Irene asks for freedom.		
October	Young Jolyon sees Irene and Bosinney in Botanical Garden.		7. "Into the Dark"
November	Rape, Bosinney's death, trial. Irene leaves Soames.		the beginning of 8 " <u>Indian Summer of a Forsyte</u> "

1892	Old Jolyon dies. Irene receives legacy.	Interlude: “Indian Summer of a Forsyte”	8. <u>“Indian Summer of a Forsyte”</u>
1892-1899 1894	Subsequent deaths of old Forsytes. Helene’s death.	<i>In Chancery</i>	9. <u>”In Chancery”</u>
1899	Monty Dartie runs away with a dancer. Holly and Val meet. Soames wants to divorce Irene. Jo visits Irene, their friendship begins. Winifred’s divorce proceedings start. Irene leaves for Paris, Jo joins her there.		10. “Challenge”
1900 January June	Jolly gets recruited, Jo returns from Paris. Soames follows Irene. Dartie returns to Winifred. Irene returns from Paris. Jolly dies. Val and Holly get married. Soames and Irene get divorced.		11. <u>“In the web”</u> and 12. <u>“Birth of a Forsyte”</u>
1901 January February 2 March May November	Soames and Anette’s wedding. Queen Victoria’s funeral. Jo and Irene’s wedding. Jon is born. Fleur is born, James dies.		12. <u>“Birth of a Forsyte”</u>
1920 Spring Summer October	Fleur and Jon meet and fall in love with each other. Jo dies, Jon and Irene leave England. Fleur marries Michael Mont.	<i>To Let</i>	13. <u>“Encounter”</u> 14. “Conflict” 15. <u>“To Let”</u> 16. “A family wedding”
1922	Fleur flirts with Wilfred Desert. Soames joins the Board of PPRS. George dies. Kit is conceived. Wilfred goes East.	<i>The White Monkey</i>	16. “A family wedding” 17. <u>“The White Monkey”</u> 18. <u>“Afternoon of a Dryad”</u>
1923 November	Kit is born. Michael decides to go into the Parliament.	<i>The Silver Spoon - backstory</i>	19. “No retreat”

1924		Interlude "A Silent Wooing"	20. <u>"A Silent Wooing"</u>
February	Jon meets Anne Wilmot in North Carolina.	<i>The Silver Spoon</i>	
September	Francis Wilmot visits London. The beginning of Fleur's conflict with Marjorie.		
1925	Action for libel.		21. "Action for libel" 22. <u>"The Silver Spoon"</u>
1926	Fleur, Michael and Soames' visiting Washington, D.C.	"Passers by"	23. "Strike" 23. "Strike" 24. "Afternoon in Ascot" 25. "Portrait of Fleur" 26. <u>"The Swan Song"</u>
May	Jon, Anne and Irene return to England. The General Strike. Fleur and Jon meet again.	<i>The Swan Song</i>	
Summer	Michael's project of slum clearance. Fleur's plans and actions to win Jon, opening the rest house in Dorking. Soames makes a research into his ancestors' history. Fleur wins and loses Jon. Soames dies.		

Appendix 4. *Brideshead Revisited* – the chronology of events

Chronology of the events appearing in *Brideshead Revisited*, both in the novels and the serial:

Dates	Events	Chapters	Episodes
1940s	Charles Ryder unexpectedly comes back to Brideshead which is in military use.	Prologue (pp. 1-14)	1. "Et in Arcadia Ego" minutes: 1-18
1920s	Book 1 "Et in Arcadia Ego"		
May 1923	Oxford, preparations for Eights Week. Sebastian visits Charles and takes him for a ride to Brideshead.	1 (pp.17-34)	minutes: 19-59
1922	Flashback. Charles' coming to Oxford, the first meeting with Sebastian, the first lunch with him at Christ Church.		
May 1923	The first sight of Brideshead, meeting the nanny, seeing the house inside		
	Cousin Jasper's visit to Charles, criticising him for connections with Sebastian and Anthony Blanche. Dinner with Anthony, meeting with Sebastian the following Sunday.	2 (pp.35-53)	minutes: 60-75
Summer 1923	Charles gets home for Long Vacation, miscommunicates with his father. A telegram from Sebastian comes, Charles leaves for Brideshead, meets Julia. Julia leaves Brideshead, Charles stays with Sebastian.	3 (pp.54-70)	minutes: 76-101 2. "Home and Abroad" minutes: 1-5
	Charles' aesthetic education at Brideshead, idyllic summer with Sebastian Bridey and Cordelia come to Brideshead. Charles and Sebastian go to Venice and meet Lord Marchmain and Cara. Return to London.	4 (pp. 71-94)	minutes: 6-16 minutes: 17-23 minutes: 24-48 minutes: 49-51
Autumn 1923	Oxford. Sebastian's depression increases. Lady Marchmain comes to Oxford to visit. Julia introduces Rex to the boys. A party in London, which ends with Sebastian's drunk driving and the boys' arrest. Samgrass becomes Sebastian's guardian.	5 (pp. 95-136)	3. "The Bleak Light of Day" minutes: 1-5 minutes: 6-7 minutes: 8-9 minutes: 9-31 minutes: 32-34

Christmas 1923	Christmas at Brideshead.		minutes: 34-48
Spring 1924	The boys return to Oxford Easter at Brideshead, Sebastian's drinking worsens. Conversation with lady Marchmain, Charles' leaving for London. Back in Oxford, Sebastian's drinking continues. Sebastian is sent down for a term and goes abroad with Samgrass.		minutes: 49-51 4. "Sebastian Against the World" minutes: 1-23 minutes: 24-29 minutes: 30-49
1920s	Book 2 "Brideshead Deserted"		
1924	Charles decides to study painting in Paris; a letter from Lady Marchmain		minutes: 50-52
Christmas 1924	Samgrass and Sebastian come back, Charles comes to Brideshead. Sebastian's problems remain unsolved, Charles gives him money which makes him Lady Marchmain's enemy. Charles returns to Paris, meets Rex searching for Sebastian. Charles reads about Julia's wedding in June.	1 (pp. 139-166)	5. "A Blow Upon a Bruise" minutes: 1-49
Spring 1925			6. "Julia" minutes: 1-7
Summer 1923-1936	Charles tells Julia's story in retrospect: her marriage plans, her engagement to Rex and final discovery of his having been married before.	2 (pp. 167-187)	minutes: 8-50
Spring 1926	Charles returns home for the General Strike, meets Anthony Blanche in London. Lady Marchmain, dying, wants to see Charles, who is asked to fetch Sebastian from Casablanca. Charles' trip to Casablanca, meeting Kurt and Sebastian; Lady Marchmain's death. Charles returns to London, talks to Bridey and Cordelia.	3 (pp. 188-208)	7. "The Unseen Hook" minutes: 1-7, 11-21 minutes: 8-10 minutes: 21-26 minutes: 27-50 8. "Brideshead Deserted" minutes: 1-13
1930s	Book 3 "A Twitch upon the Thread"		
1936	Charles has become an architectural painter, a summary of his career is provided. He takes a trip to Mexico. He comes to New York, meets his wife.	1 (pp. 211-246)	minutes: 14-15 minutes: 16-25 minutes: 26-50

