Cinema and Its Representations

Cinema and Its Representations:

Poetics and Politics

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

As in translation studies, where a major concern of theoreticians and practitioners is the fidelity of the translation to the source text, 'to be faithful or not' is also a major question in adaptation studies. Early advocates of 'fidelity criticism' maintained that an adapted version of a literary work is required to be an exact reproduction of its source. Viewed as such, adaptation amounts to nothing more than a secondary, inferior production. It is a parasitic practice whose success entirely depends on how closely it reproduces the literary text. In contrast, contemporary criticism has moved beyond this restrictive principle, and critics tend to regard adaptation more as a creative process, in which the adapter should possess some degree of imaginative freedom and incorporate his/her artistic vision in the process of adaptation. In fact, as Corliss puts it, the adapter should keep only the central theme, the 'skeleton', of the source, and cover it with the flesh of his own artistic creativity until 'the creature looks human' (Brown 2009, 180).

Discussing the question of fidelity in novel-to-film adaptation, Leitch also argues, that faithfulness to the original is the exception not the rule, and, as such, it benefits the critics more to investigate the reasons why some adaptations seek to be faithful rather than to ask why some adaptations are not faithful. Directors attempt to be faithful to the source material, Leitch says, because the fame and popularity of a well-established and beloved literary text can guarantee the financial success of the movie adaptation. Therefore, financial rather than 'aesthetic' considerations motivate fidelity (Leitch 2007, 128). The well-loved source text creates an 'enormous audience' for the adapted version, and the adaptation benefits from that.

Although Leitch's assumption about the financial consideration motivating faithful adaptation is insightful, there are things it cannot explain. It does not seem, for instance, to consider the fact that wishing to reap the benefits of the reputation of a literary masterpiece does not necessarily create fidelity; once a movie is announced to be *based* on a well-loved novel, the audience will fill the movie theatres with little regard for the question of fidelity at first, not to mention the fact that it is often the case that a significant fraction of the audience has not read the source in advance, so is not particularly troubled by the question of fidelity. In fact, contrary to

Leitch's suggestion, fidelity criticism stresses the exact reproduction of plot, tone, and dialogue, which are all aesthetic, rather than commercial concerns. On the other hand, Hutcheon in her theory of adaptation adds the question of morality to the discussion. Not surprisingly, traditional criticism, with its humanist leanings and its emphasis on the question of morality, argues that in the process of adaptation, the *moral* thing for the adapter to do, is to fully adhere to the original text. In this sense, demanding fidelity is 'morally loaded' for Hutcheon.

Accordingly, the first part of the present collection engages with the fidelity argument in adaptation studies. Through analyzing Joe Wright's 2001 movie adaptation of Ian McEwan's novel *Atonement*, and drawing mainly upon Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation, Keramatfar and Bavakhani argue that absolute fidelity of the adapted movie to the source should not be taken as the ultimate criterion for judging the success of an adaptation. In fact, novel and film employ different 'modes of representation' that make an absolute fidelity impossible. Yet, in the process of adaptation, what needs to correspond closely enough to the original is the 'story'. Story consists of different elements, the most important of which is 'characters'. Beyad and Keramatfar demonstrate how Wright's movie reproduces the *story* of McEwan's novel, through the artistic management of characters.

Employing a narratological approach, Kazemi examines Roger Michell's 2004 adaptation of McEwan's novel *Enduring Love* to argue that the book and the movie employ different narrative strategies to recount the story; a difference that stems from the specific preferences of various modes of representation. He uses Warhol's typology about disnarration and narratability to examine the question of inclusion and exclusion in the cinematic adaptation. He concludes that the film favors a linear representation of the non-linear events of the novel, leaving out some of the 'telling pieces' that the novel contains.

Hassanzadeh and Pourgharib draw upon Bakhtin to adopt a 'dialogic approach' to literary adaptation, to study two cinematic productions of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*; an approach that does not reserve a 'superior' position for the original text, and views adaptation as a process of interaction. In particular, they focus on the Bakhtinian concept of chronotope (spatial and temporal interconnectedness) to argue that by adopting different 'chronotopic strategies', directors produce adaptations that may differ considerably. They also demonstrate, through analyzing adaptations of Shakespeare's plays, how chronotopic strategy can influence the response that an adaptation receives from the audience.

In Part Two, the contributors explore one of the pressing issues of the postmodern world, as represented in the contemporary cinema: the nature of subjectivity and its sociopolitical implications. Subjectivity has been variously defined and interpreted in different disciplines. Although these interpretations do not arrive at a consensus, and sometimes even contrast sharply, they converge on one point: subjectivity, as E. Hall puts it, is "a matter of life and death" (Hall 2004, 124) to us, and thus requires continuous investigation and reformulation. As such, as the traditional notions of subjecthood with their emphasis on the autonomous, self-conscious, and unified nature of subjects have lost their credibility in the face of the present-day complex cultural milieu, and failed to account for the postmodern subject, investigating the question of subjectivity has found a new, tremendous significance, in so much as cultural critics even identify the "postmodern condition with a heightened consciousness about the problematic nature of human subjectivity" (Harper 1994, 3). Postmodern artists, who, as Lyotard says, are in the position of 'philosophers' (Lyotard 1984, 81), also feel obliged to devote themselves primarily to exploring the issue of subjectivity.

