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**Mansfield Park: A Confrontation between Jane
Austen's and Patricia Rozema's character of Fanny
Price**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

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Introduction

The novel *Mansfield Park* together with its main heroine Fanny Price is often considered by a contemporary reader as a boring novel with a priggish heroine. However, when the novel was written Fanny Price was considered, both by the authoress and readers, as a perfect Regency heroine. It was Jane Austen's first attempt on creating such a perfect heroine, someone akin to the Victorian notion of 'angel in the house', a pure submissive woman with unbelievably strong moral conviction, someone who is one with nature and God, a woman who appears to be kind, and also someone who remains perfectly frigid in her opinions about others. Fanny Price may appear to be perfect, at least at the first sight, but she is certainly not. As will be discussed later in this thesis, Austen's Fanny Price is prone to jealousy, extreme emotional sensitivity and, above all, it is her main trait, morality, which seems to hinder her the most. She seems to condemn anything or anyone slightly improper. So although, Henry Crawford is not a bright example of a good proper man, as he is more an example of the decline of an era, he still could be saved from his sad lifestyle and eventually became a 'good man' under a kind yet strict hand. Fanny Price refuses everything about him though, her morality and sentimentality does not necessary lead to kindness and desire to help, so in this case, it leads to intolerance. Perhaps, it is Fanny Price than Mr. Darcy from *Pride and Prejudice* who actually follows the extreme version of "My good opinion once lost is lost forever."¹ Another flaw which stems from her morality and genteel-like manners would be prejudice. When living in Portsmouth, the reader can see how she disdains her family and whole household. She loves them, they are her family after all, but she despises everything about their lowly manners, loud friends and appalling behaviour.

Jane Austen had failed in creating a perfect heroine then. The question would be why did she even tried to create a perfect heroine when everything she had ever written before and even after were heroines with definite flaw who, at the end, repented and found their happiness. The examples of these imperfect heroines would be Elizabeth

¹ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Spottiswoode and Shaw, 1853): 50.

Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice* with her prejudice, Emma from *Emma* with her arrogance, Anne Elliot from *Persuasion* with her blind obedience or Marianne Dashwood from *Sense and Sensibility* and her rashness. All of these heroines follow certain pattern. They have to firstly overcome their flaws in order to reach happiness. So what is the reason behind *Mansfield Park*? At the beginning, it is important to mention that *Mansfield Park* is, at least partly, considered as an autobiographical novel. The reason behind writing this novel could be Austen's own despairing over an unfavorable situation. After death of her father, Austen found herself in the same situation as Fanny Price; dependent on her relatives, namely her brother's family. So, in a short succession, three disasters hit her; the death of her father, the fall from certain type of lifestyle and her dependence on her brother. These experiences could make her bitter and that is why she could try to create a perfect life for a heroine with similar personal disasters.

Patricia Rozema creates her adaptation of *Mansfield Park* with her own understanding of Jane Austen. Firstly, she chooses different theme for the film, she is inspired by motive of slavery in the novel. The rest of the novel is simply a stage set for her. She alters it to her own needs and she creates a palimpsest—'reused or altered form while still retaining traces of its earlier form'²—of whole novel with Fanny Price at the peak. She creates new Fanny Price inspired by the juvenile Jane Austen and the 'flawed' heroines from the Austen's universe.

This thesis called *Mansfield Park: A Confrontation between Jane Austen's and Patricia Rozema's character of Fanny Price*, as the title suggests, is concerned with analysis of characteristic traits of the original Fanny Price by Jane Austen and her interpretation by director Patricia Rozema in the film adaptation *Mansfield Park* from 1999. Furthermore, the thesis is also concerned with the comparison between these two versions of Fanny Price and possible explanation why would Patricia Rozema chose to create a palimpsest of the character of Fanny Price in her film adaptation.

² *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s. v. 'palimpsest, n.,' accessed June 21, 2016, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/136319?rskey=O0CGTr&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>

The thesis is divided into multiple sections; each is concerned with the analysis of a certain personality or physical trait of the character of Fanny Price, both in the novel and film, or alternatively anything which directly influences Fanny Price, such as the motive of slavery in the novel and film or family ties. The following chapters contain the traits which may be shared between the both versions of Fanny Price, such as her morality, her faith in God, her love and jealousy towards Edmund and even her education. Other analyzed traits are these which one version of Fanny has and other does not or the traits where the differences are so great that they can be considered as the opposites. Such traits are their different physical constitution, pride, the timidity and the sentimentality of the novel's Fanny and Rozema's Fanny.

Each chapter is roughly divided into two sections. Each section is dedicated to the analysis of the same trait in each version of Fanny Price.

Finally, the analysis of both versions of character of Fanny Price shall be summarized and then compared to each other. Furthermore, this thesis will offer an explanation why did the director Patricia Rozema chose to alter the character of the main heroine and also the motivation behind this decision. At the end of this thesis, the main objective will be answered; whether the characters in an adaptation should be faithful to the original characters or if it is possible to reach the faithfulness to a novel by other means.

1 Fanny's morality

Morality is the trait that is both Fanny Price's strongest point and, simultaneously, Austen's Fanny's downfall for a few, mainly contemporary, readers. Each of Jane Austen's heroines has a different main trait and all of them have strong morals, but it is Fanny Price who has her morality as her strongest virtue which brings her happiness at the end of the novel. For all of her weaknesses and insecurities, Fanny's so-called backbone and strong conviction comes precisely from her strong morality. To call it determined and unshakeable moral code may suit her better than having just strong morality alone. She may struggle, she may even cry, but when she decides that sometimes is plain wrong, she wilfully abides to her decision no matter what can happen. After all, she was the only one who realised that there must be something elementary wrong with the man who shamelessly flirts with an engaged woman and she keeps this opinion through whole novel. At this point, readers could call her overtly uptight and narrow-minded. Just because a handsome gentleman has an innocent conversation with the older sister does not necessarily mean anything is wrong, they may say. However, Fanny's thoughts in chapter 23 are quite clear and logical concerning this topic:

“[...] no embarrassing remembrance affected his spirits. Here he was again on the same ground where all have passed before and apparently as willing to stay and be happy without Miss Bertrams, as he never known Mansfield in any other state [...]”³

It is fascinating how easily Mr Crawford switches his attentions to an only young female left, Fanny. If she thought him improper before, now she deeply distrusts him. He keeps changing his earlier opinions only to please her, speaks in an easy, flippant manner and never takes anything seriously. So when he suddenly changes into a serious, love-smitten man who offer her his hand in marriage, she is confused and angry. She adamantly keeps by her unblemished morals and she never wavers

³ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 228.

because her conviction is the only thing she has. She is able to sacrifice a future of a wealthy wife in a most probably unhappy marriage as she lacks any affection for the man.

Interestingly so, all Austen's previous heroines had at least one of the traits Fanny's cousins and Mary possess, be it wit, charm or liveliness, so why would Austen make Fanny so unmemorable? The answer is because she wanted to highlight Fanny's morality to the highest where it is not obstructed by other desirable traits. Austen wants to show the readers that without morality and kindness which comes with it, a person is bound to lose in the end. It is not the most elegant, witty and lively lady who win the true happiness. Austen made her opinion clear as to what a perfect woman should be like, foremost full of kindness and unshakeable morals.

