



Literary Studies

Cinematizing the Victorian Novel to Cinema “*Pride and Prejudice*”

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A B S T R A C T

Jane Austen’s novels and clever heroines and romantic interests have been adapted into movies and television shows for decades. This study explores a literary adaptation of Jane Austen’s novel entitled *Pride and Prejudice*, published in 1813. It was adapted to the screen by Joe Wright in 2005 and written by Deborah Moggach. We shall discuss how Joe Wright interpreted the setting and conflict. This research was conducted using the adaptation theory proposed by Linda Hutcheon. We argue that the movie interestingly altered the setting to show the characters’ romantic scenes and the major characters’ social economy level. The movie provides its audience transposition of major external and internal conflicts among the major characters. The movie has minimized the issues of social condition status and women’s roles in the Victorian era. Moreover, the film focuses on finding true love, the power of love, and the romantic scene. Joe Wright realistically maintains the struggle of romantic relationship between Darcy and Elizabeth and the beautiful landscape setting makes the audience feel it.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recently movies have developed substantially. In the mainstream of cinema, either telling or retelling stories are being converted from literary works. Adaptation of literary works has always been the interest in cinema studies. Hollywood and other film industries have provided their audience with both “the untouchable and “un-filmable” classical literary works, and some novels have interestingly refilmed (Welsh and Lev, 2007). Despite being fictional or a fictionalized version of true stories and real-life events, literature keeps track of what has happened, is, or will happen in many circumstances in human life and surrounding things. It is a universal knowledge that literature is regarded as the reflection of reality. Adaptation of literary works and their “fidelity” have become central issues and has attracted cinematic studies (Welsh and Lev, 2007). However, adaptations are also regarded as a strategy to expose the amazing of literary works to aggression (Carmell, 2012). Richard (2021) claims that “screen adaptation

can inspire spectators into a narrative world that sensually, intellectually, and imaginatively fulfills them.”

With the novel, authors share their imagination about something with the readers; they imagine the authors’ world by reading the novel. Through the characters, setting, plot, and conflict arranged by the author, people can imagine and visualize how the story in their minds. However, not all people like to read a novel with hundreds of pages. From that problem, filmmakers share the stories by adapting them into films. Some of the films are very successful, but some have been failures because the critics think the film has damaged the novel. The film adaptations themselves have thrived, and the people who see them give appreciation, and some have received awards.

By the twentieth-century film, industries have brought more canonical authors’ work to the screen. Among the earliest films were adaptations of literary works. In the year 1990, some titles such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*, *The*

Stoking Scene From “Naughty Anthony,” and a series of films entitled *Living Pictures* (1900) are described in the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) as “faithfully representing well-known art masterpieces (Cartmell, 2012:2).” Moreover, in the beginning, some critics have become concerned about “fidelity” in the adaptation of literary works because readers who knew the story and had some expectations become disappointed. McFarlane argues that “the insistence on fidelity has led to a suppression of potentially more rewarding approaches to the phenomenon of adaptation (1996, 10).” A visual experience of the spectators and how the novel’s narrative is adapted are parts of one of the attractions of adaptation study. Richard (2021) claims that “...the cinema of attractions resist might be marginalized for its apparent lack of narrative coherence or psychological depth...and he continues ... and its pointed ‘lack of interest’ in character and narrative development.”

Movie adaptation until now still becomes a popular product that is loved in the film world. Adaptation is changing to suit different conditions (according to Cambridge Dictionary). When a movie is adapted from a novel, changing from the condition in the novel into a film occurs. The novel is treated with different interpretations differently when adapted into a movie, especially if the novels are from the best seller novel, because the reader perceives the story. The moviemaker has challenges adapting the novel, how the works interpret the visual, change the narration into a dialogue. As Hutcheon says, every performance presented in the adaptation work must be dramatized because the description, narration, and represented thoughts must be transformed into speech, actions, sounds, and visual images (2006:40). As more and more novels have been adapted, film critics question the motivations of adapting a literary work into a film.

One good example of adaptation is the adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. *Pride and Prejudice* is a novel by Jane Austen published on January 28, 1813. The book has appeared as her masterpiece and is classified as a female literary canon because she introduces that women should have a choice. Similarly, as Tamir and Iman (2018) affirm, Gillian Flynn’s novels vividly describe that women can take the role of a dominant figure in a patriarchal society.

