

UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI

FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

## Mansfield Park Reconsidered

Bakalářská práce

Autor práce: Zuzana Kapustová

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D.

Olomouc 2016

Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci  
Filozofická fakulta  
Akademický rok: 2014/2015

Studijní program: Filologie  
Forma: Prezenční  
Obor/komb.: Anglická filologie (ANGF)

Podklad pro zadání BAKALÁŘSKÉ práce studenta

PŘEDKLÁDÁ:	ADRESA	OSOBNÍ ČÍSLO
KAPUSTOVÁ Zuzana	Sklářská 193, Valašské Meziříčí	F13188

TÉMA ČESKY:

Proměny Mansfieldského panství

NÁZEV ANGLICKY:

Mansfield Park Reconsidered

VEDOUcí PRÁCE:

Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D. - KAA

ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:

The thesis is to deal with Jane Austen's Mansfield Park, the one Austen novel contemporary readers as well as critics find puzzling, "a Victorian novel among Jane Austen's writing". I am to explore the critical assessments of this particular novel, and three adaptations of the novel that have been released so far in order to examine the popular approach to the material and changes in taste of the Austen readership over two centuries.

SEZNAM DOPORUČENÉ LITERATURY:

Austen, Jane. 2003. Love and Friendship. London: Hesperus.  
Austen, Jane and Sabor, Peter. 2006. Juvenilia. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
Austen, Jane. 2014. Sense and Sensibility. London: Vintage Books.  
Austen, Jane. 2012. Pride and Prejudice. London: Penguin Books.  
Tomalin, Claire. 2012. Jane Austen: a life. London: Penguin Books.  
Nixon, Lauren. 2011. Jane Austen: a celebration of her life and work. Berkshire: Worth Press.  
Hornby, Gill. 2005. Jane Austen: the girl with the magic pen. London: Short Books.

Podpis studenta:

*Kapustová*

Datum:

*12.5.2015*

Podpis vedoucího práce:

*elk*

Datum:

*12.5.2015*

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucí práce a uvedla jsem všechny použité podklady a literaturu.

V..... Dne.....

Podpis.....

I would like to give thanks to my supervisor Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D. for her help and providing me with useful materials. Moreover, I would like to thank my friend for her advice concerning this thesis.

## Contents

Introduction.....	6
1 The Life of Jane Austen.....	7
1.1 Letters from Austen.....	8
2 A Novel That Differs .....	8
3 Adaptations of Mansfield Park .....	9
4 The 1983 Series .....	10
5 The 1999 Adaptation .....	13
5.1 Different from the Original .....	14
5.1.1 The Issue of Slavery.....	15
5.1.2 Fanny Price .....	16
5.1.3 Other Characters .....	19
5.1.4 The Story.....	21
5.2 Mistakes Made in the Adaptation.....	23
5.3 The Public Reactions.....	24
6 The 2007 Adaptation .....	26
6.1 Story Differences.....	27
6.2 The Character of Fanny.....	31
6.3 Other Characters.....	31
Conclusion .....	33
Resumé.....	34
Bibliography .....	36
Annotation.....	38
Anotace .....	39

## Introduction

Apart from being less popular among contemporary readership than Jane Austen's famous novels, Austen's *Mansfield Park* tends to gain more supporters in the film sphere. The book is said to be controversial and not typically "Austen". It was published as author's third novel, following *Sense and Sensibility* as well as her most popular novel *Pride and Prejudice*. This thesis intends to focus on changes and nuances between the three adaptations throughout the past almost forty years with respect to the original novel. The aim of this thesis is to explore how the filmmakers adapted the novel to please the audience and how can the story of the book be adjusted to fit in approximately two-hour cinematic event. Not only the story, but also the heroine's character, which is the main point of the controversy of the novel, went through several alterations with the later film adaptations. Additionally, in order to provide a framework to the object of this study, it will briefly explore the author's life and also provide a background to every adaptation as well as a few public responses to some of them.

## 1 The Life of Jane Austen

The aim of this first chapter is to briefly introduce the author of *Mansfield Park* and also many other important literary works, Jane Austen.

Jane Austen was born in the village of Steventon, Hampshire in 1775. She had seven siblings. Jane and her sister Cassandra were sent to school in Oxford and Southampton, before attending the Abbey School in Reading, and were encouraged to write from an early age. Jane began writing novels in 1790, while she was living in Steventon. Her first published novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, although did not appear until 1811. *Mansfield Park* was her third novel.

Her early life seemed secure enough, however it was touched by more than one tragedy concerning her cousin as well as her aunt.

When her father retired in 1801, the family moved to Bath. The years Jane spent in Bath were not happy. The family had only few friends, but they made acquaintances. The custom was that the sons of the family pursued careers, while the daughters stayed at home, awaiting marriage and involving themselves with domestic affairs. Harris Bigg-Wither of Manydown Park asked Jane to marry him in the winter of 1802. She initially accepted his proposal, but turned the man down the next morning.

It can be sensed in several Jane's letters that she admitted to her sister Cassandra how frustrated she had been there.

After her father's death in 1805, the family left Bath to stay with Jane's brother, Frank, who was stationed at the Naval Dockyard, in Southampton.

Jane's brother, Edward, had been formally adopted by a relative, which led to his elevation as a country gentleman. He became the owner of Chawton House in Hampshire and in 1809 offered a home to his mother and sisters on the estate there. Jane was able to enjoy the successful publication of her first novel here. First the authorship was a secret, when the author was only referred to as a "lady", but later on, her brother Henry gave the secret away and Jane Austen became famous.

By the time she was completing her last novel, *Persuasion*, she was seriously ill. During the last few weeks of her life, she lived in College Street, Winchester, to be close to her physician. She died in Cassandra's arms in Winchester at the age of 41. The novel *Persuasion* was published after her death.

## 1.1 Letters from Austen

It is said that Jane Austen lived a quiet life. Only a few of her manuscripts still exist. The major amount of her correspondence was either destroyed or edited by her sister, Cassandra. That resulted in the rare knowledge about Jane. It can be deduced from her remaining letters and personal acquaintances that she was a woman of stature, humor and keen intelligence. Austen family remembrances portray her as kind, almost saint human being, but critics who have studied her work and her letters assume she was a bit sharper than her family wanted to show.

The motif of Jane writing her letters is reflected in the adaptation from 1999, when the director of the film, Patricia Rozema, assimilated Fanny Price with Austen herself. This theory is to be explored later in this thesis.

## 2 A Novel That Differs

*Mansfield Park* was written between years 1811-1813. It was published in 1814. It is considered the most controversial of Austen's major novels. The book explores the life of Fanny Price since she was a child. Fanny is different in many ways from every other lead female character Austen created. She loves her brother a lot, he means a world to her and later she finds herself being also attached to her cousin Edmund. Fanny is intelligent and witty, but very sensitive and shy. That is also because she is portrayed as not being the beautiful girl every man falls in love with instantly. Her character and her past prevent her from believing someone can actually be interested in her.

Fanny does not seek marriage or social status in oppose to other Austen's female characters. For example the Bennet girls from *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) are sociable, pretty and they enjoy the company of men, hoping they would get married soon. Elizabeth Bennet does not like to precisely follow the rules and manners of society.



It can also be referred to *Mansfield Park* as Austen's sexiest novel, as shown below.

Readers who miss the point of Fanny Price miss the point of the novel. She is the filter through which we view the mesmerizing Crawfords. They turn the big house into a theatre, and put on an erotic play called Lovers' Vows chiefly so they can flirt like crazy. Henry Crawford creates havoc and rivalry between the Bertram sisters, Fanny's cousins. Edmund, destined for the church, falls in love with Mary Crawford, and takes part in an inflammatory scene in which a pious, uptight clergyman is seduced by a coquette. All the time, Fanny is watching and despairing.<sup>1</sup>

Sex runs through this novel.<sup>2</sup>

Fanny cries out to Maria: 'You will certainly hurt yourself against those spikes, you will tear your gown.' We don't need Dr Freud to work that one out.<sup>3</sup>

Fanny is herself consumed with sexual jealousy.<sup>4</sup>

These are the opinions of Paula Byrne. However there is some truth behind them. Even though the main character is not concerned by love life, the other people in the book obviously deal with love and even adultery. There is an issue concerning one of the daughters, Maria Bertram, who runs away with Henry Crawford, even though she has already been married to somebody else and put her family in shame.