As for the film version of Fanny, it could be said that she attained certain perfection in other ways. She has wit, she is charming and smart and very lively, just like her cousins and Mary Crawford, but, in addition to all that, there is her strong morality and conviction which make her different from the other women in the story. In this case, it is practical to refer to her morality simply as strong since this Fanny Price's conviction fails her once. Henry's gentlemanly attentions, Fanny's miserable love for Edmund and her home situation full of poverty finally breach her imaginary shields and she succumbs to Henry's proposals of undying love. She prepares herself to marry a man she does not love but perhaps can grow to love. Ironically, she needs only one day to realise she cannot marry a man she still does not trust fully due to his flippant ways. Therefore, she regains her moral outlook and changes her mind. Still, it is just this moral code what is left of the original Fanny's in Rozema's version. And although this Fanny Price could not be more different from the original, we can still say this is Fanny Price because it is her strong morality and all the insecurities which stem from it which truly define her.

2 Faith in God

It is faith which is most probably behind Fanny Price's strong morality. The majority of past and even contemporary literature and views equal morality and faith. One example of this equation could be; What is moral is pure and what can be more pure than faith in God?

Austen's Fanny's faith is visibly extremely strong. The reader could even accuse her of being excessively pious almost to the rigidity. The example would be whole theatre 'fiasco'. She strongly condemns the company's wish to play the chosen *Lover's Vows*. Another point would be her adamant refusal of the participation in the play itself. The reason for this refusal could be in her shyness but also in the impropriety of the play itself. For her, the act itself is not immoral but acting a part in such a decadent and quite debauched play most definitely is. When Mary Crawford seeks Fanny to ask for help in rehearsal of her part, Fanny is quite insistent about just reading the part not acting (saying) it.⁴ She feels betrayed by Edmund's decision of playing the counterpart to Mary because to that day he was always on her side and on the side of 'propriety' as is proper for a future clergyman. So when Edmund approaches her to tell her about his decision, she can see Mary Crawford's influence and Edmund's lust for her. She is quite often shocked by Crawford sibling's opinions in general; the example could be Mary's opinion on Edmund's ordination and Henry Crawford's speech on the ruined play. On this occasion she even refers to Henry Crawford's mind as corrupted.⁵

Another subtler indication about God's influence in Fanny's daily life would be her simple joy and appreciation of nature. During their visit in Sotherton, everyone in the company talks about the possible 'improvements' to the gardens or the whole estate but it is only Fanny who just enjoys the former glory and simple but old gardens which are more work of God than one of human. She comments on such scene with

⁴ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 173.

⁵ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 231.

the words, “When I look out on such a night as this, I feel as if there could be neither wickedness nor sorrow in the world.”⁶

The last point is on the prayer itself. Whereas Mary sees prayers and mass in general as something of necessity, something “for invent excuses for staying away”⁷, Fanny sees collective prayers as “valuable part of former times”⁸, moments when people share all their inner thoughts with each other, when they are closest to each other, moments of pure spirituality and solidarity.

Concerning the matter of faith and religion, Michael Karounos in his essay *Ordination and Revolution in “Mansfield Park”* theorises about Austen’s symbolism of religion and established order in Edmund and Fanny’s union. Both of them were ‘ordained’ in the same week; Edmund to the clerical class and the ordination in Fanny’s case means coming out in society. This quick succession of ordinations signifies the later marital unity between them.⁹ Other symbolism of the religious unity of Fanny and Edmund comes as Edmund’s gift of a chain to William’s cross. Karounos claims the cross and the chain is the metaphor for the unity between religion and gentility and it binds Fanny to Edmund and Mansfield. The exaggerated necklace given by Henry Crawford seems to be unfitting as it does not suit Fanny’s personality and dedication.¹⁰

For Rozema’s Fanny, her faith is not necessarily strong, but it still partially guides Fanny through her decisions. This is again a trait which is often overshadowed by her stronger and more obvious traits. However, her faith to God shines when she is confronted with other characters, mainly Mary Crawford. During Fanny’s visit at Parsonage, Mary and Fanny’s conversation spins from music to the faith and the

⁶ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 114.

⁷ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 87.

⁸ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 87.

⁹ Michael Karounos, “Ordination and Revolution in “Mansfield Park””, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 44 no.4 (2004): 726, accessed April 18, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3844533>.

¹⁰ Michael Karounos, “Ordination and Revolution in “Mansfield Park””, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 44, no.4 (2004): 732, accessed April 18, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3844533>.

whole conversation is obviously a subtle fight for Edmund's affections. However, their opinions about faith are also sincere. She evidently enjoys the spirituality which accompanies faith and, perhaps, an elevation of spirits during mass. For Fanny, faith is strictly a spiritual experience. Fanny uses the excuses of "Edmund would say" on the subject of church music, but this opinion is clearly hers or at least she completely agrees with this statement. Mary, on the other side, is a cosmopolitan and highly materialistic woman, she enjoys gaiety, high-class lifestyle and takes faith as something akin to a relic from the past. She could be taken as part of an early decadent society and she is deeply offended by the thought of being a mere clergyman's wife.

3 Fanny's love to Edmund

When young Fanny Price arrives at Mansfield Park, Jane Austen describes her behaviour as:

"[...] unhappy as possible. Afraid of everybody, ashamed of herself, and longing for the home she had left, she knew not how to look up, and could scarcely speak to be heard, or without crying."¹¹

The passage above is also essential to the topic of shyness in Fanny which is covered in chapter 7 of this work. This chapter, however, is focused on the part of the citation which is concerned with Fanny's unhappiness and her inability to stop crying over her fate. She is alone in a new milieu and as Austen says "nobody put themselves out of their way to secure her comfort."¹² Therefore, when Edmund approaches her of his own volition and with kind words he immediately earns her loyalty and deep affections. She does not seem to romantically love him right from the beginning but throughout the years her sisterly love changes into something more. He gradually becomes her confidant and person she loves the most. She never seems to break

¹¹ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 11.

¹² Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 12.

decorum and reveal her true feelings but, interestingly so, it is only Edmund (and William) to whom she shows her feelings (worry, happiness, etc.) quite violently on various situations. At the end of the novel, Edmund thinks her love, or regard in this case for him, is merely “sisterly”¹³ one. But if it was true she would not show the great amount of jealousy towards Mary Crawford as is further elaborated in chapter 4 of this thesis. That is why, her feelings must be genuine and also quite possessive towards Edmund. The ending of *Mansfield Park*, however, is rather abrupt. Edmund quite suddenly realises the greatness of Fanny, of “all her smiles and all her ways; as Mary Crawford had never been”¹⁴ and immediately thinks of marrying her. Austen tries to tactfully end the novel but unfortunately it is not very well done. The happy ending feels forced and not genuine.

Rozema’s Fanny has most probably fallen in love with Edmund gradually just like Austen’s Fanny. In contrast to Austen’s Fanny she is more open about her affections, at least to herself. She dearly loves him and moreover she understands him (more to this topic in chapter 4). Unlike Austen’s Fanny, Rozema’s Fanny is also a companion for various activities than just solely conversation, like horse-riding, and the conversations itself tends to be in more playful manner between them. The superior number of the shared activities and past-times is the reason why she seems to be more suitable partner to Edmund than both Austen’s Fanny and even Mary Crawford. She also seems to be more selfless in her affections or, perhaps, heartbroken as she tries to give up her love for Edmund and move on. This could be possibly the main reason why she accepts Henry’s marriage proposal. It was already discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis that in a sudden lapse of her moral convictions she agrees on the proposal but it was most probably due to her broken heart that she had this lapse at all. The minor reason for her acceptance was to escape the poor living conditions in Portsmouth. Rozema also chooses to be more physical in displays of love which is another unthinkable notion in the novel. In the novel, the love between Fanny and Edmund is always on the platonic level. There are issues with Bertram sisters’

¹³ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 484.