Mansfield expresses an underlying tenet of postmodern sociocultural theory when he defines subjectivity as "primarily an experience that remains permanently open to inconsistency, contradiction and unself-consciousness" (Mansfield 2000, 6). And as experience is characterized by change, fluidity, and inconsistency, the subject of the experience can only be decentered, fragmentary, and inconsistent. The contributors to Part Two of this collection emphasize that a subject is a social construct, and seek to shed new light on different dimensions of 'postmodern decenteredness', as represented in the contemporary cinema. Fathali, concerned with the question of contemporary subjectivity, and drawing upon the postmodern anthropology of Marc Augé, investigates the place of 'non-place' in contemporary cinema, and its attraction for the directors. She reviews Steven Knight's *Locke* (2013) Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010) and Charlie Kaufman's *Synecdoche, New York* (2008) to argue that non-place provides a space where the free-floating, anxiety-ridden subjects of the postmodern situation may find a chance to encounter with their underlying selves, free from the contingencies of time, place, and cultural contaminations; an encounter that helps the subjects feel 'anchored' and develop 'a rather militant brand of subjectivity'.

In the same vein, Nezamdoost and Habibzadeh employ Jean Baudrillard's ideas concerning the questions of origin and reality in the postmodern situation, and tie it in with the issue of subjectivity. They demonstrate how,

in Amenábar's 2001 gothic movie *The Others*, hyperreality and simulation undermine individuals' sense of reality with some significant social repercussions. In such a puzzling state of replication, and uncertainty about reality and appearance, the search for one's identity, one's 'real reality', becomes a particularly urgent and daunting concern. Nezamdoost and Habibzadeh follow the movie's protagonist in her quest for the reality of herself and those around her.

Shabanirad and Dadkhah, more than others, examine the political implications of postmodern subjectivity. Through a Foucaultian framework, they connect George Orwell's celebrated novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with Martin Scorsese's 2010 movie *Shutter Island*. The dystopian vision of both works has a lot to do with the system of total control and surveillance. In such a condition, the 'panoptic state' constantly watches its own subjects, and constructs them through various disciplinary practices and institutions. These subjects lose their sense of individuality and agency, and thus cannot be regarded as the right subjects for bringing about any change in the structure of the society. Shabanirad and Dadkhah demonstrate how the novel and the film present a Foucaultian dystopia of constant watch and control. Their argument shows how, for Foucault, subjectivity does not exist; it is something invented by "dominant systems of social organization in order to control and manage us" (Mansfield 2000, 10).

In "A Semiotic Reading of Abbas Kiarostami's *Ten*," Ghafoori tries to decode the acclaimed Iranian filmmaker's experimental movie, which seems to be an attempt to present real events in the real life of an actress without the interference of cinematic tools and conventions. Ghafoori shows how Kiarostami advances this general view about his film by making minimal use of script, *mise-en-scène*, editing, music, and photography. Nevertheless, in a rather deconstructionist mood, and by investigating the film's systems of signification with the help of the theories of Christian Metz and Umberto Eco, Ghafoori puts forward his conviction that the reality in *Ten* is as 'represented', as in any other film.

Part Three presents a discussion of the politics of visual representation, with a focus on the question of identity. Imani studies Tim Johnson's 2015 animated film, *Home*, as a work practicing 'postcolonialism in reverse'. In the film, which narrates the invasion of earth by a group of aliens, it is not the colonizers that effect changes in the identity of the colonized. The colonizers themselves undergo a change of identity through their contact with the colonialized; an idea which, Leela Gandhi, calls 'nativization'. Imani regards this reversal as a conscious effort to exonerate the invaders

from their imperialist intentions. Homi K. Bhabha's theories about mimicry, and hybridity, and Edward Said's ideas about the mechanisms of colonialism are used to show how colonialism works in reverse, in *Home*.

Keramatfar and Dehghani address the question of stereotyping in the visual representation of eastern people in western media. They maintain that, in spite of the growing criticism about its portrayal of non-western people, orientalist discourse has not discarded presenting stereotypical images. It has only replaced earlier fixed stereotypes with new flexible and 'ambivalent' ones that similarly help western powers reproduce their hegemonic influence. They analyze the American TV series *Homeland* (2011-) to demonstrate how cultural products may serve to advance this imperialistic agenda. No longer relying on the old, unchanging stereotypes, Keramatfar and Dehghani argue that the series uses 'negative formulae' to produce new stereotypes, 'brown sahibs', as models to be imitated by oriental people. As these new stereotypes have internalized western values and superiority, they effectively help westerners to reestablish and continue their domination.

Like Keramatfar and Bavakhani, Poursanati deals with another political agenda behind the production and representation of oriental stereotypes, in this case 'assimilationist politics'. She uses the *German Alarm for Cobra 11* to demonstrate how, in situations of immigration, the host culture mobilizes its cultural institutions and productions to contain cultural diversity through encouraging, and, in fact, ensuring, immigrants' integration into the cultural zeitgeist of the host country. Alarm for Cobra 11 provides a stereotypical 'model' of Turkish immigrants who, in spite of having Turkish names and appearance, have internalized German attitudes, akin to Keramatfar and Bavakhani's 'brown sahibs', to re-assimilate Turks into German culture.