	<p>The Ryders take the trip home and meet Julia on board.</p> <p>The stormy trip, during which Charles and Julia consummate their love. Celia goes home, Charles stays in London.</p>		<p>9. "Orphans of the Storm" minutes: 1-23</p> <p>minutes: 23-26</p>
	<p>Exhibition of Charles' paintings in London. Anthony Blanche comes over. Julia and Charles come back to Brideshead.</p>	2 (pp. 247-258)	<p>minutes: 27-44</p> <p>minutes: 45-51</p>
1938	<p>Julia and Charles in Brideshead reflecting on the two years together. Bridey announces his engagement, offends Julia; Julia's breakdown reveals her internal conflict. Rex's political involvement is revealed.</p>	3 (pp. 259-276)	<p>10. "A Twitch Upon the Thread" minute: 1-5</p> <p>minutes: 6-26</p>
	<p>Charles' preparations for divorce get finalised. Cordelia comes to Brideshead. Sebastian's further lot retold by Cordelia to Charles.</p>	4 (pp.277-291)	<p>minute: 27-32</p> <p>minute: 33-37</p> <p>minutes: 38-50</p>
1939	<p>Lord Marchmain decides to come back to England to die Lord Marchmain's death, Julia's rejection of Charles</p>	5 (pp. 292-319)	<p>11. "Brideshead Revisited" minutes: 1-53</p> <p>minutes: 54-71</p>
1940s	<p>Charles, while in Brideshead with the army, finds out Julia and Cordelia are away, talks to nanny Hawkins. Charles visits the chapel, his conversion is signalled.</p>	Epilogue (pp. 320-326)	minutes: 72-88

Appendix 5. *The Raj Quartet* and *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984) – the chronology of events

The table below shows the chronology of the events in *The Raj Quartet* novels and in *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984), the serial, in the historical context.

Dates and historical context	Events	Novels and setting	Episodes
February-August 1942 The Japanese attack on Burma. “Quit India” movement. August 1942 social unrest	Hari Kumar and Ronald Merrick’s first encounter. Hari and Daphne meet. Edwina Crane is assaulted. Daphne is raped, Hari is arrested.	<i>The Jewel in the Crown</i> Setting: Mayapore	1. “Crossing the River” 2. “The Bibighar Gardens”
May 1943	Daphne dies.	Setting: Kashmir	3. “The Question of Loyalty”
October 1943	Susan Layton and Teddie Bingham’s wedding.	<i>The Day of the Scorpion/The Towers of Silence</i>	4. “Incidents at a Wedding”
April 1944 Fighting in Imphal	Teddie Bingham’s death; Ronald Merrick’s mutilation.	Setting: Pankot, Mirat, Kandipat prison, Calcutta, Ranpur	5. “The Regimental Silver”
May 1944	An interview of Hari Kumar in Kandipat prison, carried out by Nigel Rowan (with Lady Manners’ secret presence), leading to Kumar’s release.		6. “Ordeal by Fire”
June 1944 D-Day Summer 1944	Sarah’s trip to Calcutta. Mable Layton’s death and the birth of Susan’s baby Susan’s mental breakdown. Barbie’s illness.		7. “Daughter of the Regiment” 8. “The Day of the Scorpion” 9. “The Towers of Silence”
August 6, 1945	Barbie Batchelor’s death.		The beginning of Episode 11

<p>August 1945 Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki Announcement of Japan's surrender</p>	<p>Colonel Layton returns from the prison camp. Guy Perron starts to work for Merrick. Merrick gets engaged to Susan Bingham.</p>	<p><i>A Division of the Spoils</i> Setting: Bombay, Pankot, Mirat</p>	<p>10. "An Evening at the Maharanee's" 11. "Travelling Companions" 12. "The Moghul Room"</p>
<p>August 1947 Approaching independence of India and division into India and Pakistan</p>	<p>Ronald Merrick is killed. Guy Perron visits Mirat. The Nawab accedes Mirat to India. The slaughter of the Muslims travelling by train from Mirat to Ranpur; Ahmed Kasim is killed.</p>		<p>13. "Pandora's Box" 14. "A Division of the Spoils"</p>

Appendix 6. *Middlemarch* – the chronology of events

The table below shows the chronology of the events appearing in *Middlemarch*, both in the novel and the serial. The numbers indicate the order in which those elements appear in the plot of the novel. The column presenting the plot of the serial clearly indicates the way in which those events were reshuffled, especially in the early episodes. Events in the serial marked with “•” are those, which do not as such appear in the novel. Their introduction is discussed in detail in Chapter Six.

Books	Events in the novel	Events in the serial	Episodes
Prelude			
Book 1 “Miss Brooke”		6. Lydgate comes to Middlemarch.	Episode 1
	1. Dorothea is introduced – horse-riding, working on plans of cottages she wants to set up.		
		11. Lydgate’s plans for the fever hospital, meeting with Bulstrode, who insists on Rev. Tyke’s being appointed as the hospital chaplain.	
	2.Casaubon comes for dinner, Dorothea gets attracted.		
		• Fred and Farebrother playing billiards; Fred’s financial problems signalled.	
		16.Lydgate visits Farebrother.	
		8. Rosy, Mrs Vincy and Fred are introduced.	
		9.Fred and Rosy’s ride to Stone Court; Mr Featherstone and the greedy relatives awaiting his death are introduced, Rosy and Lydgate meet.	
		10. The complex relationship between Fred and Mary Garth is signalled.	
	3.Sir James decides to get involved in Dorothea’s plans for cottage construction.		
		10. Fred gets some money from Featherstone, after a letter from Bulstrode; Mary is upset by Fred’s conduct.	
		7. Lydgate’s interest in Rosy Vincy grows.	
	4.Casaubon proposes to Dorothea and is accepted; her family and friends are upset. 5.Dorothea visits Lowick, meets Ladislaw.		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement dinner, organised by Brooke, combined with his political career plans being signalled; introduction of interrelations between the characters like the Vincys, Bulstrode. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lydgate at work with the poor; another conversation Lydgate-Bulstrode, focusing on the question of chaplaincy. 	
		13.Lydgate at the Vincys', flirting with Rosy during a party; the question of chaplaincy discussed.	
	6.Lydgate is introduced. (Chapter 10)		
	7.Lydgate's interest in Rosy Vincy is signalled.		
	8.Rosy, Mrs Vincy and Fred are introduced.		
	9.Fred and Rosy's ride to Stone Court; Mr Featherstone and the greedy relatives awaiting his death are introduced.		
	10.Fred gets some money from Featherstone, after a letter from Bulstrode; Mary is upset by Fred's conduct.		
Book 2 "Old and Young"	11.Lydgate's plans for the fever hospital are revealed.		
	12.Bulstrode's manipulation about Lydgate's voting against Rev. Farebrother as the hospital chaplain.		
	13.Lydgate at the Vincys', flirting with Rosy during a party (the question of chaplaincy discussed).		
	14.Fred's financial problems are revealed; Mary rejects him.		
	15.Lydgate's attitude to marriage is revealed.		
	16.Lydgate visits Farebrother.		
	17.Lydgate votes for Rev. Tyke.	18.Dorothea and Casaubon in Rome visit museums, seen by Ladislav and his friend Naumann.	
	18.Dorothea and Casaubon in Rome visit museums, seen by Ladislav and his friend Naumann.	17.Lydgate votes for Rev. Tyke.	