¹⁴ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 484.

elopement but, in this case, that is not relevant. In Rozema's adaptation, the viewer can clearly see the physical attraction between Fanny and Edmund. The kiss between them can be another short lapse of judgement as it happened during stressful times but it gives their future relationship the possibility of progress and it is not finished in same abrupt way like in the novel.

4 Fanny's jealousy

One understandable flaw of Fanny Price in general is her feelings of jealousy towards Mary Crawford and Edmund Bertram. This feeling comes hand in hand with feeling of betrayal. Fanny Price was for many years the centre of attention to Edmund. Even if he saw her only as a little sister, with exception of his blood-related real sisters she was still the only woman who he looked at. But everything changes with the arrival of Mary Crawford. Mary Crawford could be taken as an exotic and rare bird, uncommon in countryside where Mansfield Park is located. She is attractive, witty, intelligent, playful, she is not scared of saying her own opinion and can be quite blunt in her assessments. Generally, she could be taken as a modern 'prototype' of woman. She is the complete opposite of Fanny in her character and also she is incomparable in beauty and manners to Edmund's sisters. From the first moment Edmund sees her, he is transfixed by her whole being. He falls in love with her so quickly and so strongly that he cannot even see many of her flaws which would be crucial in their possible married life. For the first time, he starts to unintentionally ignore Fanny and her opinions and this is the beginning of her jealousy of them.

During majority of Fanny's monologues and thoughts of Mary's character in the novel, there are moments where Fanny has knowledge which she should not have even with her uncanny ability of the keen observation of people's character. Majority of the novel is narrated from Fanny's perspective and the narrator tries to stay subjective, writing only of observation and feelings Fanny herself could make and see. But it is obviously hard for the narrator (Jane Austen herself) to stay completely subjective. A keen reader can see the moments when Austen unintentionally forces her own opinions and omniscience through Fanny's mouth. There are, of course,

many passages where her thoughts could be interpreted as a ‘I am better. I have known Edmund for longer.’ However, the omniscience in regards of Crawford’s sibling hurt her image of perfection more than not because this is perhaps the main reason why many readers accuse Fanny Price of being ‘priggish’ and insufferable woman.

“Could she believe Miss Crawford to deserve him, it would be – oh, how different it would be – how far more tolerable! But he was deceived in her; he gave her merits which she had not; her faults were what they had ever been, but he saw them no longer.”¹⁵

This quotation can be used as a proof of the earlier theory. It depicts Fanny’s thoughts just before the ball held in her honour. At this moment, there is an informal certainty about Mary and Edmund’s future marital union. The broken first part of the quotation refers to Fanny’s heartbreak and shattered dreams. For the second part of the quotation there are two options. The first would be that her assessment of Mary Crawford comes from her jealousy. In this case, the jealousy Fanny displays would be overly obsessive and perhaps unbecoming of Fanny’s character itself. The thought of ‘She is bad person, she charmed Edmund away from me’ is unreasonable and does not fit her character. There is no dispute though that Fanny is jealous on numerous occasions such as; during the walk at Sotherton, Edmund lending Fanny’s horse to Mary or Edmund’s comments on Mary’s beauty and wit. However, Fanny Price is shy and timid and even though there is a general truth about ‘still water running deep’, Austen intended to make Fanny the perfect forgiving and pure lady and obsessive and unreasonable jealousy would ruin her effort. That is why there is the second option; a fact made from the observation. But from this option, another difficulty arises as well. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Fanny is a keen observer and together with her extensive amount of reading she should have certain experience of diverse human traits. However, reality is different. She has never met anyone similar to Crawford siblings before because she has almost never dealt with anyone else apart of her

¹⁵ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 270.

immediate family and governess; therefore, she lacks experience, not to mention certain aptitude to socialisation. Their behaviour is something alien and unknown to her, that is why even their motives should not be so clear to her. She should not determine Mary Crawford 'true face' with such clarity and ease. Therefore, it must be Austen who speak through Fanny while trying to show Fanny's moral superiority.

Fanny in Patricia Rozema's adaptation seems to be subtler but simultaneously more open about her own feelings. She keeps her feelings to Edmund and her jealousy mostly to herself. It also seems that she does not possess the same amount jealousy as Austen's Fanny does. One of few moments where she is suitably open about her feelings is the subtle confrontation between her and Mary Crawford which was already mentioned it in the chapter 2 in regards of the faith. As said above, this conversation was mainly a so-called 'cat fight' for Edmund's affections.

She still tries to be a good friend and advisor to her dear Edmund but she is also clearly betrayed by his actions and how easily he was influenced by others, mainly Mary. The culmination of this betrayal in the film is the moment when Edmund sides with others in question of Henry's proposal to Fanny. In the past, Edmund was always on the Fanny's side when making important decisions and he was considerate of her feelings. Now, influenced by Mary and his attempts to please her, he openly doubts her decision and feelings. He is blinded by his attraction to Mary to see her flaws and through her even the flaws of her brother. This is the moment where a viewer can clearly see Fanny's heartbreak.

Furthermore, Rozema's Fanny has with exception to her strong morality completely different character. Firstly, she does not possess the fragility of mind and body which Austen's Fanny does. She is not easily mentally influenced and wounded by opinions and actions of others. And that is why she tries to not to allow herself to be hurt and swallowed by her own feelings. She is also quite resolute; she is able to take action to ascertain her position. She is strong and firm in her standing and her decisions and she refuse to be a victim to her own feelings.

5 Family ties

Fanny Price often mentions her deep love for her older brother William who is the only tie to her old family in Portsmouth. He and her cousin Edmund are the only ones who actually deeply care about Fanny's wellbeing. And it is them to whom Fanny turns for advice or reassurance. Her dependence on William only multiplies when Edmund is smitten with Mary Crawford and Fanny faces her feelings of jealousy and dejection. The relationship further deteriorates when Edmund reveals his plans for Fanny's marriage with Henry Crawford. Due to these feelings akin to betrayal, William's letters and presence become an anchor for Fanny. William, although greatly thankful for Henry Crawford's assistance with his promotion, knows all of Fanny's feelings and he is the only one who does not impose his opinion about the man on Fanny.¹⁶ He remains her closest and beloved person in the family which can be continually seen in her thoughts during her stay in Portsmouth.

As a person who cherishes love and affection, Fanny often thinks about her family in Portsmouth, her many brothers and sisters, her busy but loving mother and rough father. It is probably her defence mechanism against the lack of such feelings in Mansfield household, mainly in the first weeks of her arrival. There, she is just little poor Fanny, a child of poor sister Price, who married foolishly¹⁷. She has no place and no respect here. In Portsmouth, she "had been always important as playfellow, instructress, and nurse"¹⁸.

She imagines how wonderful it would be living with loved ones, how different it would all be in the sense, 'if I was there I would not deal with this'. So when she hears about her uncle's decision to send her to visit the family house in Portsmouth, she "was delighted, but her happiness was of a quiet, deep, heart swelling sort [...] there were emotions of tenderness that could not be clothed in words"¹⁹. For the first

¹⁶ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 384-385.

¹⁷ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 3-4.

¹⁸ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 13.

¹⁹ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 378.

time in years, she would receive genuine affection. Moreover, she could escape Henry's confusing attempts to marry her.