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PART ONE:

ADAPTATION DEBATES

SHIFT, REPETITION, AND VARIATION IN ADAPTATION

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Introduction

Adapting a narrative into a movie involves a necessary shift in the mode of representation, from the telling mode of a novel, to the showing mode of a movie. Such a shift, in turn, entails alterations which are often due to the specificities of each mode. In such a shift, characters and plot are the general narrative elements that undergo major transformations. Accordingly, but avoiding the practice and principles of 'fidelity criticism', this paper aims to explore the changes resulting from the shift from the telling mode of representation to the showing mode, in Joe Wright's adaptation of Ian McEwan's 2001 novel *Atonement*. It is argued that, although condensation of the major characters is commonly observed in the movie adaptation, with some subtle and/or obvious changes in the story, the movie, through character management, gives the characters some new dimensions and/or intensifies their intended characteristics. Such character management is demonstrated to be mainly carried out through manipulation of the details of the story.

The bulk of cinematization of literary works has witnessed a tremendous expansion in contemporary cultural world. Many recent award-wining movies are, in fact, reworking of contemporary or classical novels. This has necessitated the need to pay closer attention to the practice of criticism of these adaptations. Fidelity criticism, the idea that the adaptation must rigidly re-produce the adapted text, has dominated the analysis of the success or failure of adaptations. In fact, it has become a cultural desire' (Cartmell and Whelehan, 2014) and is morally loaded (Hutcheon 2006). Such criticism

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not only seeks to examine, with surgical attentiveness, the faithfulness of adaptations to their originals, but also tends to regard adaptations as essentially derivative, secondary, and inferior. This fidelity criticism has, however, been severely criticized and rejected as the ultimate criterion for judging the merit of an adaptation. Robert Stam (2000), for example, rejects it because of its Victorian prudishness and its accusatory moralistic nature.

Linda Hutcheon (2006), in the course of presenting her own theory of adaptation, also denies the validity of what she sees as the two main principles of fidelity criticism. She argues for the double nature of adaptation; it is both a product and a process, it is "a creative and interpretive transposition of a recognizable other work or works" (Hutcheon 2006, 33). As a (formal) product, she argues, adaptation results in "a shift of medium", with medium being "the material means of expression" (Hutcheon 2006, 34). For her, such a shift in medium necessarily entails some changes. As she argues, "transposition to another medium, or even moving within the same one, always means change or, in the language of the new media, 'reformatting'" (Hutcheon 2006, 16); indeed "they are re-mediations" (Hutcheon 2006, 17).

On the other hand, Hutcheon believes that, as a process, adaptation "always involves both (re-)interpretation and then (re-)creation." It is, therefore, suggested that, in adaptation, strict fidelity to the original should not be considered as the ultimate criterion, not only because of medium shift, and the changes originating from that, but also because of the changes in the cinematic version resulting from the openness of the original to different interpretations. It should be noted, that Hutcheon also criticizes the clichéd idea that adaptation is an essentially inferior practice to literary production. Indeed, she believes that adaptations have their own 'aura' and are "second without being secondary" (Hutcheon 2006, 9). The question she has raised: "if adaptations are, by this definition, such inferior and secondary creations, why then are they so omnipresent in our culture and, indeed, increasing steadily in numbers?" (Hutcheon 2006, 4) is quite insightful. Mary H. Snyder (2011) similarly calls adaptation a creative process, and goes on to explain how "the process [of adaptation] begins with the screenwriter" (Snyder 2011, 202), with lots of difficulties and technicalities involved.

Therefore, the argument that adaptation is in itself a re-creation or a creative process helps Hutcheon to challenge this misconception, by concluding that "adapters are first interpreters and then creators" (Hutcheon 2006, 18). The strength of Hutcheon's argument in redeeming adaptation from charges of inferiority and parasitic dependence, lies in the fact that she gives both the

original novel and its adaptation their due credit, and, unlike Leitch (2003), does not attempt to discredit literary fiction in order to challenge the fallacy that novels are better than films. In fact, in the controversy about novel-to-film adaptation, Leitch feels called upon to defend cinematic representation, believing "the valorization of fidelity amounts to a valorization of literature" (Leitch 2003, 162). While Leitch's discontent with the strictures of strict faithfulness to the source text is legitimate, and shared by many contemporary critics, his insistence on maintaining a hierarchical relationship between adaptation and original text, with the higher position reserved for the cinematic version, is only the practice of fidelity criticism in reverse.