### **3 Adaptations of Mansfield Park**

Even though the novel itself is not the one everyone talks about, it got many various adaptations. In 1983 it got its first BBC series adaptation, which will be

---

<sup>1</sup> Paula Byrne, "Mansfield Park shows the dark side of Jane Austen," The Telegraph, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/10987048/Mansfield-Park-shows-the-dark-side-of-Jane-Austen.html>, retrieved July 26, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1.

analyzed later in this thesis as well as two other film versions, one from 1999 and the second one from 2007.

The BBC also provided a radio drama adaptation in 2003, starring Felicity Jones, Benedict Cumberbatch and David Tennant.

In 2011 a chamber opera was performed by Heritage Opera.

A stage adaptation by Tim Luscombe was being performed during the years 2012-2013.

‘From Mansfield With Love’, a YouTube vlog adaptation of Mansfield Park by Foot in the Door Theatre started in December 2014.

It is said that the BBC series from 1983 resembles the book most honestly of all later adaptations. On the other hand, films from 1999 and 2007 try to make the moral, shy and sensitive Fanny Price more sympathetic for viewers. There is a high probability that modern viewers would not fully understand what makes Fanny who she is and she would probably be less interesting for them. Actually, even though this may be a smart move, it does not let people see the real, original version. These days, people are more likely to watch some recent adaptation of a book rather than reading it.

This thesis will further explore the popular approach to the material and changes in taste of the Austen readership over two centuries.

#### **4 The 1983 Series**

The BBC series, which was filmed in 1983, is said to be the most faithful to the book. It consists of six episodes in total runtime of 261 minutes. This chapter will provide an analytic perspective of the series’ beginning and its protagonists along with a comparison of the series and the book.

The filming was located in many great English houses, however, a few studio shots were used which cut down on the lush atmosphere being presented. It must be remembered that this series was filmed for television on a much smaller budget than people have grown accustomed to seeing, that is why the action tends to be slower and more elaborate than used to.<sup>5</sup> Unlike previous BBC series, most scenes were filmed

---

<sup>5</sup> Laura Boyle, “Mansfield Park: 1983,” The Jane Austen Centre in Bath England, <https://www.janeausten.co.uk/mansfield-park-1983/>, retrieved January 1, 2001.

outside the houses. This suggests that more money was spent on this production than it was back in 1970s, although these scenes were created with a hint of design rather than only ordinary for places to go for a walk in.<sup>6</sup>

Austen begins the book by telling a story of three sisters. One of them marries a penniless sailor and has more than half a dozen children. Fanny Price is the second eldest of them all. The other two sisters are well married, one of them is Mrs. Norris and the second one is Lady Bertram. Fanny's mother has to live in poor circumstances with a husband that is almost useless, so she writes to her wealthy sister Bertram, begging for help. The Bertrams agree to help by taking on the care of one of the Price children.

The series starts with a scene when Mrs. Norris comes to Mansfield Park to talk to Sir Thomas and his wife about Fanny Price's arrival. This scene offers a first impression about these three characters. Mrs. Norris is certain that Fanny will stay at Mansfield Park even though it was her idea to bring her. In the book Mrs. Norris is not evil, rather a scheming woman who does things to please only herself. For a person who has never read the book this reality is obvious even in this first scene of the series. Firstly, she talks about how they will make Fanny's life better, give her an education and opportunities. She surely did not mean herself as the one who will give the girl a home. In one sentence she even mentions that Fanny will not grow up to be as handsome as her new sisters and that she will never be more to them than a sister. This fact testifies about not giving her the credit she might deserve – Fanny's family no longer belongs to the high society as does the family of Mansfield Park. Mrs. Norris then quibbles about taking Fanny to stay with her, apparently because of Mr. Norris – she basically refuses to take her in order not to make her husband's health worse. However, it is more than clear that it is only an excuse. The reaction of Mrs. Norris when Lady Bertram appoints the fact that it was her idea and that Fanny would come to her is, "What? To me?" The expression on Mrs. Norris' face almost sums up her whole character. She basically smiles through naming all the reasons why Fanny has to stay at Mansfield Park.

When Mrs. Norris is bringing Fanny to Mansfield, she makes it all clear to the girl that it is her deserving she can come to live with the Bertrams.

---

<sup>6</sup> Sue Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television: A Critical Study of the Adaptations*, (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2002), 86.

Nine years have passed. Mrs. Norris likes to use Fanny's help all the time, but her opinion on taking Fanny does not change. This time the excuse is that she has no room for her in her cottage. Fanny does not complain, she just does what she is told to.

Lady Bertram, as well as the other characters, is portrayed exactly the way as she is in the book. She can be considered a hypochondriac, since she never feels well and the reader or the viewer mostly sees her lying around even though she is fine. She also likes to have Fanny to keep her company all the time. Fanny reads to her instead of going out. Nevertheless, Lady Bertram is a good woman in her heart and is also capable of admitting how much Fanny means to her. Lady Bertram is extremely overprotective over her small dog. When Fanny first touches him and the dog shows he is alive, Lady Bertram almost goes mad and points out that the dog finally feels comfortable around her daughters and does not want anything to scare him. Her character is lazy not only in life, but also in her speech. In the film she talks slowly, like she has all time in the world and the impression she gives is that she makes a poor soul of herself.

When it comes to solving the problem with Fanny not getting any exercise, Edmund proposes that she should have a horse of her own. Mrs. Norris does not seem pleased about it, after all according to her Fanny is not qualified to have such a luxury Maria and Julia have. As it is in a book as in a film, Mrs. Norris cares about the well-being of herself and the Bertram family, but does not include Fanny into it, even though she was the first one to come up with the idea of her staying with them. Mrs. Norris seems to always have a reason for her opinions which for a reader or a viewer are pure excuses to preserve Fanny's distinction from them.

Throughout the first episode, Fanny seems like the protagonist and not important character in one. There are moments when a voiceover reads the letters she wrote to her brother, which is a way of sharing her thoughts with a viewer, who would know almost nothing about her to this point. She only speaks when asked to. Fanny is a completely different protagonist from the ones Austen usually created. At first she is a frightened little girl who wants to go back home. She gets rid of her fears as she gets used to living with the Bertrams. Even though she is constantly reminded of her background, her good sense of morality stays with her. Fanny is a shy and sensitive girl, who did not take much beauty, but she is intelligent and does not show any naivety. She is a girl who does not give any impression to a viewer. One can easily

think of her as boring, but there is much more behind her actions. Fanny is performed with a lot of effort to give the same impression as she does in the book.

There is a feeling in this contemporary world that the filmmakers have to re-think and re-do *Mansfield Park* so that the heroine and the story fall in line with our modern sensibilities and worldview. This so called problem came up with the two later adaptations, which will be analyzed later in this thesis.

It is then important to pay attention to the one adaptation that is willing to perform the book as it is, with all its characters portrayed the way Austen created them. This series is by right being called the literal transcription of the book.

However, this film is not a completely faithful adaptation. Screenwriter Kenneth Taylor completely ignored Fanny's questions regarding Sir Thomas' role as a slave owner with an estate in Antigua. Whereas Austen's novel and the 2007 film briefly touched upon the subject, writer and director of 1999 adaptation Patricia Rozema literally confronted it. Only the miniseries ignored the topic, altogether.<sup>7</sup>

## 5 The 1999 Adaptation

The following chapter will explore the critical assessment to the film adaptation of *Mansfield Park* from the year 1999. It was written and directed by Patricia Rozema. The runtime of this film is 112 minutes, which in comparison with the previously analyzed series is less than half the time. Regarding this, the film lacks some detailed scenes and is not as precise as the series adaptation. The film departs from the original novel in several aspects. For example, Patricia Rozema tried to incorporate the life of Jane Austen into the film, as well as there are the issues of slavery and plantation life pointed out. The majority of the film was filmed at Kirby Hall in Northamptonshire. When filmed outdoors, several scenes appear showing a landscape or a view at the Mansfield Park. The adaptation offers a moment in the morning when Fanny comes back to Mansfield Park with Edmund to take care of ill Tom and the residence and its land is hiding in morning fog with sunbeams coming through. This is purely an aesthetical moment, such as the one where a carriage is shown riding its way through landscape. To be concrete, Fanny's way to Mansfield Park when she was little shows the cliffs and the sea right before they stop and talk

---

<sup>7</sup> R. Powell, "'Mansfield Park' (1983) Review," The Powell Blog, <http://rpowell.livejournal.com/84959.html>, retrieved February 25, 2011.

about the boat near the shore. At the end of the adaptation, while the voiceover is on, the camera flies above hills and river and takes us to the house of Mrs. Norris and her niece Maria.