However, when she arrives to her family home, she is disillusioned and shocked. There is no loving welcome, no warm affections and William, the only person she can depend on, must abruptly leave to sea. Her protector and dear friend is gone and she is alone in a complete unbearable household full of "the noise, commotion and the people."²⁰ Even a contemporary reader used to a certain level of rudeness can see something wrong in this statement. Furthermore, this is proper and polite Fanny Price who says it, so it appears to be more loudmouth swearing than stating the facts. Actually, she even does not try to hide her disdain over her family's manners and behaviour. Fanny is used to a quiet and peaceful environment and most importantly to an orderly household. Ironically, Portsmouth's family house could be compared to a zoo due to widespread disorder and number of family members in such a small house. The youngest children are wild and untameable, the mother spends more time commanding disobedient servants than raising her children and the father's behaviour is something for which Fanny is "more ashamed than of all the rest."²¹ Her father who was in the past the lieutenant in the British Navy has the means of being charming and even somewhat well-mannered man when the need arises. But it is his crude behaviour and implicit jokes in the presence of his friends which makes him so repulsive in Fanny's eyes.

All of her dreams of an affectionate family are shattered, they are nothing like what she imagined them to be. Her family loves her; she is still their daughter and sister after all; but there is awkwardness, estrangement and, of course, pragmatism present. From her mother's point of view, her daughter's arrival probably means that they have to manage another child when they have so many hungry mouths to feed already.

Fanny realises that she changed and that Portsmouth is no longer her home. No matter how she may or may not feel inferior living with her cousins, Mansfield Park is

²⁰ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 402.

²¹ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 411.

now her true home. She starts to miss Mansfield. She even has problems filling her time as William, the only one in the family who truly cherish her, is gone and her family's acquaintances appears to be "men all coarse, women all pert and everybody all underbred"²² and she herself is not very popular, as "young ladies were offended by her 'airs'."²³ To help her sanity, she tries to create a semblance of order in the house and re-befriends her younger sister Susan who Fanny considers a long lost soulmate and, perhaps, a genuine diamond in the rough, due to Susan's similar views and judgements, yet Susan's ability "to try to be useful, where she (Fanny) could only go away and cry."²⁴

Same as the original Fanny, Rozema's had a difficult time adapting to the Mansfield household. It was not only because she missed her family in Portsmouth, but due to her cheerful and independent personality as a child as well. However, she was able to overcome her loneliness thanks to Edmund, letters to her sister Suzie and a wide range of hobbies. While she deeply loves her family, she was not very happy about her uncle's decision to visit her former home. She thought that perhaps there can be some good in visiting her family but she knew from beginning that she no longer fits into Portsmouth life which she confirmed right in firsts days of her stay. There was a possibility she could return to that life. She reclaims her position of 'a second mother' in the family she had before her departure for Mansfield. She seems to create order in the household and even earn love from her younger siblings. She appears to gradually adjust to her new place in the new house, but she is, much as Austen's Fanny also was, very embarrassed of her family situation in the presence of Henry Crawford. In relevance to this embarrassment, it can be noted that the source of this emotion is different for each Fanny Price, both the original and the adaptation. Austen's Fanny is mainly embarrassed for her family's unbecoming and perhaps low-class behaviour. Poverty has secondary place for Fanny as it seems bearable. The house is small but can still be considered as a city mansion and the family even can afford a servant or

²² Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 405.

²³ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 405.

²⁴ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 406.

two. On the other hand, Rozema's Fanny's embarrassment seems to focus mainly on her family's poverty itself. Rozema's image of the Portsmouth household is even poorer than in the novel. The household is without servants and it is more of a fisherman's house than low middle class family house. Rozema completes the image of poverty by adding several scenes, such as; shared bed with Suzie, fleas in bedclothes, dirt, grime and even presence of maggots on dining table and unappetising food. Rozema's reason for this portrayal of Portsmouth's house is apparently because she wanted to make the poverty of the house more visceral.²⁵

The place of William is taken in the adaptation by Suzie, Fanny's younger sister. The siblings' relationship is different as well. As mentioned above, William was the anchor, the protector to docile, sickly Fanny. Suzie, on the other hand, seems to be more of a pen friend, an important companion, someone with whom Fanny can share gossip and romance stories as the only ally she has. As Suzie is a younger sibling, there also comes the question, if Fanny would even share her inner deepest thoughts with a younger girl who has her own little problems. Moreover, Suzie admires her beautiful and elegant older sister and hopes to become the same in the future and that is perhaps why Fanny does not want to shatter her dreams by showing her reality.

6 Fanny's physical constitution

Austen's Fanny Price is fragile child with weak constitution from the beginning and that is why she is quite restricted in a number of activities. The sole activity she can handle without complications is horse-riding; long walks and prolonged activities are exhausting for her, they even make her ill. This fact is best illustrated by the incident in chapter 7 in the novel. There Fanny suffers from anaemia and possible sunstroke because she was forced to do pointless errands by her aunt. Even her brother William warns her mother before he leaves for sea: "She is tender and not used to rough it like

²⁵ Sue Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2002), 99.

the rest of us.”²⁶ Furthermore, physical exercises are not the only cause to her sudden declines in health. As she is overtly frail and easily distressed by almost any unfavourable situation, her state of mind often influences her physical constitution as well. This shows most commonly in the form of sudden weakness, loss of appetite or headache.

Health issues are another difference between the original Fanny and her palimpsest. Rozema’s Fanny is not only healthy; it can be said that she is overly lively. Her uncle, Sir Thomas, even calls her “a wild beast” in the film adaptation and Sue Parrill in *Jane Austen on Film and Television* comments how Fanny is “in robust health and something of tomboy”²⁷. The used words are probably fitting though. In the opening scene where the viewers first see grown-up Fanny Price, she literally rushes after Edmund across the whole house while loudly screaming and giggling. Also, horse-riding is her joy, one of her most beloved hobbies, not a necessity which comes from the lack of other activities like Austen’s Fanny. Horse-riding is apparently Fanny’s solution to stressful situations as well. A great example of this is the scene where Fanny dramatically rides at night in the rainstorm. When she is overtly agitated or angry she uses this activity to relax and calm herself. She also does not have any problems with long walks or, perhaps, long runs in the rain, as Parsonage where Crawford siblings resided had to be some distance from Mansfield house. In this regard, Rozema apparently seems to take inspiration from Austen’s Elizabeth Bennet.

7 Fanny’s shyness and social aptitude

Firstly, it would be appropriate to examine the origins of Fanny Price’s shyness. In Brodie’s *Notes on Mansfield Park*, the author, Graham Hanley, theorises on the origins of Fanny’s shyness.

²⁶ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 399.

²⁷ Sue Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2002), 89.

“Her shyness was probably a result of her mother’s preference for sons and indifference to daughters, and the atmosphere at Mansfield Park no doubt aggravated it: Mrs Norris bullied her; Sir Thomas frightened her; her cousins, with exception of Edmund, treated her with disdain, and Lady Bertram, though kind, was too lazy to try to understand [...]”²⁸

And the novel supports these claims. Mrs. Price’s first letter to her sister after ten years of separation contains the question if there is anything they (Bertram’s) could do to help her oldest son William, definitely not her daughter. Another of her mother indifference to the daughters would be that she almost does not greet her own daughter after ten years of separation and she only seems to dote on William.²⁹ The fact that she misses her brother, who encourages her, more than her parents could be also taken as a proof.

“[...] unhappy as possible. Afraid of everybody, ashamed of herself, and longing for the home she had left, she knew not how to look up, and could scarcely speak to be heard, or without crying.”³⁰

Although, Fanny’s shyness could be for the most part caused by the manner she grew up in Portsmouth, large portion of this shyness also arises from her fear, astonishment, loneliness and confusion when she arrives to Mansfield. The passage above confirms this thought; everything is new and confusing for her, everyone is acting differently than she is accustomed to, she barely knows what to do and she is terrified of the future. Furthermore, if the passage from Hanley’s review above is considered again, there are new people, apart from her mother, who make her embrace her timidity even more. For Mr. Norris, Fanny is constant target of mocking and contempt. It is not sure whether it is for her own twisted amusement, her blindness to Fanny’s qualities or just means of encouragement for Bertram’s sisters. Sir Thomas is initially cold and almost uncaring person for whole family, not just Fanny. Lady Bertram

²⁸ Graham Hanley, *Brodie’s Notes on Jane Austen’s Mansfield Park* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 9.