This notion of process, moreover, suggests that the way Hutcheon believes that adaptations are "repetition without replication," is that they are "repetition with variation." In other words, "with adaptations, we seem to desire the repetition as much as the change" (Hutcheon 2006, 9). In order to explain and expand her ideas about the variations that accompany repetition in adaptation (as a process of re-interpretation and re-creation), Hutcheon attends to the question of idea (content) and expression (form). While in adaptation the latter persists, the former changes; this constitutes the foundation of her theory of adaptation. Her notions of idea and expression roughly correspond to McFarlane's notions of *narrative* (which can be transferred) and *enunciation* (which cannot be transferred). Therefore, the success of adaptation depends not on the strict fidelity of the cinematic version to the original, but on how, and to what extent, the content of the original persists in its adapted version. Then the question arises as to what constitutes the content. Wishing to present a sound theoretical framework, Hutcheon dismisses the notions of spirit, tone, and style as ideas which can represent the original, to be reproduced in the adaptation. Indeed, they are too subjective to be considered as constitutive of the content, and almost impossible to theorize.

What she eventually refers to as the core' of the content to be transferred in adaptation is story. That is, what Hutcheon believes to be crucial in adapting a text into a movie is the reproduction of the story of the original, and as such, the story is the core of both cinema and novel. Dudley Andrew (1984) shares this idea with Hutcheon: "[story] is celebrated in literature and … it is nearly synonymous with the word 'cinema'" (Andrew 1984, 76). He also adds that, "no matter how we judge the process or success of the film, its 'being' owes something to the *tale* that was its inspiration, and potentially its measure" (Andrew 1984, 96, italics added). As the novel turns into a movie, it is the story that transmits, but in both a different form, and a different mode of engagement. At the same time, Hutcheon does not fail to

raise the question of adaptability of stories, and contends that realist stories are more readily adaptable than experimental ones, which only become homogenized in the process of adaptation. Nevertheless, she reiterates that it is the story that persists in adaptation. And naturally, persistence of the story, means the persistence of the different elements of the story:

> In adapting … "equivalences" are sought in different sign systems for the various elements of the story: its themes, events, world, characters, motivations, points of view, consequences, contexts, symbols, imagery, and so on (Hutcheon 2006, 10).

Of these equivalences, this paper focuses mostly on character and motivation, and attempts to analyze the persistence of the elements of story of Ian McEwan's novel *Atonement* (2001) in its 2007 cinematic adaptation.

II

In an interview with David Lynn, McEwan reveals his belief in the importance of, and his attraction to, the idea of character, by stating that, "the creation of character… seems to me very much the central project of exploring our condition" (McEwan 2001, 51). He expresses his distaste for the modernist portrayal of the 'alienated figure'. This even leads him to criticize Virginia Woolf, because her idea that 'character is now dead' helped push the novel down some very fruitless impasses (though this idea is open to question since, to give just one example, Woolf, in her 1923 essay *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown*, argued that all novel-writing is about creating character: "the foundation of good fiction is character-creating and nothing else" and believed that the crisis in novel writing originated from the inadequacy of novelists in creating character). The attraction to character causes McEwan to praise 19th century novelists too:

> "I do think that the nineteenth century invented for us some extraordinary things, and we'd be crazy to turn our backs on them. And one is, the notion of character. We run narratives about other people in our real lives, we make characters of them, necessarily, because it helps us to guess what they might do next" (McEwan and Lynn 2007, 51)

Peter Childs (2006), in his analysis of McEwan's fiction, explores realist and modernist sides of McEwan, and comes to the conclusion that while McEwan's fiction reveals "a modernist concern with consciousness and perceptiveness", it "places itself in a realist tradition of deep, rich characterisation and social breadth" (Childs 2006, 143). McEwan embodies his belief in the tradition of rich characterization in *Atonement*. Not only are

Briony, Cecelia, and Robbie, fully presented, as the triangle around which the main action of the novel turns, with all the hidden aspects of their psychologies verbalized, but also less important characters, like Emily, (who for Ellam (2009) symbolizes feminine passivity), and Leon, receive in-depth analyses. It should also be noted that McEwan lays special emphasis on representing characters' psychological states, and considers rendering people's minds an important aesthetic task (Groes 2013), which is an essential part of writing fiction. "The novelist's privilege, according to Ian McEwan, is to step inside the consciousness of others, and to lead the reader there like a psychological Virgil" (Groes 2013, ix).

The point to be considered here is how McEwan's emphasis on character, and his rich characterization in *Atonement*, are represented in Joe Wright's 2007 cinematic version of the novel. It was earlier discussed that what should persist in adaptation are the elements of story. That is, 'equivalences' of these elements from the original should appear in the cinematic version. However, since adaptation is defined as 'repetition without replication', not 'slavish copying' (Hutcheon), what is meant is not *exact* equivalence. Some changes are unavoidable. These changes arise, in turn, from the fact that adaptation involves a shift in medium (Stam) and mode (Hutcheon). Stam (2000) believes that cinematization is a move from a single-track medium to a multitrack medium. The novel is a single-track medium as it deals only with words on the page. The movie, on the other hand, is multitrack medium; it draws not only upon words, but also on music, sound, etc. This shift of medium produces automatic differences and makes fidelity criticism impossible. Hutcheon also agrees that technical constraints of different media will inevitably highlight different aspects of that story (Hutcheon 2006, 10), that is why "a novel, in order to be dramatized, has to be distilled, reduced in size, and thus, inevitably, complexity" (Hutcheon 2006, 36). She also argues that adaptation involves a change in mode of representation, from the 'telling mode' of fiction to the 'showing mode' of cinema, which is a move from imaginative reconstruction to direct aural and visual perception. In other words,

> With each mode, different things get adapted and in different ways … To tell a story, as in novels, short stories, and even historical accounts, is to describe, explain, summarize, expand; the narrator has a point of view and great power to leap through time and space and sometimes to venture inside the minds of characters. To show a story, as in movies, ballets, radio and stage plays, musicals and operas, involves a direct aural and usually visual performance experienced in real time (Hutcheon 2006, 13).