	19.The first argument Dorothea/Casaubon about him not letting her help him.		Episode 2
	20.Dorothea is visited by Ladislav and his attraction to her develops; Casaubon becomes irritated by Will's presence in their life.	20&22.Dorothea is visited by Ladislav and his attraction to her develops, Ladislav implements doubts in Dorothea's heart concerning the validity of Casaubon's study and work.	
	21.Dorothea and Casaubon visit the painter, Casaubon has his portrait painted, as well as Dorothea's.	• Opening of the hospital, Brooke is excited about progress and reform.	
	22.Ladislav visits Dorothea again and implements doubts in Dorothea's heart concerning validity of Casaubon's study and work.		
Book 3 "Waiting for Death"	23.Fred sells and buys a horse; Mr Garth bears the financial consequences of having signed Fred's papers; Fred's visit to the Garths.		
	24.Fred's illness, treated by Lydgate, which brings the doctor closer to Rosy.	21.Dorothea and Casaubon visit the painter, Casaubon gets his portrait painted, but also becomes jealous of Ladislav.	
		23.Fred buys the horse; loses it, then visits the Garths about his debt.	
		26. Dorothea and Casaubon return from Rome, Celia is engaged to Sir James.	
	25.Lydgate flirts with Rosy and passes for her fiancé, unaware of it.	25.Lydgate flirts with Rosy.	
	26.Dorothea and Casaubon return from Rome, Celia is engaged to Sir James.		
	27.Dorothea and Casaubon have an argument over Ladislav's letter, Casaubon has a fit, Lydgate gives a diagnosis.		
		25.Lydgate passes for Rosy's fiancé, unaware of it.	
	28.Brooke writes a letter to Ladislav, inviting him to Tipton.		
	29.Lydgate proposes to Rosy.		
30.Featherstone dies.		Episode 3	
Book 4 "Three Love Problems"	31.Featherstone's funeral viewed through the window, Ladislav's presence in Middlemarch becomes known to the Casaubons.		
	32.The portrait of Casaubon as Thomas Aquinas is presented to the Casaubons.		
	33.Featherstone's will is revealed.		
	34.Lydgate's marital plans and plans to buy the house are expressed.		

		• Lydgate’s wedding.	
	35.Ladislaw’s visit to Dorothea and her subsequent speaking up for him; Casaubon’s letter forbidding Ladislaw any further visits at Lowick.		
		• The Lydgates’ visit to Quallingham.	
	36.Brooke’s quarrel with Dagley and subsequent hiring Caleb Garth to manage the estate.		
	37.Raffles arrives, visits Rigg.		
	38.Casaubon learns about his condition.		
Book 5 “The Dead Hand”	39.Dorothea visits the Lydgates, meets Ladislaw there (singing), then talks to Lydgate about her husband’s condition. She plans to support the new hospital.		
	40.The conflict between Lydgate and other doctors increases.		
	41.Brooke’s political plans are consulted with Ladislaw.		
	42.Casaubon’s death		
	43.Casaubon’s will and codicil get announced to Dorothea.	41.Brooke’s political plans are consulted with Ladislaw.	Episode 4
	44.Dorothea asks Lydgate about a candidate for chaplaincy at Lowick.		
	45.Brooke fails as a politician.	43.Casaubon’s will and codicil get announced to Dorothea.	
	46.Fred’s asking Farebrother to find out what Mary’s feelings are, Farebrother talks to Mary about Fred.	44.Dorothea asks Lydgate about a candidate for chaplaincy at Lowick.	
		53.Captain Lydgate visits the Lydgates, Fred’s graduation announced.	
	47.Bulstrode buys Stone Court.		
		45.Brooke fails as a politician.	
		53.Rosy takes horse rides with Captain Lydgate.	
		49.Dorothea’s widowhood, Ladislaw comes over to say good-bye.	
48.Raffles gets to Bulstrode to blackmail him.			
	52.Lydgate tries to solve the problem of his debts.		
	53.Rosy loses her baby.		
Book 6 “The Widow and the Wife”	49.Dorothea’s widowhood, Ladislaw comes over to say good-bye.		
	50.Dorothea’s plans to build a colony in Lowick.		

	51. Peasants attack railway construction agents; Fred helps Garth, then decides to become a surveyor.		Episode 5
	52. Fred talks to the Garths, Mary acknowledges her feelings for him.		
	53. Captain Lydgate's visit to the Lydgates; Rosy loses her baby.		
	54. The Lydgates' financial problems, Lydgate secures his debts with his furniture.		
		46. Fred comes to Farebrother to discuss his future career and his chances with Mary Garth.	
		54. The Lydgates' financial problems, Lydgate secures his debts with his furniture.	
		46. Farebrother talks to Mary about Fred.	
		50. Dorothea's plans to build a colony in Lowick.	
	55. Ladislav finds out about Casaubon's codicil.		
	56. Raffles speaks to Ladislav, revealing the truth about his maternal grandparents.		
	57. Raffles comes back to Bulstrode.		
	58. Another good-bye between Will and Dorothea.		
		• Raffles gets sick, is driven away by Bulstrode.	
		51. Peasants attack railway construction agents; Fred helps Garth, then decide to become a surveyor.	
Book 7 "Two Temptations"	59. The Lydgates' financial problems, plans to lease the house.		
		52. Fred talks to the Garths, Mary acknowledges her feelings for him.	
	60. Rosy spoils Lydgate's plans to lease the house; hostility between them arises.		
	61. The Lydgates get a letter from uncle Godwin, hostility between the two increases.		
		• Dorothea's plans for the colony shattered by Garth.	Episode 6
62. Bulstrode's falls ill, Lydgate's request for a loan gets rejected.			
63. Raffles, grievously ill, comes back, Bulstrode uses Lydgate's services and lends him the money.			
64. Raffles dies, Bulstrode's past is revealed.			

	65.Hospital board meeting, dismissing Bulstrode, Lydgate loses credibility.	
	66.Lydgate tells Dorothea the full story; she announces her will to support him.	
Book 8 “Sunset and Sunrise”	67.Dorothea’s support of Lydgate, her visit to the Lydgates results in seeing Rosy and Ladislav together.	
	68.Dorothea’s talk with Rosy, who tells her about Ladislav’s feelings. Rosy writes a letter to Ladislav.	
		70&71.Bulstrode talks to Hariette about Lydgate having returned the money; they decide to lend the Stone Court to Fred and Mary.
	69.Ladislav comes over, having a long conversation which ends with engagement.	• Ladislav comes to Lowick, no explanation given, just he and Dorothea kiss.
	70.Bulstrode talks to Hariette about Lydgate having returned the money; decision to lend Stone Court to Fred and Mary.	
	71.Fred and Mary get the Stone Court.	
		• Dorothea speaks to Celia about her plans to marry Ladislav and renounce her wealth.
Finale	72.Further life of the protagonists, summarised.	