### 5.1 Different from the Original

The film contains many differences from the Jane Austen's novel *Mansfield Park*. These are the results of Patricia Rozema's own influence on the film. The film makes changes in some main characters, eliminates several others and reorganizes certain events. The result is a film that keeps the evolution of the protagonist (Fanny Price) and series of events of Jane Austen's novel, but in other ways, presents its themes and ideas differently, which is also claimed by some critics.

Rozema's film also faced potential challenges from the audiences' prior exposure to Austen adaptations. Audiences may have expected a certain look to the film or type of character from *Mansfield Park* given their experiences with the recent Austen films. The traditional adaptations (*Persuasion*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*) vary in their approach to Austen – the extent the plot and characters were changed and the use of cinematography, for example – but the movies have some commonalities. Most of the films emphasize the romantic story lines, glamorize the appearance of the main characters, alter the male hero, and offer a sentimental view of the English estate and landscape. Unlike Austen's novels, the adaptations tend to dwell on the romance of the central couple and an idyllic view of the English past. The adaptations then find it necessary to change Austen's heroes in order to make the romance more believable. Many of the heroes are made more handsome than described in the novels and become more emotionally expressive. Adding to the romance of the stories is the beautiful settings for the characters. With the exception of *Persuasion*, the Austen adaptations are vibrant depictions of radiant English landscapes: the films seem to celebrate the picturesque nature they use to build the stories. Given audience experiences with *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, audiences may have expected another lush, romantic Austen tale. Rozema provided another option.<sup>8</sup>

The plot of the film changes the moral message of the original novel and creates a story that criticizes slavery instead of criticizing the modernity. Rozema said

---

<sup>8</sup> Kathi Groenendyk, "Modernizing Mansfield Park: Patricia Rozema's Spin on Jane Austen," *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-Line* 25, no. 1 (2004): par. 6, <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol25no1/groenendyk.html>.

in the DVD commentary that she was just pointing out political and social issues that would be obvious to contemporary readers. On the other hand, the BBC series focuses mainly on the costumes and manners of the period.<sup>9</sup>

With the film being filmed at Kirby Hall, the interior is presented with minimal furnishing and bare walls. On the contrary, in the BBC series, the house is fully decorated.

### 5.1.1 The Issue of Slavery

On her way to Mansfield Park, when Fanny's carriage pulls over by the sea shore, Fanny hears some noise from a boat. The conversation with the coachman is following:

Fanny: "Do you hear that?"

Coachman: "Black cargo, Miss."

Fanny: "Black cargo?"

Coachman: "Aye. Slaves. Probably some captain or heroic ship doctor brought home some darkies as gifts for the wife."<sup>10</sup>

This is one of the points where the film shifts from the novel. Austen consciously ignored slavery. She chose not to address slavery as well as Napoleonic Wars and Industrial Revolution in her work. In fact, Austen disputed slavery. Her fiction was never concerned with politics but with personal relationships. Some critics, including Edward Said and Vladimir Nabokov, have taken Austen to task for ignoring the slavery issue and thus tacitly supporting imperialism. The critic Claudia Johnson emphasized the importance in the novel of the issues of slavery and the oppression of women, in particular as they relate to the character of Sir Thomas and how he treats Fanny Price.<sup>11</sup> Rozema therefore decided to add this issue to the film as she felt Austen should have done it in the first place.

Austen's novel actually does mention slavery on several occasions but does not elaborate on it at all. A most notable moment in the novel is when Fanny asks Sir Thomas a question about the slave trade, but neither he nor anyone else from the

---

<sup>9</sup> Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television: A Critical Study of the Adaptations*, 85.

<sup>10</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Patricia Rozema (1999; UK: Miramax, 2000), DVD.

<sup>11</sup> Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television: A Critical Study of the Adaptations*, 85.

family answers it. She tells Edmund about it, but in this film and also in the BBC series this whole part is not mentioned.

In this film version, Fanny talks with Edmund while they are riding horses about Sir Thomas' troubles. She thinks that he is sorry about taking her into his home, but she learns that he has been having some trouble with slaves at the plantation. Edmund claims the abolitionists are making inroads and Fanny considers it a good thing for which Edmund has an answer:

“Well, we all live off the profits, Fanny.  
Including you.”<sup>12</sup>

This is a reminder of how Bertram family owes to slaves for the family's wealth. The film presents the problem of slavery as one of central points. It is pointed out after Tom Bertram's return from Antigua. The return is motivated by his disgust with what he has seen there. One can find explicit description of how the slaves were treated, when Fanny finds violent drawings of the treatment of slaves in Tom's bedroom while taking care of him.

There is a parallel throughout the film between Fanny's role as a woman and also a poor relative in the Bertram family, and the role of slaves. Fanny is considered as someone less important and worthy of wealthy life, mostly by her aunt Mrs. Norris.

At the end of the film a voiceover also informs the viewer that Sir Thomas has abandoned his pursuits in Antigua and he chose to pursue some exciting new opportunities in tobacco.

### **5.1.2 Fanny Price**

The character of Fanny (Frances O'Connor) is significantly different in the film. In the novel, Fanny is “small of her age, with no glow of complexion, nor any other striking beauty; exceedingly timid and shy, and shrinking from notice; but her air, though awkward, was not vulgar, her voice was sweet, and when she spoke her countenance was pretty.”<sup>13</sup> As long as she is a child, this description agrees with the film. Otherwise in the book, Fanny mostly keeps her state, she is very shy and timid,

---

<sup>12</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Patricia Rozema (1999; UK: Miramax, 2000), DVD.

<sup>13</sup> Jane Austen and Peter Conrad, *Mansfield Park* (London: Campbell, 1992), 12.



and is not used to giving her own opinion. Her physical condition is fragile, making her get tired easily. On the contrary, in the film Fanny is extroverted, self-confident, and outspoken young lady, while also being physically much healthier. There is no sign of her health being somehow worse than the others. She even takes her horse to ride away in a rainstorm after Sir Thomas proposes the idea of a ball in Fanny's honor. Throughout the whole film Fanny stays healthy and full of strength. She is a young woman who does not fear other people and their opinions, therefore she smiles more and talks to people with more open attitude. One of the examples is the scene when she along with Edmund and Crawford siblings are playing cards. At one point in the film we see Fanny as she is lying on her stomach on a bed, freely kicking her legs in the air in Edmund's presence. Like many other scenes, this one presents Fanny as feeling comfortable in the company of the opposite sex. That gives her a modern characteristic, which does not appear in the original novel. The film version of Fanny provides the viewers a chance to sympathize with this young lady who does not appear to be neglecting her own needs and feelings. However, Rozema recreated young Fanny for the viewers to see intelligence in her even from the beginning.

When Fanny says goodbye to her family and travels away, she is dressed quite poorly with her hair tousled. However, in the previous series she was dressed nicely, in a red cloak with a hat.

Fanny's passivity and moral stance are seen as virtues in the novel but she is not portrayed this way in the film. The only exception to this is during the staging of *Lovers' Vows*, when she voluntarily rejects taking a part.