This novel tells a love story of a middle-upper-class British family in the late 19th century. The setting

of place in this story is a middle-upper class family that lives in England in the late 1700s-early 1800s. The actual dates are unclear. However, it recognizes that the movement takes a region a while at some point during the Napoleonic Wars (1797-1815) because Austen references soldiers and regiments. The cinematography and soundtrack of the movie are excellent for the younger generations. Holden (2005) affirms that Elizabeth (Keira Knightley) is not portrayed as a woman of the early Eighteenth century because she is a blatant and determined person. When literary reading works especially belong to the nineteenth-century era, a reader usually faces the typical stereotype of patriarchal gender roles. A woman is associated with femininity, and a man is associated with masculinity (Imelda and Iman, 2021).

This research is aimed to investigate how Joe Wright adapted the Victorian novel. In this study, the writers would like to analyze the setting of place and conflicts shown in the movie entitled “*Pride and Prejudice* movie 2005”. The reason for choosing *Pride and Prejudice* is that it has been regarded as a successful film and contains social class conflicts in the nineteenth-century era. Conflicts are elements of fiction that develop the story, so all great novels convey many conflicts categorized as leading and supporting generally. To make a new story, we assumed that in the process of adaptation Wright changed the setting, characters and the conflicts of the novel in order to give a dramatic and romantic effect. We want to explore how Wright portrays conflicts in society and in what ways the alterations to the story have been made.

The writers chose this novel and movie because it has many conflicts of Victorian era that make it a good story. Second, the setting is one of the parts of literary work with the background of Victorian era that is interesting when it is an adaptation into a movie; when reading a novel, people can imagine the setting of place based on the writer’s description. In a movie, people can see it based on the play director’s imagination, and in *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen did not put much detail about the place setting. It will be interesting to see how the movie shows the setting of the place and whether it will be given the same feeling as the novel. Hong (2013) mentions that the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie are focused on their figures and routines activities and how they go in and out through houses and gardens.

Furthermore, the movie version in 2005 is the most popular version of the *Pride and Prejudice* novel, and the movie got many awards. Therefore, in this work, the researcher is interested in conducting the study, which is the adaptation, becomes the topic of this study. Another reason to conduct this study is that the researchers know that the result of adaptation will be different from the original work; so many changes are influenced by factors that significantly change the place of setting and the conflicts, which will be discussed in this research.

The writers use the adaptation theory by Linda Hutcheon for this analysis. The adaptation is a formal entity or product, a process of creation, and a reception process; adaptation is formed intertextuality of literary work. Furthermore, adaptation as process and product is closer to the word's common usage and is broad enough to treat film and stage productions, musical arrangements, song covers, and visual art (Kinney, 9, 2013).

II. THEORY AND METHOD

Today, the study of film adaptation has expanded in many directions, and many scholars have focused on comparing literary works and completed films (Lev, 2007). When we discuss literary works, it can be seen in the world it is written and presented. In his book *Novel to Film*, Brian McFarlane (1996:201) invokes the analogy of close reading of literary texts for this kind of detailed examination of specific works. McFarlane (1996) asserts that in adaptation, a comparison is central. However, the comparison work should not ask about the fidelity of one piece to another, but it should be focused on the demeanor in which a text is changed, altered, or transformed.

Furthermore, he states that necessary alterations of English novels in the nineteenth-century focus on exposing instead of narrating the story. It demotes the intervention of the author's element. Elliot, quoted in Brosh (2008) mentions that film adaptations transposed the pictures of books and entwined its story.

Richard states that since 1907, the narrative of literary adaptations has become filmmakers' interest (2021). Pertiwi and Iman (2021) claim that a film director restructures and accentuates the crucial elements that he adapts to the screen adaptation. Vergara (2015) claims a bold production from an evident change of *Naked Lunch* that its adaptation by David Cronenberg left out some parts of the

novel, but he still kept the same essence. In the twentieth century, great movies were made. They were able to imitate and replicate historical events and dramatize different kinds of stories because filmmakers believe that every book is adaptable. Unavoidably, the naive spectator expects the truth and loyalty (Welsh, XX, 2007).

In conducting this study, the writers will apply the adaptation theory by Linda Hutcheon. In her book, Hutcheon (2006) claims that adaptation as a process and product is closer to the word's common usage and is broad enough to treat film and stage productions and musical arrangements and song covers as visual art. Each production of adaptations is made based on adapters' interests and reasons (Hutcheon, 2006). She defines five categories in analyzing a film adaptation (2006:33-158). The first element is 'what'; it refers to the adaptation and parts adapted from the book. Second, the 'who-why' element examines who the filmmaker is and why the filmmaker adapts it. The next element is 'how' it is adapted. The last ones are 'where-when' the novel was adapted. These elements are identified based on time and place. According to Hutcheon (2008, 173), adaptation "involves both memory and change, persistence and variation." In that case Austen's works are comprehensible; Austen herself would get surprised at the level of satire, romantic and erotic scenes of Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* films (Hopkin, 2012). Christopher Orr quoted by Dillanian (2018, 110), avows that "Within this critical context [i.e., of intertextuality], the issue is not whether the adapted film is faithful to its source, but rather how the choice of a specific source and how the approach to that source serves the film's ideology."