Appendix 7. *Bleak House* – the chronology of events

The table below shows the chronology of the events appearing in *Bleak House*, both in the novel and the serial. The numbers indicate the order in which those elements appear in the plot of the novel. Sections in the first column are shaded to group the chapters as they were originally published. Events shaded in the second column are those, which were detracted in adaptation. Letters a, b or c have been introduced in the case of those the events from the novel's subplots, which were divided into separate scenes in the serial. Events in the serial marked with “•” are those, which do not as such appear in the novel or are significantly modified in the serial.

Chapters	Events in the novel	Events in the serial	Episode
I. In Chancery (third-person narrator)	1. The hopeless case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce is introduced; Lord Chancellor determines to send a young girl and a boy to live with their cousin.	1a&3a. Esther comes to London to meet Lord Chancellor, meets Richard and Ada, becomes Ada's companion; some of her childhood backstory is presented in retrospect;	1
II. In Fashion (third-person narrator)	2. Lady Dedlock, bored to death, is introduced, and so are Sir Leicester, her husband, and Tulkinghorn, their lawyer and legal advisor. Lady Dedlock is moved by the handwriting she sees on the documents of the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case.	Jarndyce and Jarndyce is introduced in her conversation with Guppy. 2a. Lady Dedlock surrounded by boredom is introduced. 3b.&4. The three young ones meet Miss Flite. They stay at	
III. A Progress (Esther as the narrator)	3. Esther's childhood, her aunt's death; staying at Greenleaf; eventual leaving for London, then being sent to Bleak House via London, having met Richard and Ada, and become Ada's companion.	Mrs Jellyby, Ester talks to Caddy. 5a. Krook is introduced. • “Nemo” is introduced in a	
IV. Telescopic Philanthropy (Esther as the narrator)	4. Esther, Ada and Richard's staying at Mrs Jellyby, Esther talks to Caddy.	number of scenes, his legal writing and his addition to opium.	
V. A Morning Adventure (Esther as the narrator)	5. The three young people visit Miss Flite at her place, Krook is introduced.	Mrs Jellyby, Ester talks to Caddy. 5a. Krook is introduced. • “Nemo” is introduced in a Tulkinghorn and his clerk are introduced.	

<p>VI. Quite at Home (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>6. The three reach Bleak House, meet John Jarndyce; meeting Skimpole and being manipulated by him into paying his debts.</p>	<p>2b. Tulkinghorn shows the legal papers to the Dedlocks, Lady Dedlock is moved by the sight of the handwriting.</p>	
<p>VII. The Ghost's Walk (third-person narrator)</p>	<p>7. <u>Mrs Rouncewell, the housekeeper of Chesney Wold, is introduced; her sons are mentioned, attention is drawn to the missing of the one who is a soldier. Attraction between Rosa, the maid, and Mrs Rouncewell's grandson is suggested; Mr Guppy visits Chesney Wold, finds Lady Dedlock's portrait surprisingly familiar.</u></p>	<p>6. Esther, Ada and Richard reach Bleak House, meet Skimpole, are manipulated into paying his debts. 7a. Guppy visits Chesney Wold, sees the portrait of Lady Dedlock. 8a. Mrs Pardiggle visits Bleak House and a brickmaker's house.</p>	
<p>VIII. Covering a Multitude of Sins (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>8. Esther's conversation with John Jarndyce about the court case and about the history of Bleak House; meeting Mrs Pardiggle <u>and her children</u> and visiting a brickmaker's house with her.</p>	<p>9a. Guppy's proposal to Esther. 10. Tulkinghorn's visit to Snagsby, inquiring about "Nemo"; Tulkinghorn goes to Krook's and finds Nemo dead.</p>	
<p>IX. Signs and Tokens (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>9. Richard and Ada's love grows; Richard's first plans for a career (a sailor), <u>Mr Boythorn's visit</u>; Mr Guppy's unexpected visit and even more unexpected proposal to Esther.</p>		
<p>X. The Law-Writer (third-person narrator)</p>	<p>10. Mr Snagsby is introduced, visited by Tulkinghorn, who enquires about the writer who copied the documents in the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case; Tulkinghorn visits Krook, and eventually Nemo's place, find the man not responding.</p>		
<p>XI. Our Dear Brother (third-person narrator)</p>	<p>11. Nemo is pronounced dead; Jo, a homeless child is questioned in court by the coroner during an inquest.</p>	<p>11a. Krook and Tulkinghorn go through Nemo's belongings and call for the doctor. Woodcourt comes in and pronounces Nemo dead. 13a. Richard and Ada's love grows; Richard's first plans for a career, decision made upon medicine.</p>	<p>2</p>

XII. On the Watch (third-person narrator)	12. Bored Lady Dedlock returns from Paris, Rosa is introduced to her, Hortense, and her older maid becomes jealous. Tulkinghorn informs lady Dedlock about Nemo's death.	11b. An inquest in Nemo's case. • Boythorn meets Tulkinghorn, the conflict between the Dedlocks and Boythorn is signalled. 12. Lady Dedlock returns from Paris, Rosa is introduced to her, Hortense, her older maid becomes jealous. Tulkinghorn informs lady Dedlock about Nemo's death.	
XIII. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	13. Considerations over Richard's future, his decision to pursue medicine; Ada confesses to Esther the secret of her and Richard's mutual affection; Esther admits her interest in the young surgeon she meets.	13b. Richard is sent to learn the medical profession. Esther and Woodcourt meet. • Krook is shown as being in possession of the letters.	
XIV. Department (Esther as the narrator)	14. Richard begins his career; Miss Jellyby visits Esther and confesses her love for young Mr Turveydrop; Esther visits the dance academy; Esther, Ada and Mr Jarndyce visit Miss Flite, meet doctor Woodcourt there.	13c. Richard and Ada want to get engaged. 14. Miss Jellyby visits Esther and confesses her love for young Mr Turveydrop; Esther's visit to the dance academy; Esther, Ada and Mr Jarndyce's visit to Miss Flite, meeting doctor Woodcourt there. 15. Skimpole meets Jarndyce and his dependents in London; a visit to the debt collector's place; discovery of a family of three children living by themselves. 16a. A mysterious woman interrogates Jo about the dead lodger and is led by the boy to Krook's place. We can see it is Lady Dedlock.	3
XV. Bell Yard (Esther as the narrator)	15. Skimpole meets Jarndyce and his dependents in London; a visit to the debt collector's place; discovery of a family of three children living by themselves.	17a. Richard's interest in medicine fails, he wants to be a lawyer.	