Early in the movie, the difference between the telling mode and the showing mode of presentation is alluded to by the comparison made by Briony between stories and plays, in terms of the convenience of presenting them to the audience. Briony say's "Perhaps I should have written Leon a story. If you write a story, you only have to say the word 'castle', and you could see the towers and the woods and the village below, but in a play, it's… It all depends on other people."

The difference seems to be between the convenience of the imaginative reconstruction in the telling mode, as contrasted with the precariousness of trusting, and depending on, other people to receive your ideas. Moreover, Briony's words illustrate Chatman's distinction between explicit and implicit 'story space' (although Chatman believes that verbal story-space is abstract, but cinematic story-space is literal). Briony is stating that in the telling mode, mentioning the explicit story space 'castle' brings automatically in its wake the implicit story space of the down-the-hill village, and the woods, with the help of the imagination of the audience.

It should be noted that there are others who do not agree that medium shift is the source of many changes in the process of adaptation. Thomas M. Leitch (2003), for example, who believes that there is no such a thing as adaptation theory, and that there exist only adaptation studies, carried out in a theoretical vacuum, explores what he calls "a dozen interlinked fallacies." With regard to the shift of medium involved in the process of adaptation, he rejects the idea that "*differences between literary and cinematic texts are rooted in essential properties of their respective media*, as an outright fallacy" (italics are original). It is surprising, however, that later in his argument, he admits unconsciously the role of medium specificity, when he states that the novel is "the only medium whose conventions allow third-person sentences beginning ''she thought'." Leitch's downplaying of media specificity tends to disregard some restricting and broadening features of each medium in discussions of adaptation. While, for instance, the verbal medium of a novel, and its flexible length, allow it in-depth analyses of, and commentary on, individual characters' inner world, the visual medium of cinema, which is more rigid than fiction in terms of length, portrays the characters in action, and therefore such detailed insight into the psychology of the characters is only to be inferred. Hutcheon believes "all performance media are said to lose internal character motivation in the shift to externalization" (Hutcheon 2006, 42). Such a de-psychologization of characters when they are adapted from fiction to movie is the main concern of this study. And, not surprisingly, Leitch sees the common conception that "*novels create more complex characters than movies because they offer*

more immediate and complete access to characters' psychological states" as another fallacy (italics in the original).

Character, as a story element, undergoes some unavoidable changes as it is transferred from the telling mode of the novel to the showing mode of cinema. These changes are mainly related to the inner world of characters. Snyder (2011) believes that "both novels and films allow access and invite readers/viewers into the psychological states of character but with different effect in the particular medium" (Snyder 2011, 211). Hutcheon, believing that in the showing mode "we cannot get at the interior of the characters", also argues that in cinematizing a novel "there is inevitably a certain amount of *re-accentuation* and *refocusing* of … characters" (Hutcheon 2006, 40, italics added). Yet, she does not explore the nature of such character shift. Such a re-accentuation mainly occurs in the form of condensation of characters, and less frequently in the form of expansion of characters. Although Stam talks about 'condensation of character', he uses it in the sense of reduction of the number of characters of the novel when they appear in the movie; for example, how a family in a novel is reduced to one or two of its members. He believes that film adaptations have a kind of 'Sophie's choice' about which characters in the novel will live or die. However, condensation here is used in the sense of how psychology of character is reduced and appropriated in the movie, although character condensation in the sense that Stam employs is observable in the movie too. Mr. Tallis, Polly, the chambermaid, Doll a servant, Old Hardman, and Betty are characters who are mentioned and given parts in the novel, especially Betty, but are *condensed*, in Stam's sense of it. Moreover, there are examples of condensation of *event* (as another story element) in the movie. For example, in the movie nothing is seen about the air strikes that are mentioned frequently in the narrative.

However, it is psychological condensation which is crucial in the adaptation of McEwan's novel. This has a lot to do with McEwan's rich characterization; in *Atonement* he invests his characters with deep psychological details, as Ellam states that McEwan places covert rather than overt psychological pressure on his characters (Ellam 2009, 8). Such psychological details may not be properly reflected in the *showing* mode of cinema, and are thus condensed.

Briony is the character who is condensed the most. McEwan, with his emphasis on characterization, enriches the character of Briony with many psychological details; such details are often condensed in the showing mode of the movie. The novel reads that "she did not have it in her to be *cruel*."

(italics added). This *told* incapability of being cruel is not *shown* in the movie and it is not without some cost, since in the novel this initial fact about the character of Briony contrasts with her later act of cruelty (accusing Robbie of rape) with some resounding irony; yet in the movie, such a contrast in character, and therefore such an ironical meaning, is lost. Moreover, from being incapable of cruelty to committing cruelty implies a change, a development in Briony's character which the movie does not convey.