This study uses a qualitative research method. The study data are taken from comparing Jane Austen's novel and Joe Wright's film *Pride and Prejudice*. The writers will use the data and descriptively describe the analysis. Then the analysis will be elaborated by using John Gibbs' mise-en-scene approach. Gibbs (2002:1-2) says that mise-en-scene is "the content of frame and the way they are organized. "The frame content means how lighting, costume, decoration, properties, and the actors are in the screen. It means to analyze framing, camera movement, the particular lens employed, and other photographic decisions. Mise-en-scene can help the researchers to understand the film.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pride and Prejudice are one of the famous works of Jane Austen. The novel tells the love story between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth at the beginning of the 20th century. There are many adaptation versions of *Pride and Prejudice*, one of the famous versions is the movie adaptation with the same title, *Pride and Prejudice* 2005. This movie version becomes one of the best versions because the movie is based on Austen's original story and setting in the novel. It has been regarded that Wright's work created a hybrid heritage film genre. It received four nominations at the 78th Academy Awards. *Pride and Prejudice* 2005, the film shows the setting of place in a good view in early 20th-century style, even a bit with the narration from the novel.

Nevertheless, the movie's conflicts still portray the issues portrayed in the novel and the social condition in the early 20th of England. Joe Wright focuses on the interaction between the major characters and their love story. The conflicts arise because of the differences in their status.

The Analysis of Setting of *Pride and Prejudice* Movie

The fictional elements significantly contribute to analyzing the setting of place and conflicts in *Pride and Prejudice* novel and its adaptation. Analyzing the setting cannot be a part of the characters' movements. Setting symbolizes and highlights the evolution of the main characters' relationship. Characters are essential because the character is part that makes the story as a whole. One particular character is typically the central focus of the story, or as the protagonist character and character that opposes with protagonist are the stories convincing and exciting.

Overall, there are twenty-nine characters in the novel and twenty-one in its movie adaptation in 2005. However, there are only four major characters in this study: Elizabeth Bennet, Mr. Darcy, Jane Bennet, and Lydia Bennet. Although the novel is portrayed from an unspecified female perspective, in this case, the spectator receives a fair portrayal of events from Austen's narrator in the movie. Therefore, throughout the entire performance Keira Nightley who played Elizabeth, significantly becomes the focus, and her feminist characteristic is less dominant than other female characters. Joe Wright did create a new Mr. Darcy because he still appears as an arrogant hero of England's upper

class, Pemberley in Derbyshire. In addition, he is a proud and romantic man influenced by his class expectations.

According to Klarer, setting "denotes the location, historical period, and social surrounding in which the action of text develops" (2004:24). *Pride and Prejudice* novel and its movie in 2005 provide some settings to develop the characters and its narrative. The portrayal of the setting is one of the crucial components to utilize the story's subject. The setting in this movie substantially influences the theme and its narrative. *Pride and Prejudice* is a romance, and the novel is set in Hertfordshire, located to the North of Greater London. Austen shows twelve settings of place: Longbourne, Lucas Lodge, Meryton, Netherfield's, Pemberley, Rosings, London, Kent, Hunsford, Derbyshire, Hertfordshire, and Lambton. In the film, there are nine prominent settings: Longbourne, Meryton, Netherfield's, Pemberley, Rosings, Kent, Hunsford, Derbyshire, and Lambton.

Wright changed the setting where the scenes take place and the conflicts to give his audience a dramatic and romantic effect on the novel. These four scenes take place in Longbourn but in the movie. The landscapes and the views nicely support critical scenes of the class's status conflicts. It starts with the Bennet house, which represents a middle-economy class home. Next is Netherfield's, where Mr. Bingley lives, who has a higher rank than Bennet. Then the movie shows Rosings, the place of Lady Cathrine with a higher-economy level, and strengthens her class status. The last is Pemberley, which envisages the highest level economy in that story that belongs to Mr. Darcy. Overall, the movie shows the novel's beauty and makes the Victorian era's mood seems realistic.