<p>XVI. Tom-all-Alone's (third-person narrator)</p>	<p>16. Sir Leicester's suffering from gout; more information about Jo and the place he lives in; a mysterious woman interrogates Jo about the dead lodger and is led by the boy to Krook's place.</p>	<p>17b. Mr Woodcourt is leaving for India and China; Esther gets a small bouquet of flowers.</p>	
<p>XVII. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>17. Richard's interest in medicine fails; Esther learns more about her history from John Jarndyce; Mr Woodcourt is leaving for India and China, <u>together with his mother</u> visits Bleak House; Esther gets a small bouquet of flowers.</p>		
<p>XVIII. Lady Dedlock (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>18. Richard in London studying to be a lawyer, Esther, Ada, Jarndyce and Skimpole visit Boythorn; Esther sees Lady Dedlock in church, who seems familiar; they meet again in the park.</p>	<p>18a. Richard in London studying to be a lawyer, Esther, Ada, Jarndyce and Skimpole visit Boythorn;</p> <p>17c. A conversation between Jarndyce and Esther about her background.</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>XIX. Moving On (third-person narrator)</p>	<p>19. Mr Snagsby is confronted with the constable and Jo, interrogated about the coin; Mr Guppy involved; <u>Jo escapes</u>.</p>	<p>18b. Esther sees Lady Dedlock in church, who seems familiar; they meet again in the park.</p>	
<p>XX. A New Lodger (third-person narrator)</p>	<p>20. <u>Mr Jobling becomes Krook's new lodger</u>; Smallweed <u>and his family</u> are introduced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The French maid is dismissed. <p>19a. Mr Snagsby is confronted with the constable and Jo, interrogated about the coin; Mr Guppy involved;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guppy visits Krook in search of information about Nemo. <p>19b. Tom-all-Alone's is visited by Snagsby and Bucket in search of Jo.</p> <p>22a. Jo is confronted by detective Bucket with Hortense, in the presence of Tulkinghorn, recognises the woman.</p>	
<p>XXI. The Smallweed Family (third-person narrator)</p>	<p>21. <u>The Smallweed family are described</u>, George visits them, inquired about Hawdon.</p>	<p>22b. The interrogation of Jo continues, he recognises the clothes, not the woman.</p>	

XXII. Mr. Bucket (third-person narrator)	22. Jo is confronted by detective Bucket with Hortense, recognises clothes, not the woman.	23a. Richard plans to join the army; practising with George in London,	
XXIII. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	23. Hortense quits her job with Lady Dedlock and wants to work for Esther; Richard plans to join the army; Caddy gets engaged; Charley becomes Esther's maid.	23b. Charley becomes Esther's maid. 27a. Mr Smallweed is brought to Mr Tulkinghorn.	5
XXIV. An Appeal Case (Esther as the narrator)	24. Planning Richard's army career, visiting George in London, Esther and Richard's visit in court; Mr Gridley's death.	26. George at his gallery, visited by Smallweed; conversation about debts and knowing Captain Hawdon's handwriting.	
XXV. Mrs. Snagsby Sees It All (third-person narrator)	<u>25. Mrs Snagsby tries to find out what Mr Snagsby is hiding; Jo involved in the game of secrets and false conclusions between Mr Snagsby, Mrs Snagsby and Mr Chadband.</u>	Smallweed requests the handwriting from George and is not given.	
XXVI. Sharpshooters (third-person narrator)	26. George at his gallery, visited by Smallweed; conversation about debts and knowing Captain Hawdon's handwriting.	24b. Mr Gridley is found at George's gallery and dies in the presence of Bucket and Miss Flite.	
XXVII. More Old Soldiers Than One (third-person narrator)	27. Tulkinghorn requests the handwriting from George in Smallweed's presence and is not given. <u>George visits the Bagnets.</u>	27b. Tulkinghorn requests the handwriting from George and is not given. 28. Mr Rouncewell's visit and proposal to take Rosa away.	6
XXVIII. The Ironmaster (third-person narrator)	28. Mr Rouncewell's visit and proposal to take Rosa away.	• Guppy discovers at Krook's the connection between Lady Dedlock,	
XXIX. The Young Man (third-person narrator)	29. The Dedlocks in London; Guppy visits Lady Dedlock and informs her about Esther; the connection between Lady Dedlock, Esther and Captain Hawdon is established.	Esther and Captain Hawdon. 17&30. Mrs Woodcourt visits Esther; 31a. Esther takes sick Jo to Bleak House.	
XXX. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	30. Mrs Woodcourt visits Esther; Caddy Jellyby gets married.	29. Guppy visits Lady Dedlock, explains to Lady Dedlock who	

XXXI. Nurse and Patient (Esther as the narrator)	31. Esther takes sick Jo to Bleak House, Jo disappears, later <u>Charley falls ill</u> , and afterwards Esther contracts smallpox.	Esther is. 31b. Sick Jo disappears.	
XXXII. The Appointed Time (third-person narrator)	32. Guppy visits the room at Krook's which was Hawdon's, looking for the letters; Krook's body having combusted spontaneously is found.	31c. Esther falls ill with smallpox. 32a. Krook's spontaneous combustion takes place. Guppy finds his remains.	7
XXXIII. Interlopers (third-person narrator)	33. Guppy <u>and Jobling</u> give statements; Smallweed arrives to take property of Krook, Tulkinghorn is his lawyer.	33. An inquest into Krook's death. Smallweed arrives to take property of Krook, Tulkinghorn is his lawyer. 35a. Esther recovers from smallpox, but is scarred.	
XXXIV. A Turn of the Screw (third-person narrator)	34. George is manipulated into giving Captain Hawdon's handwriting sample to Tulkinghorn; George's debts are to be paid off by the Bagnets.	• Guppy visits Lady Dedlock, is seen by Tulkinghorn. 35b. Esther learns about Mr Woodcourt's heroic deeds.	
XXXV. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	35. Esther recovers, but is scarred; Woodcourt is said to have returned safely from his voyage.	34a. George is manipulated into giving Captain Hawdon's handwriting sample to Tulkinghorn.	
XXXVI. Chesney Wold (Esther as the narrator)	36. Esther, Charley and Mr Jarndyce stay at Mr Boythorn's house, Esther is recuperating; Esther meets Lady Dedlock, the secret is revealed.	34b. George delivers the sample. • Jarndyce nearly confesses his affection for Esther. 39a. Smallweed goes through Krook's papers. Guppy visits. 36. Esther, Charley and Mr Jarndyce stay at Mr Boythorn's house, Esther is recuperating; Esther meets Lady Dedlock, the secret is revealed.	8
XXXVII. Jarndyce and Jarndyce (Esther as the narrator)	37. Richard becomes focused on the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case, supported by Skimpole;	37. Esther and Ada meet Richard. Richard becomes focused on the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case, supported by Skimpole.	9