Furthermore, Briony's 'narrative spell', the fact that she spent a lot of time studying, that she had written a story at the age of 11, and that it was generally accepted that "the baby of the family possessed a strange mind and a facility with words, are not *shown* in the movie. This latter reduction is particularly significant, as the audience may wonder how a thirteen-year-old could write a 'stupendous' play without any help.

Elsewhere in the novel, some other details are revealed about Briony. Ellam (2009) argues that with regard to Briony "it is often repeated that alongside this ambition to be a writer is a desire for order, and this is made manifest in her attempts to take charge of both the production of the play and wider events" (Ellam 2009, 32). Moreover, it is revealed that she likes writing because it satisfies her love for secrecy and order:

> "She was on course now, and had found satisfaction on other levels; writing stories not only involved secrecy, it also gave her all the pleasures of miniaturization… Her passion for tidiness was also satisfied, for an unruly world could be made just so. A crisis in a heroine's life could be made to coincide with hailstones, gales and thunder, whereas nuptials were generally blessed with good light and soft breezes. A love of order also shaped the principles of justice" (McEwan 2002, 7).

Although in the movie attempts are made to *show* Briony as a girl who keeps to herself, these attempts fail to indicate her love of secrecy, they portray her more as a lonely, brooding girl. Again, this happens because of the different modes of novel and movie. What is *told* could not be exactly *shown*.

Condensation may play a role in character's motivation too. In the case of Briony, for example, the motivation for writing the play is pruned and condensed in the movie; the only motivation for writing the play is *shown* to be celebrating the return of Leon while the narrative provides some other motivations not negligible or inconsequential. The novel *tells* us that Briony's "play was not for her cousins, it was for her brother, to celebrate

his return, provoke his admiration and guide him away from his careless succession of girlfriends, toward the right form of wife, the one who would persuade him to return to the countryside, the one who would sweetly request Briony's services as a bridesmaid." These latter motivations of Briony, which are not *shown* in the movie, also help to condense the character of Leon.

It should be noted, however, that such discussion of condensation is not the same as the 'rhetoric of loss' frequently found in analyses of fidelity criticism. Character condensation argues that with the shift in 'mode of representation' come, inescapably, some changes in character. In fact, in some instances, the condensation of character adds to the intended or desired effect of the novel. In the case of Briony, although the detailed characterization of Briony, her tastes, her yearning for secrets, and her desire for "a harmonious, organized world" are not shown adequately in the movie, her distaste for wrongdoing is felt when the audience views Briony's shock; she actually gasps and collapses on the couch when she sees her sister through the window, near the "basin" in what at first sounds to be an indecent situation. Her desire for "a harmonious, organized world" is *shown* in the intensity of the disbelief that, addressing her uninterested cousins, she exclaims: "how can you hate plays?" In her organized world, play is something that all may love. This sense is expressed better in the movie, as the novel requires Briony to say this sentence 'reasonably', while in the movie she expresses it passionately. Here, Briony is facing a case of disharmony which requires an impassioned, rather than a reasonable, reaction.

This kind of character management is also apparent in the case of Emily Tallis. The fact that Emily is condensed in the movie, both in the physical and psychological sense, may not be taken as a mere loss; in fact there are traces in the novel that invite the director to reduce her. Although a rather long section of the narrative is devoted to *real*izing her as a mother by revealing, mostly through stream of consciousness, the essential lines of her anxiety for her children, the novel, at the same time, reads that "illness had stopped her giving her children all a mother should", and that "though she sometimes longed to rise up and intervene [in the affairs of the house], especially if she thought Briony was in need of her, the fear of pain kept her in place." (This is what Ellam characterizes as Emily's 'feminine passivity'). In other words, it seems that the text provides compelling evidence that, in a movie production of the novel, the mother ought to be reduced, thrown into near invisibility. Furthermore, Emily's refusal to intervene in family affairs, relying only on her 'sixth sense' developed from her long withdrawal, sounds to be essential for the story in another sense. It is such a withdrawal, combined with the absence of father, signifying the

absence of another determining and organizing force, which ripens the situations for domestic tragedy to unfold. This latter point is also substantiated, when, in his interview with Deveney, McEwan "explains how this novel is about 'absent parents'" (Ellam 2009, 5).

There is another interesting example of character management in the movie. When Cecilia is discussing reading books with Robbie, Samuel Richardson, the novelist mentioned in the novel, is pushed into the background; even his very name is repressed in the movie. It is Fielding who is mentioned and foregrounded by marginalizing Richardson. Cecilia says that she prefers Fielding 'any day' as he is 'much more passionate'. This latter sentence is not mentioned in the novel. This fact, combined with the fact of foregrounding Fielding, generally considered to be a writer more passionate than Richardson, can help characterize Cecilia better, as a girl with a passionate nature; a detail that predicts, and is in line with, future incidents of the novel. In this sense, the showing mode improves the characterization of the telling mode.