Most importantly, this film version of Fanny is portrayed as being a writer during her childhood and her adulthood at Mansfield Park. These character features are incorporated directly from the life of Jane Austen. Some of Fanny's writings were written by Austen including *The History of England*. Fanny is here supposed to be a child with a head full of romance novels and fictional stories. Following the scene where she was offered to write to her sister Susy, the viewer gets a direct gaze from Fanny telling a piece of horror fiction she created and sent to her sister. A few moments later Fanny looks directly to the camera again and tells the viewer as well as Edmund, who is shown for the first time as a man, a bit of what she called *The History of England*. This comes from Austen's juvenilia. Fanny reads to Edmund what she wrote and she does likewise in the voiceovers. This is purely Rozema's invention. She tried to alter Fanny and connect her character with Austen herself. As a result,

“Austen” becomes the narrator of the film. Right before Sir Thomas enters Fanny’s room to inform her about Henry Crawford’s marriage proposal, she reads aloud from what she has just written, “The intimacy between them daily increased, till it grew to such a pitch that they did not scruple to kick one another on the slightest provocation.”<sup>14</sup> The pronoun “they” is there to substitute for “Families of Fitzroy, Drummond and Falknor.” This is an excerpt from *Frederic and Elfrida: A Novel* written by Jane Austen. It is ironic that the lines Fanny was supposed to have written when she was eleven and the lines she was supposed to have written in her twenties were actually written by Jane Austen when she was still a teenager.<sup>15</sup> When Fanny reads to the audience her letter to her sister Susan, updating her on life at Mansfield Park, she says, “Dear Susy: News items: Sir Thomas has dragged Tom along with him to the West Indies to ‘protect our interests there.’”<sup>16</sup> The tone she says it in implies that she knows precisely what the interests are. She continues in voice-over to explain Maria’s engagement and the death of Mr. Norris. Fanny ends her letter, facing the camera again, noting sadly, “And, life seems nothing more than a quick succession of busy nothings.”<sup>17</sup> In the novel, the character of Fanny does not say this line, which gives a pessimistic view of Mansfield Park.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, Austen did not portray Fanny as a writer or as a person with rich inner fantasy. The only exceptions are her long and regular letters to her brother William. Despite the hardships at Mansfield Park, in the novel Fanny does delight in many aspects of life there and welcomes the quiet family gatherings. Later in the film when Maria marries Rushworth, Fanny addresses the camera and says quietly, “Marriage is indeed a maneuvering business.”<sup>19</sup> In the novel, Mary Crawford says this line. By attributing these lines to Fanny in the film, Rozema fundamentally changes the character of Fanny. In addition to being more active and vocal, Fanny, in the film, is therefore cynical. As Susan tells Fanny when Fanny visits her family in Portsmouth, “Your tongue is sharper than a guillotine.”<sup>20</sup> The audience may identify with this version of Fanny because of her

---

<sup>14</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Patricia Rozema (1999; UK: Miramax, 2000), DVD.

<sup>15</sup> Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television: A Critical Study of the Adaptations*, 88.

<sup>16</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Patricia Rozema (1999; UK: Miramax, 2000), DVD.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* 16.

<sup>18</sup> “Modernizing Mansfield Park: Patricia Rozema’s Spin on Jane Austen.”

<sup>19</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Patricia Rozema (1999; UK: Miramax, 2000), DVD.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* 19.

frankness, and from this identification, the audience will rejoice with Fanny as she escapes Mansfield, finds her love, and has her writings published.<sup>21</sup>

With Fanny returning to Portsmouth to her family, the life of poor people is being shown. When she walks in the house, her mother asks her about the journey and alongside she tries to clean the table. This take speaks for the poverty and difficult life itself. One can notice dirty dishes, crumbs and vermin on the table. Fanny got used to living in luxury in oppose to this. That is why the scene with Henry Crawford's gift is included. He sends Fanny a cart with fireworks and the delivery boy lights up the fireworks and releases pigeons. Those are supposed to express the freedom from poverty Henry can offer her.

### 5.1.3 Other Characters

The adaptation leaves several characters out entirely and changes the roles and characteristics of others. Dr. Grant and Mrs. Grant, his wife and the Crawfords' half-sister, do not appear in the film at all. It was them with whom Mary and Henry Crawford stayed with in the novel and also in the BBC series. Lady Bertram is presented the same way as in the BBC series, meaning being a slow-witted person always lying around, caring about her dog more than about her children. The actress Lindsay Duncan, who portrayed Lady Bertram, also performed as Fanny's mother, Frances Price. This fact suggests to the viewer that Lady Bertram would have been as poor housekeeper as Mrs. Price.<sup>22</sup> When Fanny's sister asks about her sister, Fanny has an honest answer, "She's always suffering fatigue. Generally from embroidering something of little beauty. Not to mention a handsome dose of opium daily."<sup>23</sup> As her sister Susan points out, Fanny has a sharp tongue.

Another interesting fact about the cast concerns Edmund Bertram's performer, Johnny Lee Miller. As he was ten years old he performed as Fanny Price's brother Charles Price in the 1983 BBC series.

Tom Bertram (James Purefoy) is not only a fastidious elder son. He is also a deeply troubled young man, who can even be seen drinking as a teenager when the coachman brings Fanny to Mansfield Park for the first time. When Mrs. Norris shows Fanny the house, Fanny notices a painting by Tom and on it is himself with a hand on

---

<sup>21</sup> "Modernizing Mansfield Park: Patricia Rozema's Spin on Jane Austen."

<sup>22</sup> Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television: A Critical Study of the Adaptations*, 100.

<sup>23</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Patricia Rozema (1999; UK: Miramax, 2000), DVD.

his shoulder. The hand belongs to a figure of Death. This also contributes to the fact that Tom's soul is troubled. It is Sir Thomas who is to blame for Tom's destructive behavior, which becomes clear near the end of the film. Sir Thomas apologizes to Tom as he still lies ill. Tom, who has a minor role in the novel, takes on the role of Sir Thomas' conscience in this adaptation.<sup>24</sup>

Edmund, who gives the impression of being the right minded and intelligent one in the novel as well as in the BBC series, seems untouched by the family's interests in slaves.

Fanny's beloved brother William, who in the novel is the one she has the strongest bond with, is also omitted from the film. His character is mostly replaced by Fanny's younger sister Susan (Talya Gordon, later Sophia Myles) whom we met at the very beginning of the film. While in the book Fanny writes her letters to William, in this adaptation she addresses them to Susan. In the book and the 1983 series, Fanny is offered to write to William, but in this film she, according to what she said, misses Susy and wishes to write to her.

That also results into another change in the plot. In the book Fanny feels gratitude towards Henry Crawford for finding William a job and it makes her temporarily reconsider her immediate rejection of him. Instead, in the film Fanny's stance towards Henry changes after he dances with her at the ball held in her honor. Fanny's close relationship with William in the book is replaced in the film by her relationship with her younger sister Susan, with whom in the novel, Fanny does not develop a relationship until her return to Portsmouth.

Henry Crawford (Alessandro Nivola) is to be found much more likeable in this adaptation. In the novel and also in the BBC series he amuses himself by making Fanny fall for him. He does not skip single opportunity to try convincing her that he is the right one for her. In Rozema's adaptation he seems to actually be in love with Fanny. One really sympathizes with Henry's character after he comes to Fanny the morning after the engagement with a bouquet of daisies and dances with her, but she pushes him away and blindsides him with her rejection.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television: A Critical Study of the Adaptations*, 90.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* 24, 100.

#### 5.1.4 The Story

The film begins with credits when a viewer hears someone whispering. It is young Fanny Price telling a scary story, which she has written, to her sister Susy. It is an excerpt from Jane Austen's *Love and Freindship*, but the director has combined passages and sentences. Then, she is to depart from the family and go to Mansfield Park. Her mother obviously does not care when the girl shall return to them when Fanny asks her about it. In the film, her mother is pregnant and there are six children saying goodbye to Fanny, while in the book she comes from nine children (including the unborn one). None of this scene is in the book. In the book we first meet Fanny in the second chapter, when she met Mrs. Norris at Northampton and she took her to meet the others.

During the credits one can notice a message saying "Based on Jane Austen's novel *Mansfield Park*, her letters and early journals" which in advance clarifies the fact that Rozema took some possibilities to alter the story of the film.

When Fanny is being introduced to Sir Thomas by Mrs. Norris, there comes the question of who is going to take her. This question was originally solved before Fanny's arrival, not at her presence.

Mary Crawford (Embeth Davidtz) is much more indiscreet in the film then she is in the novel. She plays billiard with the gentlemen and even casually takes a drag from her brother's cigarette.<sup>26</sup> After Tom's homecoming from Antigua, he and his friend Mr. Yates suggest to re-act the play called *Lovers' Vows*. In the novel, Mary asks the question, "Who is to be Anhalt? What gentleman among you am I to have the pleasure of making love to?"<sup>27</sup> Similarly, in this adaptation she leans back against the billiard table and phrases her question slightly different, "I wish to play Amelia. But which gentleman am I to have the pleasure of making love to?"<sup>28</sup> This makes all the men present in the room look at her with interest. It is purely a result of modern thinking about the phrase "make love to" which nowadays is being considered as a sexual offer. On the other hand, the nineteenth-century meaning was rather "to make a pass at someone" or "be openly interested in someone". When it comes to practicing the role of Amelia, who is to be played by Mary, she practices the part with Fanny while Edmund is watching them. This scene also offers another look into the more

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 24, 92.