²⁹ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 387.

³⁰ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 11.

seems to be more of a selfish unmoving parody of queen bee³¹ than a caring mother of a house. Maria and Julia Bertram see her only as a tool of assurance of their superiority over her and for Tom Bertram she is an amusing “creep-mouse”.³²

Generally, Austen’s Fanny Price is known as a shy, timid and serious young woman. Moreover, due to her strict moral code she keeps certain opinions what topics should or should not be breached in the conversation. Also due to these high-principled opinions she fairly often finds herself in both voiced or silent disagreement with others. She seems often silently disapprove of not so proper topics. Her timidity causes her to shy from people presence and she often avoids, in exception with Edmund, a conversation altogether, as she enjoys spending her time alone in contemplation. Although, in the later chapters of the novel, mostly after Maria’s wedding, she seems to become more open and familiar with others and spends majority of her time by conversing or playing games.

Shyness is the trait which belongs only to the original Fanny. Rozema’s Fanny could be taken as a complete opposite. She is outspoken when she wants to be but she prefers to be silent and simply observe. Another reason for her silence could be a possible effort to avoid a conflict between her and her aunt. Because she has been never restrained by any traits akin to timidity like Austen’s Fanny, her social skills have not suffered and they are brilliantly developed. In this regard, she shares similarities with Mary Crawford or, perhaps, *Pride and Prejudice*’s Elizabeth Bennet. She is bright, witty and intelligent. She can hold a conversation with natural ease and if she chooses she can be as charming as Mary Crawford, and probably even more. These conversation skills could also stem from her talent as a writer which is further covered in chapter 10 of this thesis. The most obvious example of her conversation skills would be her conversation attempts with Henry Crawford. Austen’s Fanny tries to avoid any contact with Henry and even more after she creates her own opinion about him. However, Rozema’s Fanny seems to, no matter how involuntarily, indulge

³¹ Anthony Fowles, “Focus on Mansfield Park” (London: Greenwich Exchange, 2011), 44.

³² Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 149.

herself with Henry Crawford in rather witty and sometimes sarcastic conversations which even border with flirting.

8 The motive of slavery

At first sight, it seems that slavery is a subject almost omitted in Austen's novel. It becomes a fleeting topic for conversation between Fanny and Edmund,³³ but it does not hold much importance because of the focus on different topic. The contemporary reader most often considers *Mansfield Park* as a bland novel, the so-called 'rock bottom' for Jane Austen as a writer. However, it seems that *Mansfield Park* could be actually Austen's most socially-oriented novel she had ever written and it could even be considered her only Condition-of-England novel. The novel's title itself is most probably a reference to Lord Mansfield, a well-known Lord Chief Justice in Austen's time, who contributed to the abolition of slavery. These facts were commonly known by Austen's contemporaries. The less-known fact is that Lord Mansfield adopted his mixed-blood niece, Dido Belle. It cannot be said that Jane Austen, a Tory raised woman of early 19th century when the question of the slave abolition stormed British colonial empire, would be entirely inspired by a story of some mulatto woman. However, it is remarkable how many striking similarities Fanny Price holds to this woman. Fanny may not be the daughter of a mulatto slave but she comes from a lower social class. Both women live in luxury surrounded by noble relatives but due to their own class they cannot be treated the same as daughters of a baronet or a lord. Dido was, however, still the daughter of a noble, but Fanny was not. Austen elusively describes Fanny's situation as "the slave of the house and Mrs Norris who continually demeans her as the slave-manager."³⁴ Another subtle indication of slavery in *Mansfield Park* is Sir Thomas' business in Antigua. In Austen's time, Antigua was well-known for sugar cane plantations and that obviously means that slaves were the

³³ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 202.

³⁴ Michael Karounos, "Ordination and Revolution in "Mansfield Park"", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 44, no. 4 (2004): 730-731, accessed April 18, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3844533>.

manpower. In other words, the luxurious lifestyle of the Mansfield household and thus of Fanny was built on slave labour. Sir Thomas' decision to leave for Antigua was based on the marketing problems resulting from a French embargo on sugar.

Lloyd Brown, in his review of Avrom Fleishman's *A Reading of Mansfield Park*, rephrases Fleishman's opinion that "unhistorical judgments have often confused the literary evaluation of Jane Austen's fiction"³⁵ Unlike Austen's contemporary readers and critics for whom the background of her novel was obvious so they had little need for emphasis, many later critics ignored the historical context, but simultaneously they had been inspired by older criticisms. Until recently, the role of slavery was not often considered, because the topic was never explicitly breached in the novel. One of the first critics who reopened the discussion on the role of slavery and oppression of women was Claudia L. Johnson in her critical work *Mansfield Park*. It was mainly this work which inspired and influenced Patricia Rozema in creating her vision of Austen's novel. In contrast to the novel, slavery plays one of the most important roles of Patricia Rozema's adaptation. Rozema adds some additional scenes to create specific social and political background which she justifies by saying that she is pointing out realities which should have been obvious to Austen's contemporary readers.³⁶ Her Fanny holds interest in slavery from the first time she sees a cargo ship and hears slaves singing a sad, longing song as a little girl. She can see the similarity between her and them. Both has been taken away from their families. Therefore, she holds deep sympathies for them. She also claims to have done some reading on the subject, like essays written by Thomas Clarkson, a well-known English abolitionist and campaign leader against slave trade. She seems to be deeply offended by Sir Thomas' description of mulattos. However, when she retaliates, Sir Thomas is not offended by her rude behaviour, on the contrary, in a rush of his previous praise of

³⁵ Avrom Fleishman, *A Reading of Mansfield Park: An Essay in Critical Synthesis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967), 11, quoted in Lloyd W. Brown, "Review of *A Reading of Mansfield Park: An Essay in Critical Synthesis.; the Errand of Form: An Assay of Jane Austen's Art.; Jane Austen's Art of Allusion.*", in *Eighteenth Century Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1969): 148, accessed April 18, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2737704>.

³⁶ Sue Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2002), 85.

mulattos' beauty, he praises Fanny's beauty of her complexion and figure as well. This is very awkward moment when the viewer feels like Sir Thomas compares his own niece to his prized slaves, same as some marketable cattle. He completes this impression when he proposes a ball in occasion of Fanny's coming-out to society with the comment, "Surely some young man will sit up and take notice." This is the first time in the film when Fanny is utterly furious, almost beyond reason. In her anger, she tells Edmund that she will not be sold off like one of his father's slaves. The culmination of the whole film with regard to the confrontation between Fanny/slave and others of the esteemed class comes just before Fanny's departure to Portsmouth when she reveals her true feelings to the company that she would rather 'feel affection without fear or restrain and to feel myself equal of those who surrounds me'.

Sue Parrill also comments on this issue in her work. According to Parrill, Rozema creates in her adaptation a certain subtext of the similarity of the situation of the women during the Regency period and slavery. There is a notion of the inescapable cage and a terminal state where women only change their supposed "master" for another one, going from parents' control to husband's or, if they are unlucky enough, they spend the rest of their lives in poverty or mistreated by their relatives. Fanny fits into this simile by being caged by her gratitude and material obligations to her uncle, Sir Thomas.³⁷ As marriages of that period were almost always arranged and not based on love, women were forced to choose the lesser evil, that is comfort, money and some small hope of marital happiness. In this regard, Fanny is quite unique, as she was the only one to break from this so-called cage by making a decision based on her morality and feelings and she also risked her future and her current position by refusing, as the others would call it, a good match.