Cecilia and Robbie's talk about Fielding and Richardson precedes the famous basin episode which involves another condensation. In the novel, before this episode, a rather detailed account of their recent, awkward, and not-so-friendly, relationship is given, that makes the episode more understandable and tense: "There was no ease, no stability in the course of their conversations, no chance to relax. Instead, it was spikes, traps." Furthermore, knowing about the conflictual nature of their relation in the novel tends to highlight the question of gender and authority. 'Masculine authority' is therefore less obvious in the movie, as the history of their thorny relationship is not presented. In fact, in the novel, the struggle over the vase is presented as the climax of an injured relationship that the movie, by failing to present their earlier conflict, does not express. The narrative surges with the language of tension, punishment, struggle, authority, and triumph. Here again, condensation occurs, because the showing mode of the movie cannot reflect what the telling mode presents.

Conclusion

Adapting a novel into a movie requires the shift both of medium, and of the mode of representation; from the novel's single-track medium and telling mode of representation, to a movie's multitrack medium, and a showing mode of representation. What persists in this process of medium and mode shift is the story. The equivalents of the elements of story, including theme, characters, events, etc. are to be found in the adapted version. Given the fact

that McEwan pays particular attention to his characters, and invests them with minute psychological realities, the success of the adaptation of his novel *Atonement* depends significantly on how his characters are transferred. In their transference from novel to movie, characters undergo some unavoidable changes. Character condensation, both physical and psychological, is seen in Joe Wright's adaptation of McEwan's novel. Yet, the most important character change is what happens to their psychological make-up; their psychological condensation. Overall, and in spite of apparent losses through such condensations, character managements, and manipulation of details, the cinematic version of *Atonement* intensifies and gives new dimensions to the rich characterization of the novel.

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THE ROADS TAKEN AND NOT TAKEN; THE NARRATED/DISNARRATED POLITICS OF DIALOGISM IN IAN MCEWAN'S *ENDURING LOVE* AND ROGER MITCHELL'S CINEMATIC ADAPTATION

EHSAN KAZEMI[1]

Introduction

As one of the most significant British writers since the 1970s, Ian McEwan has resuscitated the connection between morality and the novel, and, as a consequence, has revived it as a remarkable cultural form befitting the historical pressures of Thatcherite era. To this end, he has paid marked attention to the reaches of the function and capacities of the narrative fiction in his oeuvre. Confirming such a claim, Dominic Head asserts that "given the persisting human hunger for narrative … my hunch is that McEwan will continue to be studied in fifty years, as a latter day Joseph Conrad, perhaps" (Head 2007, 1). *Enduring Love* (1970) furthers this narrative cause to new limits, and puts it towards staging a site for converging discourses. Centered around a balloon accident, where a man attempting to save a trapped boy loses his own life, the novel bears witness to a dialogic treatment of the questions raised therein. In view of this, meaning and resolution can be little more than easily pinpointed in any singular and controlling character, encouraging the liminal and open characteristic of the moral issues. Roger Michell's cinematic adaptation of *Enduring Love* (2004), however, seems to opt for a story with a linear, consistent line of action and thought, where the supremacy of Joe's voice (actor Daniel Craig) contributes to the unified stance toward the argument therein. Following Bakhtin's idea about the nature of meaning, the world of the film shies away from conforming to the "concrete architechtonics of the actual world of the performed act" (*TPA* 54). Such inclination in the adaptation toward a monologic rationale

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uncovers its manifestations in corresponding narrative orientations and restrictions. In other words, the marked difference between the novelistic tendency toward meaning as an in-process act and the cinematic authoritative approach of monologic voice, draw on quite distinct narrative strategies, through both narration and disnarration.

In her essay *Neonarrative; or, How to Render the Unnarratable in Realist Fiction and Contemporary Film,* Robyn R. Warhol, after touching upon Gerald Prince's notable contribution, calls attention to the cooperative function of the said and the unsaid. In fact, she believes that a novel or film approaches a certain narratological or generic type "as much by what they do not or cannot contain as by what they typically do contain (Warhol 221). Stressing on the pragmatic differences between instances unable to be narrated, and unworthy of being narrated, Warhol attempts to extend the reaches of the narratable/the unnarratable, introducing her own typology of further shades of disnarration: namely, the subnarratable, the supranarratable, the paranarratable, and the antinarratable. The main concern of the present article revolves around the first three, treated both in novelistic and cinematic media. Equivalent to Prince's 'non-narratable', the subnarratable include those events unworthy of being mentioned, or below the threshold of narrataibility. The supranarratable amounts to the ineffable, where language or visual images prove inadequate to represent certain events. The third category covers events defying and transgressing the generic conventions of a specific medium. McEwan's novel, and its cinematic adaptation, each concern themselves with the extent to which they can include or exclude, where inclusion, much in accordance with its politics of unresolved and in-between meaning, shows preference for textual dialogism or "the internally dialogic quality of discourse, and the phenomena related to it" (Bakhtin *DI* 269). Michell's work, on the other hand, bears witness to an enactment of the authoritative voice, either that of the protagonist or the cinematic license. Put simply, the monologic disposition dominant in the film resorts to little more than an exclusive line of action whence a series of events and description in the novel are all but denied a share in the adaptation and its mode of artistic expression.