<sup>27</sup> Austen and Conrad, *Mansfield Park*, 147.

<sup>28</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Patricia Rozema (1999; UK: Miramax, 2000), DVD.

casual case of sexuality. Mary touches Fanny occasionally and grabs her waist and it all makes Edmund wanting to play Anhalt. Nevertheless, the role of the cottager's wife is never offered to Fanny here.

The film completely omits the visit of Sotherton. In the novel the visit happens while Sir Thomas is away to Antigua with Tom. On this short trip, Maria and her sister Julia are both jealously trying to get Mr. Crawford's attention. Maria says to Henry that even though she is engaged she is willing to accept feelings outside her future marriage. She compares herself to the starling in Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*, who there says, "I can't get out." The link to this book appears in the thirty-eighth minute of the film when Henry comes to Fanny when she is reading a book. She tells him that it is the Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*. The second reference to this is right after Fanny finds Maria in bed with Mr. Crawford and then Edmunds goes in and sees his sister covered with sheets claiming "I can't get out,"<sup>29</sup> meaning she can't get out of the boredom of her marriage to Mr. Rushworth.

As it is in the novel, Henry Crawford proposes for Fanny's hand in marriage, but she declines. This act makes Sir Thomas angry and he sends her back home to Portsmouth. In the novel, Sir Thomas encourages Henry to continue persuading Fanny into the marriage. There is another slight difference from the book, where her department was rather a Sir Thomas' recommendation to go and see her family, while he hoped she would come to her senses, for Fanny it was a respite from the stress from Henry's unwanted attentions. These attentions are mostly left out from the film. Henry comes to see her to Portsmouth and Fanny agrees to marry him, but changes her mind overnight. Presumably this was inspired by Austen's life, when she accepted a proposal from a man she had known since childhood, and then took back her acceptance a day after it. On the contrary, in the novel Fanny is never tempted to accept Crawford's proposals. In addition, her family knows everything about it in the film.

Fanny then was pursued to go back to Mansfield Park quite early to take care of seriously ill Tom Bertram. In the novel, she stays at Portsmouth for several months. Further in the film she therefore becomes the witness to some events, such as finding Tom's drawings, as mentioned in chapter 5.1.1. The other difference from the novel, which happens after her return, is her finding out about the adultery of Maria with

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 28.

Henry Crawford. She sees it with her own eyes. This is also a point where the film shifts from the book in major way by showing sex. Maria then runs away with Henry. It all happened at Mansfield Park. On the contrary, in the novel Maria leaves her husband's house in London to run away with Mr. Crawford. This adaptation made Austen's novel very different by showing several occasions implying the sexuality of the characters, not only the sex scene mentioned above. Firstly, when Fanny accepts Mr. Crawford's proposal, they kiss passionately which is a result of instant happiness of getting engaged, although Austen's Fanny never fell for Mr. Crawford. Secondly, there is a moment in the carriage when Edmund accompanies Fanny back to Mansfield Park. He falls asleep and his head lies down at Fanny's chest and she sighs quietly with a surprise. Another scene implying some sort of attraction between Fanny and Edmund is after the discovery of Maria's adultery. Edmund sits with Fanny by Tom's bed and comforts her. Then Edmund gives her a kiss on forehead and they almost kiss on the lips.

The revelations of Maria's affair are made through letters in the novel, including letters written by Mary Crawford to Fanny. In the film there is a scene that reveals this fact with Fanny reading an article about it in the newspaper, as well as Mary's attitude towards it, which makes Edmund refuse to spend his life with Mary. In the book, Julia Bertram elopes with Mr. Yates, which only increases the shock to the Bertram family. Instead, in the film she lives at home and receives a love letter from Mr. Yates at the end of the film.

## **5.2 Mistakes Made in the Adaptation**

Several mistakes occur in the film which are either technical or do not correspond with the period the story takes place at. One of them is when Mary Crawford is playing a harp. It is a double action harp. The film takes place in 1806, but this kind of harp was not invented until 1810. Besides, the tones one can hear while Mary is playing do not correspond to the fingering of the harp. To be precise, the longest strings, which are the furthest ones away from the player, make the lowest notes, but it is shown otherwise.

Other mistake appears when Fanny, carrying a basket full of apples, is caught in the rainstorm and finds a shelter under a tree. It is not obvious whether she is picking apples there or dropped them. However she hunkers down and one can see her

put one apple into the basket and then she only reaches to the empty ground and pretends to put more apples into the basket.

In the final scene where one is informed about Sir Thomas abandoning his pursuits in Antigua because of the poor treatment of slaves and investing in tobacco. Yet in 1806, when the film is set, tobacco also depended on slaves.

### 5.3 The Public Reactions

This adaptation is greatly controversial. Reactions of the public are various. The audience therefore splits in two groups – those who enjoy the adaptation and those who despise it. Most modern viewers and mainly critics condemn the film for not sticking with the original novel. This chapter will further provide a few excerpts from reviews of the adaptation, written by critics as well as casual viewers in order to help understand the modern audience's opinions.

They made a film that missed the point in every way.” “... the film is a ghastly, random mess, with some scenes taken fairly-faithfully from the book...”<sup>30</sup>

...it's understandable that when Patricia Rozema undertook her film adaptation of Mansfield Park in 1999, she would try to spice things up a bit, primarily by endowing Fanny with a personality.<sup>31</sup>

There are a lot of bad literary adaptations out there. But, honestly, I don't think anything comes close to the horror that is Patricia Rozema's version of Mansfield Park. Rozema, despite hating the book and the character of Fanny Price, decided to make a movie out of it. One may ask why someone who hates a certain book would choose to write and direct a movie version of that book. Rozema apparently felt she could improve on Austen's story and characters, choosing to base the screenplay not only on the novel but on

---

<sup>30</sup> Fiona Clements, “Jane Austen's Mansfield Park as an exercise in imaginative sympathy,” *Literary Criticism* by Fiona Clements, <http://www.kelper.co.uk/litcrit/mansfield.html>.

<sup>31</sup> Judy Weightman, “The unmaking of an Austen heroine,” *Broad Street Review*, [http://www.broadstreetreview.com/film-tv/mansfield\\_park\\_book\\_vs\\_film](http://www.broadstreetreview.com/film-tv/mansfield_park_book_vs_film), retrieved August 14, 2012.



Austen's life. She also probably hoped to cash in on the Austen mania of the 90s, but failed big time. This killed the Austen adaptations until 2005's P&P.<sup>32</sup>

To sum up, my argument is that Patricia Rozema is successful in *Mansfield Park* because she centers her action on a complex heroine who serves as a vehicle for important thematic threads having to do with entrapment, liberty and power, and because she is so skillful in the use of cinematic devices such as editing, *mise en scène* and soundtrack that her film possesses the kind of body and texture required to engage the audience viscerally as well as intellectually. Whether Rozema's film resembles Austen's novel is irrelevant so far as I am concerned. The two works employ very different discursive practices and have quite distinct intentions. Each accomplishes the goals it sets for itself, and that, in my view, is all that finally matters.<sup>33</sup>

This is an uncommonly intelligent film, smart and amusing too, and anyone who thinks it is not faithful to Austen doesn't know the author but only her plots.<sup>34</sup>

In the hands of a less talented filmmaker, this extensive tinkering and modernizing might seem irritating and pretentious. But in peering beneath Austen's genteel surfaces and scraping away the Hollywood gloss that traditionally accrues to screen adaptations of Austen, Ms. Rozema has made a film whose satiric bite is sharper than that of the usual high-toned romantic costume drama.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> "Mansfield Park 1999 Review," Peachy Reviews, <https://marspeach.wordpress.com/2010/11/08/mansfield-park-1999-review/>, retrieved November 8, 2010.

<sup>33</sup> David Monaghan, "In Defense of Patricia Rozema's *Mansfield Park*," *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal*, no. 28 (June 2006): 64, <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/printed/number28/monaghan.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> Roger Ebert, "Mansfield Park," Roger Ebert, accessed November 24, 1999, <http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/mansfield-park-1999>.

<sup>35</sup> Stephen Holden, "Film Review: Spicing Austen's 1806 With Dashes of 1999," *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/11/18/movies/film-review-spicing-austen-s-1806-with-dashes-of-1999.html>, retrieved November 18, 1999.