XXXVIII. A Struggle (Esther as the narrator)	38. Mr Guppy withdraws his proposal, Esther is relieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tulkinghorn gets hold of the letters. <p>40. Tulkinghorn arrives at Chesney Wold, to tell Sir Leicester he lost elections and to reveal to Lady Dedlock that he knows her secret.</p> <p>41. Lady Dedlock talks to Tulkinghorn, they clarify their expectations.</p>	
XXXIX. Attorney and Client (third-person narrator)	39. Richard gets in debt; Guppy gives up searching for the letters;		
XL. National and Domestic (third-person narrator)	40. Tulkinghorn arrives at Chesney Wold, to tell Sir Leicester he lost elections and to reveal to Lady Dedlock that he knows her secret.		
XLI. In Mr. Tulkinghorn's Room (third-person narrator)	41. Lady Dedlock talks to Tulkinghorn, they clarify their expectations.		
XLII. In Mr. Tulkinghorn's Chambers (third-person narrator)	42. Hortense visits Tulkinghorn, and tries to manipulate him into helping her.	<p>42. Hortense visits Tulkinghorn, and tries to manipulate him into helping her.</p> <p>38. Esther visits Mr Guppy to stop him from searching for her roots; he takes back his marriage proposal seeing Esther scarred.</p>	10
XLIII. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	43. Sir Leicester invites Jarndyce and his wards to Chesney Wold; Esther reveals her secret to Mr Jarndyce, he tells her that the woman who broke Mr Boythorn's heart was her aunt.		
XLIV. The Letter and the Answer (Esther as the narrator)	44. Mr Jarndyce's proposal in a letter form, Esther's acceptance, in a letter form.		
		<p>43a. Esther reveals her secret to Mr Jarndyce, he tells her that the woman who broke Mr Boythorn's heart was her aunt.</p> <p>44. Mr Jarndyce's proposal. Esther's eventual acceptance.</p> <p>41a. Tulkinghorn has another threatening conversation with Lady Dedlock ordering her not to do anything out of the ordinary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smallweed turns up at George's tells him he is still in debt and it is so upon Tulkinghorn's order. 	

XLV. In Trust (Esther as the narrator)	45. Mr Vholes informs Mr Jarndyce about Richard's state of affairs; Esther visits Richard and tries to influence his decisions; Esther sees and eventually meets Woodcourt.	45a. Mr Vholes informs Mr Jarndyce about Richard's state of affairs; 48a. Lady Dedlock makes Rosa leave 45b. Esther and Ada visit Richard and tries to influence his decisions; Esther sees and eventually meets Woodcourt.	11
XLVI. Stop Him! (third-person narrator)	46. Woodcourt finds Jo and takes him with him.	46. Woodcourt finds Jo and takes him to George's, where he first meets Mr Snagsby. 48b. Lady Dedlock and Tulkinghorn have their final conversation.	
XLVII. Jo's Will (third-person narrator)	47. Jo, sick, is taken to George's, where he first meets Mr Snagsby, and then dies in Woodcourt's presence.	47a. Jo dies in the presence of Woodcourt, Jarndyce, Esther and Ada. • Jarndyce delivers the accusatory speech.	
XLVIII. Closing in (third-person narrator)	48. Lady Dedlock makes Rosa leave with Mr Rouncewell; Tulkinghorn talks to lady Dedlock and threatens her to reveal her secret; Tulkinghorn is shot dead.	48c. Lady Dedlock leaves at night; Hortence follows her. • George leaves his gallery, gets to Tulkinghorn's. 48c. Tulkinghorn is shot by the person we do not see.	
XLIX. Dutiful Friendship (third-person narrator)	49. <u>Mrs Bagnet's birthday</u> party; George is arrested by Mr Bucket.	• Clamb discovers Tulkinghorn's body. Bucket interrogates him, George is mentioned as being seen.	
L. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	50. Caddy gives birth to a child and is cared for by Esther and Woodcourt; Ada learns about Esther's engagement to Jarndyce.	50. Caddy gives birth to a child and is cared for by Esther and Woodcourt; Ada learns about Esther's engagement to Jarndyce.	12
LI. Enlightened (Esther as the narrator)	51. Woodcourt visits Richard; Ada and Richard's secret marriage is revealed, Ada leaves Bleak House.	52a. George is arrested by Mr Bucket. Esther, Woodcourt and Jarndyce visit him in prison.	

LII. Obstinacy (Esther as the narrator)	52. Jarndyce and Esther visit George in prison.	53a. Tulkinghorn's funeral, with Bucket at it. He sees Heritance at it.	
LIII. The Track (third-person narrator)	53. Tulkinghorn's funeral, with Bucket at it; Bucket gets numerous letters with Lady Dedlock's name in them; he finds out Lady Dedlock was out on the night of the murder.	53b. Bucket gets a note stating that Lady Dedlock is the murderess.	
LIV. Springing a Mine (third-person narrator)	54. Bucket informs Sir Leicester about Lady Dedlock's involvement in the case, reveals her secret; Smallweed and company rush in with the letters Krook had; Bucket arrests Hortense, revealing how he found out that she was guilty, informs Sir Leicester about the letters with Lady Dedlock called the murderess he kept receiving .	55a. George reunites with his mother; Mrs Rouncewell visits lady Dedlock asking for help. 53c. Bucket finds out Lady Dedlock was out on the night of the murder. 51. Ada and Esther visit Richard. Ada and Richard's secret marriage is	13
LV. Flight (third-person narrator)	55. George reunites with his mother; Mrs Rouncewell visits Lady Dedlock asking for help; Guppy visits Lady Dedlock making her realise that her secret was revealed; Lady Dedlock leaves a note for her husband and disappears.	revealed, Ada leaves Bleak House. 54a. Bucket talks to Hortense and manipulates her into revealing the truth. • Smallweed and company rush in to see Clamb for the letters Krook had; 54b. Bucket visits the Dedlocks, provides an explanation of what happened on the night of the murder, arrests Hortense.	
LVI. Pursuit (third-person narrator)	56. Sir Leicester is sick, learns about lady Dedlock's disappearance; Bucket finds Esther and search for Lady Dedlock with her. George's release is mentioned.	54c. Bucket reveals the reasons for which Hortense killed Tulkinghorn. 56a. George is released.	14
LVII. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	57. Bucket and Esther's search for lady Dedlock; final ride to London.	• Lady Dedlock visits Bucket, who assures her she will not be called in the case. • Clamb brings the letters to Smallweed. Guppy is told	

<p>LVIII. A Wintry Day and Night (third-person narrator)</p>	<p>58. George and his mother help at Sir Leicester’s house; Sir Leicester stays bedridden but admits his feelings for Lady Dedlock have not changed.</p>	<p>they are going to be sold to Sir Leicester.</p> <p>55b. Guppy warns Lady Dedlock, but</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Smallweed is already at Sir Leicester, revealing the truth. <p>55b. Lady Dedlock leaves a note for her husband and disappears.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Sir Leicester having read the note suffers a stroke. <p>56b.&57. Bucket finds Esther and search for Lady Dedlock with her.</p> <p>58. George and his mother help at Sir Leicester’s house; Sir Leicester stays bedridden.</p> <p>59. Esther receives a letter form Lady Dedlock, which suggests she is at the burial ground, they find her dying at the gate.</p>	
<p>LIX. Esther’s Narrative (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>59. Esther gets to London with Bucket, meet Woodcourt who joins them, together they eventually manage to find out where Lady Dedlock might be, find her dead at the gate of the burial ground.</p>		
<p>LX. Perspective (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>60. Richard’s health and finances deteriorate; Ada is pregnant; Esther and Woodcourt seem to be getting closer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sir Leicester expresses his love for deceased Lady Dedlock at her grave. 	<p>15</p>
<p>LXI. A Discovery (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>61. Esther has a conversation with Skimpole in which she accuses him of betraying Jarndyce; <u>she never sees him again, he dies in five years</u>; Woodcourt confesses his love for Esther and she tells him about her engagement.</p>	<p>60a. Esther talks to Miss Flite about Richard’s poor condition, than Ada expresses her worries and admits her pregnancy.</p> <p>61a.Woodcourt confesses his love for Esther and she tells him about her engagement.</p>	
<p>LXII. Another Discovery (Esther as the narrator)</p>	<p>62. Esther is to get married in a month; Smallweed finds a will which is dated later than all other in the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case, which will help to end the case.</p>		