The following are three critical scenes that support Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth's romance. Wright dramatizes the moment the interaction between Elizabeth and Mr. Wickham (a soldier), the conversation between Elizabeth and Mr. Wickham, and The meeting of Mr. Darcy and Mr. Wickham. The movie has shown an alteration regarding the setting where the meeting of Mr. Darcy and Mr. Wickham and Elizabeth and Mr. Wickham's conversation occur. The following setting is in Kent. Kent is a county where Lady Catherine's place (Mr. Darcy's Aunt) is Rosings. Her place is near Mr. Collins' house. In Kent, Wright pictures three crucial scenes. First is the location of Colonel

Fitzwilliam's conversation with Elizabeth. The second is the first marriage proposal of Mr. Darcy to Elizabeth, and the last is the scene when Mr. Darcy gives a letter to Elizabeth. The last setting in the novel that has crucial issues is Pemberley because the unpredictable meeting of Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth happens there.

In brief, the movie provides the audience with scenic and cloudy rural England. The changes in setting aim to picture the mood of Austen's story, and Wright successfully gives the dynamic scenes. A few places in the book are not in the film, but its alterations or the missing scenes affect the story. We claim that Wright stunningly brought the artistic image of the English landscape mood, and he remained to keep the truth of narrative and characters.

Conflicts of *Pride and Prejudice* Movie

In this part, the writer will analyze the conflicts in *Pride and Prejudice*, directed by Joe Wright (2005). The major conflicts in the novel are portrayed in the film, but Wright emphasized his screen to bring his audience to focus on love and choosing a marriage partner. The movie highlights the conflicts and provides the audience with conflicts of a social status gap in Austen's novel. One of the conflicts that go along with social status is inheritance. The audience learns that the Bennets family's inheritance is not given to Mr. Bennet's daughters but to his nephew. It creates an external conflict among the Bennets because the inheritance of Elizabeth's father is given to her cousin, Mr. Collins. The problem gets heated because Elizabeth refuses Mr. Collins' marriage proposal. It makes Mrs. Bennet angry with Elizabeth and asks her to accept Mr. Collins' proposal to save her daughter from poverty with no property. Elizabeth believes in true love and stands out with her decision. Thus, this conflict ends with the wedding of Mr. Collins and her friend Miss. Lucas. However, in the film, the marriage procession of Mr. Collins and Lady Lucas is not visualized.

The next conflict is between the minor characters, Mr. Bingley and Jane. Their first encounter is at a ball; it makes their relationship closer. The hesitance of Mr. Bingley about Jane's feelings, fueled by the prejudice of Mr. Bingley's sisters and his friend, Mr. Darcy, pushes Mr. Bingley to leave Netherfield's without saying anything to Jane. Later, Mr. Darcy confesses to Elizabeth that he interfered because he does not know that Jane has a

feeling for Mr. Bingley.

We argue that the characters' movements from one place to another in the movie have illuminated Wright's attempt to portray more realistic problems between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet due to the gap in their social status. The love story between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet is described in England sooner or later in the exceptionally late 1700s-mid 1800s. The specific dates are hazy; however, we assume the activity happened sometime during the Napoleonic Wars (1797-1815) because Austen references the male characters belong to the army and regiments. The romance of Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy has some obstacles because they come from different social classes. The scene at the Meryton assembly is the alteration to the story is clearly portrayed. The assembly is in a very dark mood and gives the site a gothic feel. It emphasizes Elizabeth's struggles to get the man that she loves.

This movie shows the resistance of Mr. Darcy's aunt to the relationship between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth. Elizabeth's social status is lower than Mr. Darcy's, and it is also a consideration for the first for Mr. Darcy before proposing to Elizabeth. The film's story ends by showing the power of Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth's love, making them together without thinking about their social status. Three prominent scenes symbolize and strengthen the hate and love relationship- Netherfield Park, Rosings, and Pemberley. Wright's camera angle of the balcony shows the audience Pemberley's beautiful view and the romantic and unexpected meeting of Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth. Wright shows an extraordinarily proud and prejudiced man from the beginning of the scenes but rather as a romantic figure and has his human side. In comparison, Elizabeth is not much different because she has a different opinion of men than her sisters and society. In the film's visualization, several backgrounds experience shrinking or cutting. It means that some settings in the novel are not shown in the film. In addition, there are additional settings portrayed in the film, and these settings do not exist in the novel. Here, the writer focused on several places in the novel that use the story's critical scenes and differences from the movie.