## 6 The 2007 Adaptation

This chapter of the thesis will provide a closer look on the newest film version of *Mansfield Park*, which premiered in 2007. To be precise, this adaptation of Jane Austen's novel premiered on 18 March 2007 on the United Kingdom network ITV, as part of *The Jane Austen Season*. It is a British television film directed by Iain B. MacDonald. The runtime of this film is almost 94 minutes including the credits, which makes it the shortest film version of this book. The scenes for this film were taken at Newby Hall, Skelton on Ure, North Yorkshire, England, UK.

The film only centers its scenes around Mansfield Park. The house of Dr. Grant and his wife and also Mrs. Norris' home never appear. The manor is full with furniture and the interior decor is much more colorful in oppose to the one in the previous film version. The interior of the Newby Hall brings the audience a taste of what the decor looked like in the period. The novel gives the impression that Mansfield Park is a modern manor house. As well as the previous adaptations, many of the scenes were shot outdoors with the characters strolling through the gardens and rustic pathways.

Not only the location is restricted only to Mansfield Park, but the costumes for this film are a subject for discussion. A great amount of costumes were designed for previous Jane Austen adaptations.

Unlike the previous production, this adaptation of *Mansfield Park* emphasizes the social depiction of Austen's era. People were often reaching for distractions from social bullying, such as Fanny playing with children, sports and dancing or parties to provide momentary relief.

There is a continual atmosphere of menace. One person who commented several times on this film argued that this reaction responded to something going on in Britain right now: a dislike of hierarchy, of artifice, of the older culture of deference. He saw it as deliberately opting for the "natural" in the preference say for a picnic, the eschewing of formality. I can see this but think it's counteracted by the intense anger that is on the edge of exploding all the time – from the father and the oldest son. The notion of a sensitive temperament unable and unwilling, too gifted and at the same time self-

possessed – which partly is in Austen’s characterization of Fanny – is transferred to Edmund.<sup>36</sup>

## 6.1 Story Differences

The opening scene is staged quite differently from the previous adaptations and also the book. In the novel, one first reads about Fanny’s presence in the second chapter. In the series, she appears after a scene with Mrs. Norris and the Bertrams who discuss her arrival. In opposition, in this film Fanny appears right at the beginning, just as it was in the 1999 adaptation. The difference between those two is that here Fanny is already on her way to Mansfield Park with tears rolling down her face. This film is, as well as the previous one, accompanied by voiceovers by Fanny’s character. These voiceovers help the audience understand the story and Fanny’s feelings. Right at the beginning she talks about how her mother had to send her to Mansfield Park. In another scene, there is Aunt Norris talking to Lady Bertram and Sir Thomas. Apparently, it was not Mrs. Norris’ idea to have Fanny sent to Mansfield Park but Mrs. Price’s. Sir Thomas provides an unpleasant reaction. “We should no doubt prepare ourselves for an ignorant child, with vulgar manners...These are not incurable faults,”<sup>37</sup> whereas in the novel he states, “...we must secure to the child, or consider ourselves engaged to secure to her hereafter, as circumstances may arise, the provision of a gentlewoman, if no such establishment should offer as you are so sanguine in expecting.”<sup>38</sup>

Fanny arrives alone in a carriage. Mrs. Norris awaits her with the Bertrams at Mansfield Park. In the book and the series, Fanny and her aunt meet at Northampton and henceforward they travel together. One of the differences from the previous two adaptations is the fact that Fanny has blonde hair here. To be precise, blonde hair and dark eyebrows, which later when she is older give the impression of bleached hair.

As Fanny comes to meet the Bertrams, she is quiet, shy and cries from the unfamiliarity of the place and the people. She runs away from the room crying right after meeting the family. Music accompanying this short scene would be much more appropriate for a comedy rather than a drama. The music can be heard through the

---

<sup>36</sup> Ellen Moody, “Mansfield Park 2007: Another Perspective by Ellen Moody,” Jane Austen’s World, <https://janeaustensworld.wordpress.com/2008/08/23/mansfield-park-2007-another-perspective-by-ellen-moody/>, retrieved August 23, 2008.

<sup>37</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Ian B. MacDonald (2007; UK: ITV DVD, 2007), DVD.

<sup>38</sup> Austen and Conrad, *Mansfield Park*, 7.

whole beginning of the film until the “Mansfield Park” inscription appears. One can find it disturbing along with the hand-held camera style.

After the credits, Fanny talks about her life in the voiceover and she directly informs the audience that as the years passed, she came to love Edmund as more than just a cousin. The character of Fanny did no such thing in the novel or the adaptations before this one. She always kept her feelings to herself for a long time.

While Sir Thomas is saying his goodbyes to travel to West Indies, he also tells Maria not to marry Rushworth before he comes back. In the original, he sends his consent with the engagement from abroad. Sir Thomas also mentions Fanny’s brother William for the first time and allows her to invite him to Mansfield Park. In this fact the film differs from the 1999 one which completely omitted William’s character. Sir Thomas turns to Fanny and adds, “I had hoped William would find his sister at eighteen much changed from his sister at ten, but I fear he will not.” Fanny is sixteen years old when he talks with her about these things in the novel.

The part of the book when everyone is so happy to stage Lovers’ Vows is also included. The difference is that when Henry Crawford and Maria Bertram kiss during practicing the play. They share a kiss behind curtains Mrs. Norris is touching up. The curtain falls and everyone present in the room is a witness, including Fanny. It was only her who witnesses them kissing in the novel and also BBC series. However, in this version, Maria and Henry pretend it is a part of the act and Mrs. Norris blames Fanny for doing a mischief as always and states that they were better off without her. On the contrary, in the 1999 adaptation, the feelings between Maria and Henry were expressed this way only to be seen by Sir Thomas and later in the film they were spotted in a delicate situation by Fanny.

When Edmund practices a part of the play with Mary Crawford, this film shows Fanny being jealous and looking at them from behind the corner. In the original, she sits with them while they read their parts. Also, Fanny does not put much effort in refusing to play the cottager’s wife. In the novel, she is much more resistant and Aunt Norris again clarifies that Fanny should be grateful to them.

“I am not going to urge her,” replied Mrs. Norris sharply; “but I shall think her a very obstinate, ungrateful girl, if she does not do what her aunt and cousins wish her—very ungrateful, indeed, considering who and what she is.”<sup>39</sup>

The issue of slavery is also mentioned in this adaptation, however, not in such amount as in the previous one. Austen mentions slavery in her book when Fanny speaks with Edmund:

Fanny: “But I do talk to him more than I used. I am sure I do. Did not you hear me ask him about the slave-trade last night?”

Edmund: “I did—and was in hopes the question would be followed up by others. It would have pleased your uncle to be inquired of farther.”

Fanny: “And I longed to do it—but there was such a dead silence!”<sup>40</sup>

After Sir Thomas’s return, Fanny asks him at dinner if he believes that slavery can continue the same way. There is a silence for a moment, but then Tom marks quietly, “Our little cousin is a friend to abolition.” Sir Thomas answers her, “I think, my dear, we may very well do without slavery. But without order, we are lost.”<sup>41</sup> Rozema did not operate on this question by Fanny at all, but on the other hand, she made the issue of slavery as one of the main points of her film.

The visit of Sotherton, which is the part of the novel where Maria and Julia both try to impress Henry Crawford, is missing from this adaptation, too.

This adaptation is more faithful to the novel in the instance of Fanny and Henry’s relationship. A short scene after Maria’s wedding takes the audience into a library to see Fanny playing with a child, laughing and being happy. Henry is watching her and therefore decides to prolong his stay and shares with Mary the idea of making Fanny fall in love with him. In 1999 film Henry finds Fanny interesting at the ball and then again while playing cards, which was originally supposed to happen at Grants’ during William’s visit, but these characters were left out of that adaptation. However, he does not inform Mary about his plans since he actually seems to be falling in love with Fanny. On the contrary, in the novel he is impressed by her at a

---

<sup>39</sup> Austen and Conrad, *Mansfield Park*, 150.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* 39, 202.

<sup>41</sup> *Mansfield Park*, dir. Ian B. MacDonald (2007; UK: ITV DVD, 2007), DVD.

dinner with Grants'. He announces Mary his intention a day after and notes that it is Fanny's lack of interest in him what challenges him. The 2007 version of Henry agrees with the original story also by the help he provides to William to get him promoted, which was the point when Fanny reconsiders her stance against Henry. However, her opinion before this is not fully discovered in this film.