³⁷ Sue Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2002), 97–98.

9 Fanny's pride and its source

In Rozema's adaptation, slavery and Fanny's feelings of sympathy and solidarity are most probably connected to her source of pride in her origins. She sympathises with slaves and, no matter how far-fetched it seems, she finds some similarities between her and their situation. As discussed in chapter 8, she is a so-called singularity in the Mansfield household. She is neither lady of the house, nor a servant. She has the education of a lady though she cannot exercise this knowledge in public. Officially, the reason is because she is still not 'out' in society, but the real reason is her class, as often emphasized by Mrs Norris, Maria, Sir Thomas or even Tom Bertram. This shows that her own social class makes her miserable and it is the reason for possible difficulties in the future. But instead of condemning her social class and despairing about the unfairness of it all, she accepts it and even uses it as a shield against others. The most evident example would be her conversation with Sir Thomas about Mr Crawford's proposal. Although her decision comes mostly from her strong morals, part of this determination which keeps her decision strong against Sir Thomas' reproach also comes from her pride as she endures everything in silent defiance.

But not all of this pride comes only from her origins. Another part of her pride comes from her excellent education. Fanny is well-read, moreover interested in all varieties of subjects. She does not take education as something necessary for becoming a flawless lady like her cousins. She takes education as means to improve herself and become a better person. Her knowledge makes her experienced and that is why knowledge is also a source of a great part of her self-confidence.

Pride which comes from her class origins is not the case for Austen's Fanny though. As discussed in chapter 5, she dearly loves her family but, when she is in Portsmouth she finds their behaviour often appalling and, apart from Susan, she is deeply embarrassed by their lacking manners. Furthermore, her origins have never helped her in Mansfield in any way. She is neither lady nor servant and along with her timid and subdued personality and her aunt Norris' bullying tendencies, often accusing her

of being “the lowest of last”³⁸, there is no place for such pride. However, this does not immediately mean she does not have any pride at all. Throughout the novel, there are moments where her pride shines brightly, however it is often overshadowed by her timid traits. Her pride and her small amount of self-confidence comes again from her morality, her strongest trait. It could be also said that without her pride as a person and Edmund’s support, such a weak, timid and sensitive woman would have fallen to hurtful actions and words of her aunt and rest of her cousins. Pride is partly the reason which keeps her above all others and their actions against her, maybe, it could be referred as a type of defence mechanism like in case of Rozema’s Fanny. However, for Austen’s Fanny, pride could be sometimes also seen in a negative sense as well. Austen often describes her, more precisely, her feelings of mortification when usually Crawford’s siblings act in unsuitable or immoral ways. Austen probably tries to describe her as pure and utterly moral person who is terrified only by the idea of her doing an immoral deed. Such behaviour should strengthen Fanny’s position as a perfect and true lady who only the best of gentlemen deserves. However, as the reader is often familiar of concept of perfection in a main character, he might misinterpret Austen’s intentions. From the reader’s point of view, it may seem that, in most of these cases, Fanny instead looks down on others. The reader may see instead the message ‘How could anyone do this?’ the more negative directed message ‘I would never have done such a thing.’ This misinterpretation shows that taking pride and confidence in being a ‘good person’ could easily backfire. It is not a mere coincidence that there is a saying which states that the path to hell is paved with good intentions.

10 Fanny’s education and imagination

At the beginning of the novel, Austen describes young Fanny’s knowledge and education through the mouth of her young cousins Maria and Julia.

³⁸ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 221.

“Dear mamma, only think, my cousin cannot put the map of Europe together [...] -or she does not know the difference between water-colour and crayons! How strange! Did you ever hear anything so stupid? [...] She is really so very ignorant! [...] I should have been ashamed of myself, if I had not known better long before I was so old as she is. I cannot remember the time when I did not know a great deal that she has not the least notion of yet. [...] But I must tell you another thing of Fanny, so odd and so stupid. Do you know she says she does not want to learn either music or drawing.”³⁹

Apart from commenting on the ignorance of young Maria and Julia themselves, they describe Fanny’s situation quite well. Fanny comes from low middle-class family. Therefore, knowledge of detailed geography of Europe or a foreign country, ancient Roman history and even expensive items like water-colours is almost inconceivable. Hence, it is neither stupidity or ignorance, she just never had the opportunity to even learn. Her family could not afford even to feed their children properly thus hiring a governess was out of question. She left her house in Portsmouth with nothing else but basic knowledge and common sense. As Sir Thomas and Mrs Norris note she was “though far from clever, she showed a trackable disposition”⁴⁰ and she had been taught nothing more than read, work and write.⁴¹ In other part of the novel, she is also described as clever with quick apprehension, good sense and fondness for reading.⁴² She also has been educated in French and history by Mansfield’s governess.⁴³

As a young woman, Fanny is described as her aunt’s companion; she talked to her, she listened to her and she read to her.⁴⁴ In fact, reading is an activity which is essential to Fanny mental growth. Due to her shyness, Fanny may lack communication skills. It is thanks to the reading that Fanny is able to keep a polite conversation, no matter how weak her attempts on this type of a conversation may

³⁹ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 16–17.

⁴⁰ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 16.

⁴¹ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 16.

⁴² Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 20.

⁴³ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 20.

⁴⁴ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 33.

sometimes seem. The only person she spends time conversing regularly is Edmund who has enough patience, kindness and sense to not rush her or confuse her. She spent many years at Mansfield and due to her situation she was often left alone with a lot of time at hand. Thus the reading is only logical opinion left to her. It did not only give her the knowledge on proper behaviour in society, reading itself also provided her the strong conviction and morality which defines her and, of course, her honed judgement of character. Interestingly so, many books were recommended by Edmund himself as he “encouraged her tastes, and corrected her judgement.”⁴⁵ Therefore, she certainly might have some foundations of these traits when she arrived to Mansfield from her home in Portsmouth, however, due to her family’s dynamics in Portsmouth and to her fear, shame and loneliness⁴⁶ on her arrival to Mansfield, it is unlikely that these traits were much developed.

Another trait which can be included in this chapter would be Fanny’s imagination. Austen’s Fanny Price may not be an aspiring and talented lady-writer like Rozema’s Fanny, however, it does not mean she lacks creativity. On the contrary, Austen gives her quite vast imagination and daydream-like tendencies. She is easily lost in the memories of past, it is even suggested by Edmund that she is able to lose herself in whatever book she reads.⁴⁷

In contrast to Austen’s young Fanny, Rozema’s young Fanny is fairly altered from the original. Rozema’s Fanny, as the novel’s Fanny, is also well-educated and possesses extensive knowledge. She seems to enjoy reading and she is almost always seen with a book in her hands. In contrast to Austen’s Fanny, she is a talented future lady-writer as well. In the beginning of the film, the viewer can see her as a bright and, perhaps, even a child prodigy. She writes her fiction romance stories in the letters to her sister Suzie and she is capable of a witty and intelligent answer to her uncle’s welcome. All of these show young Fanny as highly intelligent and well-read in many fields before she even arrives to Mansfield. She also starts working at young

⁴⁵ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 20.

⁴⁶ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 11.