Much akin to Bakhtin's ideas, Deleuze's dividing line between machines and mechanisms furthers the aforementioned different stances taken by the novel and the film, where dialogicity and open possibilities measure against the singular and already closed meaning, the latter symptomatic of another opposition in Deleuze's theoretical terminology, that of rhizomatic/arborescent. As he maintains, "multiplicities are rhizomatic, and expose arborescent pseudo-multiplicities for what they are" (Deleuze and Guattari 10). Lacking

an organizing center, a machine is no more than the connections and possibilities it forges; it is always already in becoming in relation to others. A discourse, in other words, can be outlined either in a relational and dialogic manner, fashioning its liminal and rhizomatic characteristic, or in a reduced and monlogic way already fashioned by conventions.

The present article seeks to show how differently the narrated events alluded to in McEwan's novel have been refashioned as the unnarratable in its cinematic adaptation by Roger Michell. Furthermore, it will be argued to what extent such politics of including/excluding are practiced, in order to highlight dialogicity or monologicity of meaning. To accomplish such an objective, the study will turn to Bakhtin's ideas on dialogism of discourse coupled with Deleuze's reflections on machines and mechanisms, maintaining that the unified resolution called for in the film bears little relation to the multiplicity of attitudes alluded to in the novel.

The subnarratable: trivial, but threatening enough

The novel seems to pivot on some essential, although centuries-old, questions about the origins of morality and love: did the balloon accident involve any immoral act? Whose love is more appealing by definition, Jed's attachment to Joe, or Joe's amorous feelings for Clarissa? Although such issues may appear to be appealing enough for readers, McEwan proves to effect an entrance into the sphere beyond an outward-facing novel of ideas. *Enduring Love*, in other words, espouses its dialogic attribute as much through learned controversies as through positive trivialities. The novel abounds with descriptions below the threshold, which, although supposedly hardly contributing to the plot and its knots, supply it with a complex approach toward any hidden truth. Espousing a rhizomatic perspective toward both the balloon accident and its border events, McEwan has furthered the cause of meaning as no more than liminal. As Deleuze and Gauatari put it, "the rhizome includes the best and the worst" (Deleuze and Gauatari, 7). Thus, the novel gives as much narrative credence to the outwardly unnarratable as to its leading questions. For Michell's adaptation, however, such references to the supernormal objects and events are more or less accounted for, no more than instances of subnarratable.

Among significant narrative parts of the novel sits Joe and Clarissa's romantic life. Having narrated the balloon accident, Joe talks about what happened on their way to that particular spot. Joe's journalistic obsession with the detailed survey of the phenomena, as the hallmark of his idiosyncratic narration, impregnates the supposedly trivial with a suggestive

side. Thus, the outwardly unworthy occasions preceding the core event assist the reader in unraveling Joe's personality intricacies. Thus, this doubled flashback bears witness to McEwan's insistence on staging the subtleties of their relationship. As a result, we see them talking about Clarissa's research on John Keats, posing the question: "Was it possible there were still three or four unpublished letters by Keats in existence? Might one of them be addressed to Fanny Brawne?" (McEwan *Enduring Love*, 1). The introduction of Keats into the story may work towards furthering the cause of the title, where the idealistically amorous relationship between Keats and Fanny Brawne plays the part of a foil for its precarious opposite number, that between Joe and Clarissa. In the cinematic adaptation, however, such telling pieces of the story are all but lacking. In other words, the camera narrator sees the more personal details in the novel to be quite unfit for the straightforward story of the film. To this directorial end, such nuanced references to Clarissa's professional life are found to be subnarratable, too trivial to be narrated. Even the things we are told about Clarissa are modified in favor of cinematic license, whence she is pictured as a sculptress instead of a literary researcher.

In the novel, after the narrator's helpless struggle to pinpoint the true sense of what had happened to a word (the aftermath and the furnace), McEwan opts for a flashback-like enumeration of the things preceding the accident, Joe and Clarissa's reunion after a separation of six weeks (McEwan *Enduring Love*, 1). Such a list of apparently unnecessary details could amount to a case of the subnarratable. Complementing Prince's idea of the 'non-narratable' or 'normal', Warhol finds such normal events as unworthy to be narrated, to remain behind the threshold of narratability, which goes without saying. In a manner quite as obsessive as the narrator's opening rephrase of the event, the picnic is related in an account teeming with details, such as, "a picnic whose centerpiece was a great ball of mozzarella which the assistant fished out of an earthenware vat with a wooden claw. I also bought black olives, mixed salad and focaccia" (McEwan *Enduring Love,* 1). Joe's insistence further highlights his narrative obsession with the discipline and order in which the fall (or, to voice a religious overtone for Jed, lapse) happened; so he supposedly fails to tell the necessary from the unnecessary.

A further significance of the subnarratable in the novel may lie in the connections which the living subjects establish regarding the trivialities surrounding them. Following such an approach toward consciousness, the narrative orientations in the text decide on a redefinition of consciousness in relation to possible attachments to non-realized objects. No sooner does