LXIII. Steel and Iron (third-person narrator)	<u>63. George reunites with his brother.</u>	62. Smallweed finds a will which is dated later than all other in the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case, which will help to end the case.	
LXIV. Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	64. Mr Jarndyce reveals to Esther his plan of having her marry Woodcourt and live in a smaller version of Bleak House in Yorkshire; Woodcourt and Esther reunite; Guppy proposes again.	64a. Guppy proposes to Esther, in the presence of his mother and Jarndyce. 65. The Day of Judgement in Jarndyce and Jarndyce. Richard's death. Miss Flite frees her birds.	
LXV. Beginning the World (Esther as the narrator)	65. The case is closed, the estate has been used up in the legal costs; Richard dies; Miss Flite frees her birds.	64b. Mr Jarndyce takes Esther to see little Bleak House and gives her away to Woodcourt.	
LXVI. Down in Lincolnshire (third-person narrator)	<u>66. The description of the life in Chesney Wold, with Sir Leicester being very sick and the atmosphere dismal.</u>	• The wedding party.	
LXVII. The Close of Esther's Narrative (Esther as the narrator)	<u>67. The closure – Esther happily married for seven years, all females being happy mothers, Woodcourt – a successful doctor.</u>		

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Streszczenie w języku polskim

Klasyki w telewizji: studium brytyjskiego serialu klasycznego jako szczególnej formy adaptacji tekstu literackiego

Niniejsza książka podejmuje zagadnienie adaptacji tekstu literackiego do bardzo specyficznej formy audiowizualnej, jaką jest brytyjski „serial klasyczny”. Serial ten to gatunek telewizyjny, w którego przypadku określenie „klasyczny” zawarte w jego nazwie nie wynika ze statusu serialu jako takiego, a związane jest bezpośrednio z „kanonicznością” tekstów literackich, których adaptacjami są tego typu produkcje. Wśród utworów najczęściej poddawanych adaptacji do formy serialu klasycznego znajdują się przede wszystkim powieści z epoki wiktoriańskiej, ale zdarzają się też przypadki adaptacji tekstów autorstwa tzw. „współczesnych klasyków”, czyli uznanych pisarzy dwudziestowiecznych.

Brytyjski serial klasyczny to pewne zjawisko kulturowe, narzędzie służące przekazywaniu wiedzy o dziedzictwie kulturowym, umożliwiające kontakt szerokiego grona odbiorców z treścią dzieł literackich o uznanej wartości artystycznej. W historii telewizji większości krajów europejskich znaleźć można produkcje tego typu, czyli adaptacje znanych dzieł literackich. Jednak brytyjskie seriale klasyczne wyróżniają się zarówno swoją liczbą, jak i jakością. Stały się pewnego rodzaju towarem eksportowym i inwestycją w dziedzictwo narodowe. Specyficzność takiej formy adaptacji utworu literackiego wynika przede wszystkim z długości tekstu audiowizualnego i podzielenia go na odcinki, oraz z założonej (i oczekiwanej przez publiczność) wierności tekstowi źródłowemu. Jest to więc gatunek z założenia raczej zachowawczy, wpisujący się w brytyjską tradycję popularyzacji dziedzictwa narodowego (lub „sprzedawania przeszłości”, w tym pewnego rodzaju brytyjskości – jak to określają niektórzy krytycy). Nie mniej jednak jest to gatunek podlegający ewolucji, a najwybitniejsze produkcje potrafią połączyć w sobie tradycję z innowacyjnością i przyczynić się do rozwoju gatunku. Ta ewolucja jest w dużej mierze wynikiem dostosowywania produkcji do założonych przez producentów oczekiwań widowni (szybsze tempo narracji, wydobywanie z bohaterów literackich cech najbliższych widzowi współczesnemu adaptacji, wzbogacenie strony wizualnej produkcji) oraz rozwoju technologicznego.

Serial klasyczny stanowi swego rodzaju pułapkę dla scenarzysty i wszystkich osób zaangażowanych w tego typu produkcję. Ma on z założenia być „wiernym” tekstowi źródłowemu – długość serialu wyklucza wytlumaczenie zabiegów kondensacyjnych, gdyż narracja telewizyjna rozciągnięta zostaje zazwyczaj na kilka godzin; nie ma więc ograniczenia, które często narzuca adaptatorom produkcja filmowa. W związku z tym, że utwór literacki stanowi w przypadku tego typu pro-

dukcji wartość samą w sobie i jest „nienaruszalny”, przełożenie go na język filmu telewizyjnego, atrakcyjny dla współczesnego widza, jest zabiegiem wymagającym dużego kunsztu od scenarzysty, zachowania równowagi między tym, co w danym tekście o statusie klasycznego „święte”, a tym, co współczesny widz jest w stanie uznać za atrakcyjne i godne uwagi.

Serial klasyczny charakteryzuje się wysoką jakością produkcji. Obsada składa się zawsze w jakiejś części z aktorów o uznanej reputacji; ogromne znaczenie przywiązywane jest do scenografii i kostiumów, do odtworzenia realiów epoki, w takim zakresie, w jakim odnosi się do nich literacki pierwowzór; w miarę rozwoju możliwości technicznych, czyli de facto od lat 80. XX wieku, seriale klasyczne kręcone są na taśmie filmowej i jakością zdjęć przypominają produkcje filmowe. Są to produkcje bardzo kosztowne, „stylowe”, stąd też często oskarżane o tworzenie pewnego przeestetyzowanego obrazu przeszłości, a tym samym wywoływanie u widza uczucia nostalgii za czasem minionym. Jednak warto pamiętać, że o ile zarzut taki można sformułować wobec eleganckich wizji świata przedstawionego w adaptacjach powieści Jane Austen, czy Elizabeth Gaskell, to trudno go postawić wobec jakże często pojawiających się wśród seriali klasycznych adaptacji powieści Karola Dickensa. Serial klasyczny, wbrew opinii części krytyków, to gatunek charakteryzujący się różnorodnością i podlegający ewolucji, czego dowodzi część rozważań zawartych w tej publikacji.