⁴⁷ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 159.

age on her customised version of English history, namely *History of England*, which shows Fanny's great understanding of political and historical events. She seems to finish this work in her late teens and this version of the English history shows that she is able to make her own personal opinion about certain historical events. Even her interest in contemporary political, economic and social problems, mainly slavery-related issues which was discussed in the chapter 8 can be taken as an example of her superior education.

In relation to Fanny's juvenile writings, Rozema seems to be again inspired by Austen herself, as in the affair of the acceptance of Crawford's proposal. According to Sue Parrill, Rozema is inspired, in this case, by the juvenile Austen instead of adult Austen.⁴⁸ At the beginning of the film, Fanny reads to Edmund from her completed work of *History of England* which Austen wrote during her teenager's years. Moreover, the romance stories in the letters to her sister Suzie are variations to another Austen's juvenile work, *Love and Friendship*. Rozema seems to slightly change context and plot itself to create a relation between Fanny and film itself and the stories. Finally, at the end of the film, when Fanny and Edmund walk together to Parsonage he informs her of finding her a publisher for her works which creates the ultimate happiness for the heroine, both in love and career.

11 Fanny's sentimentality

Jane Austen's Fanny Price is also considered to be quite an emotional and fragile woman. This fact was already briefly mentioned in chapter 3 of this thesis which discusses Fanny's loving attachment to Edmund and her expression of strong, often violent emotions, towards both Edmund and her brother William. This means she expresses her feelings strongly particularly in the presence of her precious people. She also seems to react strongly in negative situations or to surprising news. The

⁴⁸Sue Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2002), 87.

excellent example is her reaction to Henry Crawford's marriage proposal in chapter 31 of the novel.

“She was feeling, thinking, trembling, about everything; agitated, happy, miserable, infinitely obliged, absolutely angry.”⁴⁹

Along with her morality and timidity, this form of the emotional turmoil is also quite typical for Austen's Fanny Price. It seems that any deviation from normalcy can disturb her equilibrium. For some readers she can even seem to be a slightly emotionally instable woman due to the strength and variety of her emotions in a single moment and her overt sensitivity to the world around her. As already known from the passage⁵⁰ in chapters 3 and 7, Fanny is extremely prone to tears. Tears seem to be her 'tool' which she uses fairly often. She cries when she is happy, sad, angry, scared or simply frustrated. Obviously, she cries less than she did in her childhood but still enough to be potentially considered 'a crybaby' by an outsider. Apart from crying, Austen's Fanny is very expressive. Although, she is quite timid and for majority of time she does not talk unless she is talked to, she can communicate variety of emotions and messages through her facial expressions alone. In many occasions she is described as she tries to hide her feelings or interest in a conversation or just tries to compose herself. Basically, to an attentive observer, Austen's Fanny is quite 'easy to read' person but practically no one, apart from Edmund, gives her their attention or simply selfishly ignores her as in case of Henry Crawford and his adamant proposal.

As mentioned in chapter 6 of this thesis, which is dedicated to Fanny's physical constitution, her often violent mental state can also easily influence her already frail health. When distressed, she becomes suddenly faint and anemic. She can also have headaches or loss of appetite. This makes her logically even more fragile and instable and, interestingly so, it should contribute more to her 'imperfectness' than to an ideal

⁴⁹ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 310.

⁵⁰ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 11.

image of a woman. Again, Austen failed by choosing this particular trait in creating her ideal woman.

Rozema's Fanny Price cannot be described as overtly sensitive and even sentimental by any means. She is more emotionally stable than Austen's Fanny and she seems to react in even calm and collected manner when confronted with something unexpected or unwelcome. The example could be confrontation between her and Sir Thomas in relevance to Henry Crawford's proposal. She is also fairly expressive like Austen's Fanny. She can easily communicate with only her facial expressions or body language. It is quite hard to rouse her to anger but when she gets angry she can become very impulsive, as the scene where she is on horseback, wildly galloping across stormy landscape, suggests.

Conclusion

Firstly, it is necessary to summarize the traits of both Rozema's and Austen's Fanny Price analyzed above.

The original Fanny Price created by Jane Austen is primarily very moral-oriented, emotional, timid yet intelligent sickly woman. With all of these primary traits comes a myriad of others. Her morality most probably stems from her faith and she seems to be conservative in her opinions to a certain degree since she, at least partially, opposes the notion of slavery as it collides strongly with her moral conviction. She is also often agitated by each single improprieties, no matter how small they may seem, caused by others, mainly by Crawford's siblings or her cousins, that it actually portrays her as an intolerant person. Timidity, a trait which Fanny had since childhood and which was only nurtured further by the actions of others throughout the years, is another trait which defines her. In the beginning of the novel, she is rather terrified by the thought that she should voice her opinion to the company and, at the same times, she often does not have any desire for it. Perhaps, in the addition to her shyness, her reluctance to participate in a conversation is also partially because she was taught to be silent as it is appropriate for her class. However, it does not prevent her from observing and analyzing others. She seems to have perfect insight into other's personalities and unlike Edmund she is never wrong about her assessments. The last trait to be commented on is her extensive mental sensitivity. This trait is again related to other aspects of her personality. It should allow her to be kind and compassionate, although she is lacking in that regard. Her overtly strong emotions also often influence her physical condition, sometimes to the point of sickness.

In the opposition to the Austen's Fanny Price stands Fanny Price from Rozema's adaptation. Rozema's Fanny is also a moral woman of the strong conviction in all what is right. However, in addition to that, she is bright, witty and she is actually brave enough to voice her opinion if the circumstance is right, mostly when she feels strongly against something. She seems to be quite prideful as well, although there is

sometimes a difficulty to determine from where her pride comes from. On the occasion, she can be seen acting brashly in tomboy-like manner and she seems to like activity. Furthermore, she is also a budding and, most likely, talented lady writer. For the majority of time, it seems that she prefers to stay silent and observe her peers which gives her the air of a mysterious woman. However, her observation skills and even her morality fails her when she chooses, even for a short while, to marry Henry Crawford. This place her into the same position as Edmund Bertram and she is no longer a perfect heroine with foolproof opinions.

The comparison of characters of Fanny Price, both original and adaptation shows that Patricia Rozema chose to radically alter character of Fanny Price for her film adaptation and thus creates a palimpsest of Fanny Price. The only trait which new Fanny Price is left from the original character is the morality and strong conviction. Rest of Rozema's Fanny's personality is an assortment made from various characters of Austen's universe and, of course, Austen herself. As discussed in chapter 1 of the thesis, Austen's Fanny is supposed to be a perfect woman and wife of Regency era. She seems to be truly a model with her morality, sincerity and also fragility. However, original Fanny Price is not an ideal character to use on a contemporary scene. The first reason would be that the image of perfect woman has shift in last two hundred years. This reasoning stands mainly on the fact that contemporary readers crave more for active heroine of Elizabeth Bennet's or even Anne Elliot's type who 'grabs her own fortune and create her own destiny' than passive type of heroine like Fanny Price who 'waits for miracle in hope her beloved finally sees only her'. The second reason would be that to the contemporary reader Fanny Price is in the majority of cases quite unamiable character. What would be taken in the past as a perfection, is now interpreted as a flaw. A section of the chapter 4 of this work, which is dedicated the notion of Fanny's jealousy towards Mary Crawford and Edmund Bertram, is concerned with 'priggishness' of Fanny's character. Fanny's main strength, her morality, is quite tested as the reader sees her 'preach' about Crawford's siblings'

immorality and openness about certain matters; such as Mary Crawford's pun about Rears and Vices.⁵¹

The main reason, however, why Rozema chooses to create a palimpsest of the character of Fanny Price lies in her focus on the message or the background of the novel itself rather than on the fidelity to original character of Fanny Price. Rozema declares her 'fidelity' to the different aspect of the novel. She was inspired by the "implied parallel between the captivity of women and the captivity of slaves"⁵² and chooses this as a focus of her adaptation (as already mentioned in the introduction and in the chapter 8). Therefore, she had to adjust everything else to the needs of her chosen theme. She thought that the original character would be "too internal and judgmental"⁵³ for the focus of this film, however, she did not simply add random characteristics of contemporary heroines. For Rozema, it was clear that Mansfield Park is greatly autobiographical work, that is why she researched everything about Jane Austen as an author and as a person and she tried to incorporate Austen as Rozema understood her into character of Fanny Price without changing the interaction with other characters.⁵⁴ She takes Austen's talent as a lady-writer, her opinions and her experience, for example, in the manner of refusal a marriage proposal. She also takes the traits of other Jane Austen's heroines into the account; such as wittiness, healthy constitution and, perhaps, brashness from *Pride and Prejudice's* Elizabeth Bennet.