When Fanny's brother William arrives to Mansfield Park, the two of them talk about Fanny's life there and the audience learns about letters they have been writing to each other. These letters are not shown in the film, even though they are a great part of the novel. Fanny admits to William, "What I feel for Edmund is different. He isn't my brother."<sup>42</sup>

The ball Sir Thomas in the book decided to hold in Fanny and William's honor is here changed into a picnic to celebrate Fanny's birthday. The most significant change in this adaptation is Fanny's return home to Portsmouth being left out. Originally, Sir Thomas sends her home so she can realize the luxury they provide her and the life Henry Crawford offers her. They hoped that after she spends some time with her big poor family, she would accept Henry's proposal. In this film, Fanny is left behind at Mansfield Park while the Bertrams leave to visit Lady Bertram's mother for three weeks. With Maria and Julia already gone, Fanny became a center of attention, which she did not like, but accepted it. Now Edmund and whole family were gone and Fanny stayed at Mansfield Park all by herself until Henry pays her a visit. She chose to write a letter to Edmund. This is the first time in the film Fanny can be seen writing a letter, even though it was mentioned that she was exchanging letters with her brother William. As she writes to Edmund, her voiceover shares her thoughts, "Dearest Edmund... Perhaps it is because of my present solitude that I cannot stop thinking of our last meeting. And I so wish...I wish...I wish...I did not mean to say you should not hope. Life without hope is intolerable and even I, in my secret heart...dare hope that..."<sup>43</sup> What she wants to express are her feelings towards him, but one does not learn the outcome. In the novel Fanny and Edmund also write to each other while Fanny is gone to Portsmouth.

The news about Maria and Henry's affair comes to Mansfield Park through Sir Thomas who personally went to London and learned the truth there. Austen's version informs the reader about this differently. It was Mary's letter to Fanny that gave a hint

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 41.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 41.

about the news and then Fanny reads about it in newspaper while still staying in Portsmouth.

## 6.2 The Character of Fanny

Fanny's character in this adaptation is more faithful to the Jane Austen's Fanny. This newest version of Fanny Price (Billie Piper) is shy, but not as much as the Austen's one. However, she does what she's told to and only feels comfortable around Edmund or her brother William. She also smiles more, but does not give the feeling of being as happy as Rozema's Fanny. There are no signs of her being of poor health. One can often see her running to someone and to do something. For example when she plays badminton with Edmund and then runs to tell everyone Sir Thomas wants to talk to them or when she runs to give Maria her parasol. In the first case she breathes heavily from the sport, but otherwise she is perfectly fine. In one scene after the first Crawfords' visit, Edmund comes to Fanny as she draws a sketch of a figure. The book version of Fanny however, "does not want to learn either music or drawing,"<sup>44</sup> as one of the young Bertram sisters points out to Mrs. Norris. When Fanny does not laugh or smile, her face expression is still the same, looking sad and uninterested in sharing her feelings. This is one of the actress' efforts to relate to the Austen's Fanny. Nevertheless, Billie Piper gives Fanny the likable quality modern audience desires. Fanny also seems much more jealous of Mary than she does in previous adaptations. Her rejection of Mr. Crawford's feelings is much more reliable to her reaction in the novel. Compared to how she reacts in Rozema's film, this Fanny does not show any wittiness here. She is genuinely shocked and seems scared of his feelings towards her.

## 6.3 Other Characters

When the Crawford siblings arrive, the audience only learns that they are the neighbors. This situation tries to imitate the 1999 *Mansfield Park*. The presentation of Henry (Joseph Beattie) and Mary (Hayley Atwell) Crawford is simply modeled on the earlier film version – they suddenly appear coming to Mansfield Park as a couple.<sup>45</sup> Dr. Grant and his wife are missing from this adaptation. It is only natural that Edmund

---

<sup>44</sup> Austen and Conrad, *Mansfield Park*, 19.

<sup>45</sup> "Mansfield Park 2007: Another Perspective by Ellen Moody."

(Blake Ritson) and Mary share more scenes together than in the previous adaptation and therefore the relationship between them becomes more realistic.

The character of Aunt Norris (Maggie O'Neill) corresponds with the Austen's one much more than does the one in the 1999 version. She also appears more throughout the film and gives the audience the impression of making Fanny hers and everyone else's flunky. She puts great effort into informing everybody how she is the one who is to take credit for the well-being of others. That is one of the main characters of Austen's Mrs. Norris.

Lady Bertram (Jemma Redgrave) on the other hand, does not quite reflect the hypochondriac and lazy woman. Even though she can often be seen lying around or falling asleep, her physical health is untouched. However, she seeks Fanny's help and company a lot. At the end of the film she tells Sir Thomas that she knew Fanny has been in love with Edmund for a long time and gives them an opportunity to connect. This proves her character is not as distracted and vague as Austen's Lady Bertram.

This adaptation does not omit Fanny's brother William (Joseph Morgan). First he is spoken of right before Sir Thomas' departure and later he comes to visit Mansfield Park and gives Fanny an amber cross. This cross is a symbol of Jane Austen's life experience, when her naval brother Charles gave her an identical cross now to be seen at Jane Austen's House Museum. He stays for a while and then he is seen only in the wedding scene at the end of the film. The audience is not familiar with the letters Fanny was supposed to write to him and otherwise.

At the end of the film, there is not much information about some characters' fates. For example, the relationship between Julia and Mr. Yates is not mentioned. The audience learns about Maria living with Mrs. Norris. There is no mention about Fanny's sister Susan who was supposed to come live at Mansfield Park. In addition, the wedding of Fanny and Edmund is not left out from the final scene.



## Conclusion

There is a feeling in this contemporary world that the filmmakers have to re-think and re-do *Mansfield Park* so that the heroine and the story fall in line with our modern sensibilities and worldview. The BBC series from 1983 resembles the book most honestly of all later adaptations. It is basically a literal transcription of the novel. On the other hand, films from 1999 and 2007 try to make the moral, shy and sensitive Fanny Price more sympathetic for viewers.

In 1999, Patricia Rozema decided to alter the novel, changed Fanny almost completely and added slavery as one of the main issues of her film's story. Austen consciously ignored slavery in her novel, but Rozema considered this as something Austen should have surveyed.

The film makes changes regarding some main characters, eliminates several others and reorganizes certain events. The result is a film that keeps the evolution of the protagonist (Fanny Price) and series of events of Jane Austen's novel, but in other ways, presents its themes and ideas differently, which is also claimed by some critics.

Patricia Rozema incorporated the life of Jane Austen into the film and changed her into an aspiring writer, based on Austen, which changed the perspective of Fanny in great way.

Unlike the previous production, the 2007 adaptation of *Mansfield Park* emphasizes the social depiction of Austen's era. People were often reaching for distractions from social bullying, such as Fanny playing with children, sports and dancing or parties to provide momentary relief. Overall, there is a high probability that modern audience would not fully understand what makes Fanny who she is and she would probably be less interesting for them. Therefore the filmmakers must alter her as well as the novel to be more understandable. Even though this is a smart move, it does not let people see the real, Austen's version.

## Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se věnuje filmovým adaptacím románu Mansfieldské panství. Za posledních skoro čtyřicet let vznikly tři televizní adaptace tohoto románu Jane Austenové. Tou první, z roku 1983, je série z produkce BBC. Jedná se o nejužší zpracování tohoto románu, téměř jeho doslovný přepis. Na druhou stranu, film z roku 1999, se od díla v jistých směrech závratně liší. Režisérka Patricia Rozemaová již v úvodních titulcích dala najevo, že podkladem jejího zpracování byl nejen Austenin román, ale také její dopisy a deníky. Tato skutečnost se značně projevila na hlavní hrdince, Fanny Priceové. Fanny je představována jako aspirující spisovatelka s bujnou fantazií již od raného dětství. Její písemné projevy jsou ve skutečnosti lehce pozměněným dílem Austenové. Přestože si film ponechává vývoj postav i děje, podává jistá témata odlišně. Například to, že režisérka zakomponovala otroctví do děje jakožto jeden z hlavních problémů doby. Austenová otroctví zmínila jen velmi okrajově, záměrně se mu vyhýbala.