Zasadniczą część niniejszej monografii stanowi pięć analitycznych rozdziałów będącymi studiami przypadku, zawartych w części drugiej. Jednak przed przystąpieniem do analizy poszczególnych seriali i ich relacji z tekstami źródłowymi, niezbędne jest przedstawienie kontekstu historycznego, w jakim funkcjonuje serial klasyczny, oraz wielości możliwych ujęć teoretycznych analizy relacji między tekstem literackim a tekstem audiowizualnym. I tak część pierwsza zawiera dwa rozdziały o charakterze teoretycznym. Pierwszy z nich omawia historię serialu klasycznego jako gatunku, wyprowadzając jego genezę od publikacji powieści wiktoriańskiej w odcinkach, poprzez dźwiękowe wydania powieści oferowane przez stację BBC od początku istnienia radia, do ewoluujących wraz z rozwojem technologii form serialu telewizyjnego i jego współczesnych przykładów. Rozdział drugi zawiera przegląd stanowisk teoretycznych stosowanych w badaniach nad adaptacjami od połowy XX wieku, kiedy to zaczęły się pojawiać publikacje naukowe na ten temat. Jest to charakterystyka poszczególnych metodologii, poczynając od podejścia zakładającego wymaganą wierność literackiemu „oryginałowi”, poprzez podejście komparatystyczne przyjmujące, że adaptacja to forma przekładu intersemiotycznego, następnie podejście intertekstualne, opierające się na analizie wielości źródeł, z których adaptacja czerpie, oraz podejście socjologiczne, postrzegające adaptacje tekstów literackich jako część pewnego procesu ekonomiczno-społecznego, do podejścia interdyscyplinarnego, przyjętego w analizach adaptacji zawartych w części drugiej niniejszej publikacji. Chronologiczne przedstawienie rozwoju ujęć teoretycznych nie ma na celu ani ich hierarchizacji, ani zasugerowania, że

w procesie rozwoju jedno podejście wypiera bezpowrotnie wcześniejsze. Stanowiska te współistnieją, a przyjęcie ich zależy w dużej mierze od tego, kim jest osoba pisząca o adaptacjach, gdyż wśród badaczy zajmujących się tym zagadnieniem znajdują się zarówno filmoznawcy i medioznawcy, jak i literaturoznawcy.

Pięć rozdziałów stanowiących część drugą monografii to analizy wybranych seriali, a porządek ich przedstawienia odzwierciedla chronologię produkcji. Pierwszą jest *Saga rodu Forsythe'ów* z 1967 r. (produkcja BBC, będąca adaptacją dwóch trylogii Johna Galsworthy'ego), po której omówione są dwie produkcje Granady z lat 80. XX wieku – *Znowu w Brideshead* (serial z 1981 r. będący adaptacją powieści Evelyn Waugh) oraz *Klejnot w koronie* (serial z 1984 r. oparty na tetralogii „Kwartet angloindyjski” autorstwa Paula Scotta). Rozdział czwarty poświęcony jest *Miasteczku Middlemarch*, serialowi BBC z 1994 na podstawie powieści George Eliot, piąty zaś *Samotni* z 2005, również produkcji BBC, opartej na powieści Karola Dickensa. Każdy z rozdziałów ma podobną strukturę – rozpoczyna się od osadzenia danego tekstu źródłowego w kontekście historyczno-literackim, uwzględnia historię adaptacji tego tekstu do form audiowizualnych oraz recepcję tych produkcji, a następnie jego części poświęcone są szczegółowej analizie modyfikacji wprowadzonych na poziomie fabularnym, w funkcjach i charakterystyce postaci, oraz w sposobie, w jaki warstwa wizualna wzbogaca/modyfikuje przekaz treści literackich. Analiza ma kilka celów. Po pierwsze, poprzez omówienie pewnych zabiegów adaptacyjnych wykazany zostaje znaczny zakres modyfikacji, które są wprowadzane pomimo założonej wierności tekstowi literackiemu, i które w przypadku tych konkretnych adaptacji zostały przez widzów i krytyków zaakceptowane. Analiza odnosi się też do tego, w jaki sposób adaptacja dostosowuje fabułę powieści do formy i konwencji serialu, a także jaki wpływ na stronę wizualną mają możliwości techniczne, jakimi dysponowała telewizja na określonym etapie swojego rozwoju. Analiza jest w swej zasadniczej części porównawcza, wykorzystuje elementy narratologii na poziomie porównania fabuły i postaci, ale odnosi się też do strony wizualnej: do dekoracji, rekwizytów, kostiumów jako elementów rekonstruowanego świata przedstawionego oraz do sposobu fotografowania i edycji obrazu. Jednym z zagadnień, któremu poświęcona jest uwaga to zakres, w jakim udało się zachować w procesie transpozycji do formy audiowizualnej uniwersalność, ponadczasowość i możliwą wielość interpretacyjną powieści, czyli to, co przyczyniło się do uzyskania przez dany tekst literacki statusu „klasycznego”.

Seriale omówione w tej monografii wyprodukowano na przestrzeni niemal 40 lat. Łączy je fakt, że w historii gatunku były one na swój sposób przełomowe, a także to, że udało się w nich zachować równowagę między tym, co nienaruszalne, a tym, co należy dostosować do oczekiwań widzów. Różnią się one natomiast rodzajem tekstu źródłowego. Mamy tu bowiem bardzo typowego dla serialu klasycznego autora, jakim jest Dickens, ale sama powieść jest jedną z rzadziej adaptowanych (do formy serialu – trzykrotnie: w roku 1959, 1985 i w 2005). Podobnie rzecz się ma z *Miasteczkiem Middlemarch* – tekstem wpisującym się znakomicie

w założenia gatunku, bo będącym dziewiętnastowieczną powieścią obyczajową, ale nienależącym do najczęściej adaptowanych (istnieją dwie adaptacje serialowe – z roku 1968 i 1994). Kolejne dwa teksty są autorstwa tzw. klasyków współczesnych, czyli pozostających w mniejszości wśród seriali klasycznych. *Saga rodu Forsyte'ów* poddana była adaptacji dwukrotnie (w 1967 i w 2002), a *Znowu w Brideshead* do formy serialu tylko raz. Ostatnia z omawianych produkcji, *Klejnot w koronie*, choć z pozoru nie spełnia podstawowych kryteriów gatunkowych (czas akcji to lata 40., a autor zmarł w 1978 r. i zasadniczo nie jest obecnie postrzegany jako „klasyk”), to jednak uznawany jest w publikacjach na temat serialu klasycznego za szczególny jego przykład.

Celem zestawionych w tej publikacji analiz nie jest prosta ilustracja ewolucji gatunku – dla takiej analizy znacznie bardziej uzasadnionym byłby np. wybór kolejnych adaptacji tego samego tekstu. Omawiane przykłady to produkcje, które w największym stopniu pokazują możliwość zachowania w procesie adaptacji fabuły, charakterystyki postaci, dialogów pochodzących z utworu literackiego, przy jednoczesnym wzbogaceniu tekstu o walory audiowizualne. Analiza odpowiada na pytanie, w jakim zakresie w obrębie serialu klasycznego możliwe jest dokonanie modyfikacji tekstu źródłowego w przypadku seriali uchodzących w opinii krytyków i widzów za wystarczająco „wierne oryginałowi”, by widownia znająca utwór literacki je zaakceptowała, a będących jednocześnie przykładami seriali wysokiej jakości według kryteriów oceny produkcji telewizyjnej. Autorka wyjaśnia, gdzie leży adaptacyjny kompromis w tego typu ekranizacji i jakimi środkami zastał w konkretnych przypadkach osiągnięty.

Uzupełnieniem monografii jest siedem Aneksów, z których pięć stanowią szczegółowe zestawienia najważniejszych wydarzeń składających się na fabuły poszczególnych powieści oraz sposobów, w jaki wkomponowane zostały one w odcinki danych seriali i ich fabuły.