In conclusion of this thesis, even if Rozema chose to create the palimpsest of the character of the main heroine, Fanny Price, she did it for highlight one of the themes present in the novel. She did not, however, drastically change the manner the heroine interacts with other characters. That means Rozema remained at least partly faithful

⁵¹ Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 59

⁵² Moussa Hiba, "Mansfield Park and Film: An Interview with Patricia Rozema", *Literature/Film Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 3 (2004): 257.

⁵³ Moussa Hiba, "Mansfield Park and Film: An Interview with Patricia Rozema", *Literature/Film Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 3 (2004): 257.

⁵⁴ Moussa Hiba, "Mansfield Park and Film: An Interview with Patricia Rozema", *Literature/Film Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 3 (2004): 257.

to the original novel and by doing so, the adaptation itself should be regarded as free and open interpretation but still faithful enough to the original novel.

Resumé

Bakalářská práce *Mansfieldské panství: Porovnání postavy Fanny Priceové v díle Jane Austenové a v adaptaci Patrice Rozemy* se, jak název napovídá, zabývá rozborem jednotlivých aspektů charakteru Fanny Priceové jak v originálním díle spisovatelky Jane Austenové, tak ve stejnojmenné adaptaci románu z roku 1999 pod taktovkou režisérky a scénáristky Patricie Rozemy, a následném porovnání obou verzí hlavních hrdinek. Práce je rozložena do několika kapitol, z nichž se každá zabývá jednotlivou charakteristickou vlastností obou verzí hlavních hrdinek. Není však nutností, aby se tyto vlastnosti vzájemně shodovaly. Příkladem může být kapitola pátá, která se věnuje fyzické zdatnosti Fanny Priceové. V případě románu má Fanny Priceová křehké zdraví, rychle se unaví a únava často vede i k nemoci. Naproti tomu Rozema přetváří Fanny Priceovou do pozice mladé vitální ženy, která si těžší fyzickou aktivitu užívá.

V práci je využito jedenáct charakteristických vlastností, které jsou analyzovány jak z úhlu románové Fanny Priceové, tak z pohledu té filmové. První kapitola rozebírá morální stránku hrdinky. Kapitola dochází k závěru, že obě verze Fanny Priceové mají silně zakořeněné morální zásady, avšak tato morální jistota je poněkud silnější u románové Fanny než u té filmové. Stejný výsledek zaznamenává následující kapitola, která se věnuje náboženské víře. Dále se práce zabývá romantickou náklonností Fanny Priceové k bratranci Edmundovi Bertramovi a s ní spojenou žárlivostí. Obě verze hlavních hrdinek se potýkají s poněkud bouřlivými city k Edmundovi, které vedou i k žárlivým myšlenkám ke vztahu mezi Edmundem a Mary Crawfordovou a, v případě filmové Fanny, i k zoufalému pokusu přijmout nabídku k sňatku Henryho Crawforda. Další kapitoly zahrnují témata jako rodinné vztahy, výborný postřeh hlavní hrdinky nebo její sentimentalitu

Největší rozdíly mezi oběma verzemi hlavních hrdinek jdou vidět v kapitolách věnujících se již zmíněné fyzické kondici, vzdělání, hrdost na vlastní kořeny, vystupování na veřejnosti a celková interakce s ostatními postavami a konečně motivu otrokářství, který z velké části ovlivňuje život všech na Mansfieldském

panství. Právě v těchto kapitolách lze postřehnout záměr Patricie Rozemy soustředit se na jiný aspekt Fanny Priceové, než na který se zaměřila Jane Austenová ve svém románu. Jane Austenové záleží na vytvoření dokonalého ideálu před-viktoriánské ženy, tedy, tichá vzdělaná silně morální mladá žena, která se stane oporou pro svého budoucího manžela. Patricia Rozema v tomto pohledu zastává modernější přístup. Fanny Priceové je dle Rozemy jakousi zastánkyní rovnoprávnosti žen. Fanny soucítí s osudem otroků, neboť oba sama je jako žena a takzvaná „chudá příbuzná“ otrokem vyšších společenských vrstev a samotné společnosti, zároveň se však snaží vydobýt si svou nezávislost. Rozema postavě Fanny Priceové zanechá pouze několik původních vlastností a inspiruje se postavami dalších románů z pera Jane Austenové, jako je například Elizabeth Bennetová, popřípadě samotným životem spisovatelky. Vytváří tak naprosto novou postavu, která se původní Fanny Priceové podobá pouze ve jméně.

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Annotation

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Abstract: The thesis deals with the analysis of the character of Fanny Price, both in the novel *Mansfield Park* of authoress Jane Austen and in the film adaptation of directress and script writer Patricia Rozema from 1999. The thesis is divided into several chapters, each chapter addresses different mental or psychical trait of both Austen's Fanny Price and Rozema's palimpsest (reused, erased, or altered form which retains traces of its earlier form). The thesis is also concerned with the comparison between both original and palimpsest character of Fanny Price and subsequent explanation why Patricia Rozema chose to create the palimpsest of Fanny Price and if Rozema's adaptation could be still considered as faithful to the original novel in spite of this alternation of the main character.

The thesis is also concerned with the position of the novel *Mansfield Park* and its heroine among Jane Austen's other works and Jane Austen's motivation behind writing this novel.

Anotace

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Název práce: Mansfieldské panství: Porovnání postavy Fanny Priceové v románu Jane Austenové a filmové adaptaci Patricie Rozemy

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Abstrakt: Bakalářská práce se zabývá rozbořem a následným porovnáním postavy Fanny Priceové, hlavní hrdinky románu *Mansfieldské panství* od spisovatelky Jane Austenové, a jejího palimpsestu (využití původní formy k vytvoření formy zcela nové) ve filmové adaptaci z roku 1999 od režisérky a scénáristky Patricie Rozemy. Práce je rozložena do několika kapitol, z nichž se každá zabývá rozbořem jednotlivých aspektů osobnosti Fanny Priceové a to jak originálu, tak filmového palimpsestu. Práce se dále věnuje porovnání mezi jednotlivými verzemi hlavních hrdinek a následné úvaze, co vedlo Patricii Rozemu k vytvoření palimpsestu Fanny Priceové a zdali tato změna nezabraňuje tomu, aby filmová adaptace byla plnohodnotnou a věrnou alternativou pro původní román.

Práce rovněž uvádí román *Mansfieldské panství* do kontextu s ostatními díly Jane Austenové. Tedy, v čem se román *Mansfieldské panství* odlišuje od ostatních děl a co mohlo vést Jane Austenovou k tomu, aby tento román napsala.