Tato filmová verze Fanny se od té původní velmi liší. Je otevřená, sebevědomá, výřečná a především je obdařena pevným zdravím. Ve společnosti cizích lidí, ať žen či mužů, se necítí nepříjemně. Její silná morálka je taktéž potlačena. Tímto více odpovídá moderním charakteristikám mladé ženy, tyto vlastnosti jsou ovšem převážně v rozporu s její knižní postavou. Divákům, kteří román nečetli, však takovéto podání vyhovuje, mohou více sympatizovat s hlavní hrdinkou a shledávají film příjemným.

V této adaptaci jsou zcela vynechány některé postavy, zvláště pak Fannyin bratr William, který je její nejbližší osobou. Namísto něj Rozemaová dosadila jakožto Fannyinu blízkou duši její sestru.

Nejnovější adaptace z roku 2007 soustřeďuje své záběry pouze okolo Mansfieldského panství. První viditelným rozdílem mezi tímto filmem a předchozími zpracováními je barva vlasů hlavní postavy. Tato Fanny se ukáže být blondýnkou, zatímco předchozím dvěma přispívala k charakteru tmavá barva vlasů. Nicméně, tato Fanny zůstává mnohem věrnější té původní. Dělá, co se jí řekne a dobře se cítí pouze ve společnosti bratrance Edmunda nebo bratra Williama, který z tohoto zpracování nebyl vynechán. Fanny je zde také více usměvavá a rovněž nedává najevo známky špatného zdraví. Naopak působí jako více umělecká duše. Předchozí verze Fanny byla spisovatelkou, tato se zdá být nadanou kreslíčkou.

Několik postav v tomto filmu opět chybí. Diváci jsou však více obeznámeni se vztahem mezi Edmundem a Mary, kteří spolu tráví více času.

Je tedy nadmíru jasné, že se filmoví tvůrci přizpůsobili dílo moderním divákům za účelem získání přízně, ovšem divákům tak zůstává skryta ta pravá, Austenovská verze.

## Bibliography

- Austen, Jane and Peter Conrad. *Mansfield Park*. London: Campbell, 1992.
- Austen, Jane. *Love and Friendship*. London: Hesperus, 2003.
- Austen, Jane and Sabor, Peter. *Juvenilia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Austen, Jane. *Sense and Sensibility*. London: Vintage Books, 2014.
- Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. London: Penguin Books, 2012.
- Byrne, Sandie. *Jane Austen: Mansfield Park*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Byrne, Paula. The Telegraph. "Mansfield Park shows the dark side of Jane Austen." <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/10987048/Mansfield-Park-shows-the-dark-side-of-Jane-Austen.html>. Retrieved July 2014.
- Boyle, Laura. The Jane Austen Centre in Bath England. "Mansfield Park: 1983." <https://www.janeausten.co.uk/mansfield-park-1983/>. Retrieved January 1, 2001.
- Britannia Internet Magazine. "Jane Austen (1401-1437)." <http://britannia.com/bios/jausten.html>. Retrieved 2001.
- Cartmell, Deborah. *Screen Adaptations: Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice: The Relationship between Text and Film*. London: Methuen Drama, 2010.
- Clements, Fiona. Literary Criticism by Fiona Clements. "Jane Austen's Mansfield Park as an exercise in imaginative sympathy." <http://www.kelper.co.uk/litcrit/mansfield.html>.
- Chicago Public Library. "Jane Austen Biography." <http://www.chipublib.org/jane-austen-biography/>.
- Ebert, Roger. Roger Ebert. "Mansfield Park." <http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/mansfield-park-1999>. Retrieved November 24, 1999.
- Groenendyk, Kathi. "Modernizing Mansfield Park: Patricia Rozema's Spin on Jane Austen." *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-Line* 25, no. 1 (2004). <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol25no1/groenendyk.html>.
- Hornby, Gill. *Jane Austen: The Girl with the Magic Pen*. London: Short Books, 2005.
- Holden, Stephen. The New York Times. "Film Review: Spicing Austen's 1806 With Dashes of 1999." <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/11/18/movies/film-review-spicing-austen-s-1806-with-dashes-of-1999.html>. Retrieved November 18, 1999.

IMDb. "Mansfield Park (1999) Goofs."

[http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0178737/trivia?tab=gf&ref\\_=tt\\_trv\\_gf](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0178737/trivia?tab=gf&ref_=tt_trv_gf).

Jeffers, Regina. Austen Authors. "A Look at the Film Adaptation of 'Mansfield Park, 1999'." <http://austenauthors.net/a-look-at-the-film-adaptation-of-mansfield-park-1999/>. Retrieved July 17, 2015.

Mansfield Park. Directed by David Giles. 1983. USA: BBC Warner, 2004. DVD.

Mansfield Park. Directed by Patricia Rozema. 1999. United Kingdom: Miramax, 2000. DVD.

Mansfield Park. Directed by Ian B. MacDonald. 2007. United Kingdom: ITV DVD, 2007. DVD.

Monaghan, David, "In Defense of Patricia Rozema's Mansfield Park." *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal*, no. 28 (June 2006): 59-64.

<http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/printed/number28/monaghan.pdf>.

Moody, Ellen. Jane Austen's World. "Mansfield Park 2007: Another Perspective by Ellen Moody," <https://janeaustensworld.wordpress.com/2008/08/23/mansfield-park-2007-another-perspective-by-ellen-moody/>. Retrieved August 23, 2008.

Parill, Sue. *Jane Austen on Film and Television: A Critical Study of the Adaptations*. North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2002.

Peachy Reviews. "Mansfield Park 1999 Review."

<https://marspeach.wordpress.com/2010/11/08/mansfield-park-1999-review/>. Retrieved November 8, 2010.

Powell, R. The Powell Blog. "'Mansfield Park' (1983) Review."

<http://rpowell.livejournal.com/84959.html>. Retrieved February 25, 2011.

Tomalin, Claire. *Jane Austen: A Life*. London: Penguin Books, 2012.

Weightman, Judy. Broad Street Review. "The unmaking of an Austen heroine."

[http://www.broadstreetreview.com/film-tv/mansfield\\_park\\_book\\_vs\\_film](http://www.broadstreetreview.com/film-tv/mansfield_park_book_vs_film). Retrieved August 14, 2012.

## **Annotation**

Author: Zuzana Kapustová

Faculty: Faculty of Arts of Palacký University in Olomouc

Department: Department of English and American Studies

Title of the Bachelor Thesis: Mansfield Park Reconsidered

Supervisor: Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D.

Number of pages: 39

Number of appendices: 0

Key words: Jane Austen, Mansfield Park, adaptation, film, novel, Fanny Price, Patricia Rozema, difference

The thesis is to deal with Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, the one Austen novel contemporary readers as well as critics find puzzling, "a Victorian novel among Jane Austen's writing". The aim of this study is to explore the critical assessments of this particular novel, and three adaptations of the novel that have been released so far. It will analyze how the filmmakers adapted the novel to please the audience and how can the story of the book be adjusted to fit in approximately two-hour cinematic event. Moreover, it intends to focus on changes and nuances between the three adaptations throughout the past almost forty years with respect to the original novel in order to examine the popular approach to the material and changes in taste of the Austen readership over two centuries.

## **Anotace**

Autor: Zuzana Kapustová

Fakulta: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Palackého v Olomouci

Katedra: Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Název bakalářské práce: Proměny Mansfieldského panství

Vedoucí: Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D.

Počet stran: 39

Počet příloh: 0

Klíčová slova: Jane Austen, Mansfieldské panství, adaptace, film, román, Fanny Price, Patricia Rozema, rozdíl

Cílem této bakalářské práce je zabývat se románem Jane Austenové Mansfieldské Panství, který je současnými čtenáři považován za záhadný, takzvaný „viktoriánský román mezi díly Jane Austenové“. Záměrem studie je odhalit kritické přístupy k tomuto románu a jeho třem doposud vzniklým adaptacím. Tato práce bude analyzovat, jakým způsobem filmoví tvůrci přizpůsobili román publiku a jak může být příběh upraven, aby se dal shrnout do průměrně dvouhodinového filmového zpracování. Navíc se zaměří na změny a odlišnosti mezi třemi adaptacemi, vzniklými během posledních zhruba čtyřiceti let, ve vztahu k originální knize. To vše také z důvodu, aby mohl být prozkoumán přístup moderního publika k těmto materiálům, stejně jako změny ve vkusu čtenářů Austenové za poslední dvě staletí.