Longbourn becomes the first place that shows in the novel. Longbourn becomes the start place of the story and the end of the story. The movie portrays Longbourn as incomplete in detail which is not novel. There are four critical scenes in Longbourn:

the marriage proposal from Mr. Collins to Elizabeth, Mr. Bingley's marriage proposal to Jane, the marriage proposal of Mr. Darcy to Elizabeth, and the last when Lady Catherine visits Elizabeth.

We assert that their love problems become the cores of external and internal conflicts in the movie. Wright gives the audience a glance at the conflict between Jane and Mr. Bingley. It develops Elizabeth's confidence and negative image of Mr. Darcy, making her feel very upset and sad. Only four scenes show the togetherness between Mr. Bingley and Jane, and every scene apparently influences Elizabeth's love journey. The conflicts between Jane and Mr. Bingley and the relationship between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth are twined nicely by Wright. The writers believe both external and internal conflicts happen to complete the love story between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth.

Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth give the audience the realm of how the social status gap and their feelings for each other lead to external and internal conflict. However, the dialogues used in the movie are shortened. The audience witnesses their pride and prejudices affect their relationships. They are trapped in their misunderstanding. When it reaches the climax of their relationship, Wright gives his audience the mood of romantic feeling and a happy ending with a beautiful view of the landscape.

The last conflict and the denouement in the novel happen between Lydia and Mr. Wickham. Lydia's trouble starts when Jane is attracted to Bingley. Their conflict becomes a sign of the end conflicts in this novel. That happens because, from Lydia's case, Elizabeth learns that Lydia's problem is solved with the help of Mr. Darcy, and she feels grateful for his kindness. Her judgments fool her. Unlike the novel, the movie does not show the detail of Lydia and Mr. Wickham's problem. The movie shows when Elizabeth receives a letter from Jane, and she reads it. The scene turns to Lydia's returning home with Mr. Wickham after getting married.

Before the story ends, the conflict is focused on a bit problem from Mr. Darcy's aunt, Lady Catherine. She visits and warns Elizabeth that she disapproves of Elizabeth's interest in marrying her nephew, Mr. Darcy. The movie shows this scene, but it is shorter than the novel's narration.

In brief, the conflicts shown in the movie are almost similar to the novel. However, the images for the

setting of the conflicts have been changed. The movie changed the story's focus to the love story between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth. Four conflicts exist in the film; three are external conflicts, and one is internal. The conflicts in the movie are shot successfully by Wright and make audiences feel the realm of the characters' feelings and problems. The story has a happy ending, and all problems are solved; the main characters of the story get their happiness. Wright exposes the female characters with their feminine vulnerability and becomes the subjects of patriarchal values, class status, pride, and arrogance. On the other hand, he keeps the male characters' masculinity and their pride and wealth.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on research and discussion of the changes in the setting of place and conflict in *Pride and Prejudice* movie adaptation 2005, the writer finds differences and additions between *Pride and Prejudice's* novel and its movie adaptation. Wright has altered the setting of the place of some scenes. The scene of Mr. Collins's marriage proposal to Elizabeth is changed from after the breakfast to during the breakfast. It highlights the domestic atmosphere of the life of the Bennets. The marriage proposal from Mr. Darcy to Elizabeth is changed from Mr. Collins's house into a park in Rosings. The conversation with Mr. Bennet and Elizabeth about Elizabeth's refusal of Mr. Collins is set in front of a lake in the movie. The meeting of Mr. Wickham and Elizabeth in the novel happens in front of a grocery. Both places put the audience to explore their daily commonplace.

Furthermore, Wright sets the meeting of Mr. Wickham and Mr. Darcy from the street in Meryton to become a road by the river. The conversation between Mr. Wickham and Elizabeth changed from the ball into a tree by the river. It gives a view of the rural landscape. The conversation of Colonel Fitzwilliam with Elizabeth takes place in the church, and it gives a more picture of their daily life. The letter giving scene from Mr. Darcy to Elizabeth and the last is the meeting of Mr. Darcy in Elizabeth in Pemberley that moved to the balcony have shown their manners and quality living characters. We believe that the changes Wright created had turned his film into a much better adaptation than considering his presentation to be faithful to Austen's Victorian atmosphere.

The adaptation of the setting can give a satisfying picture to its audience. Changing and cutting the irrelevant setting from Austen's novel, Wright endows his film with a sense of reality. Wright also added a more romantic and dramatic atmosphere to the romance. The indication of these two changes made the movie have dramatization scenes in its adaptation. The writers argue that Joe Wright gives an excellent image to people who did not know the novel before. In the end, the people who read the novel first will feel satisfied when they watch this adaptation version. All changes in the movie are happening because of the limit of time. Its limitation and the way the story is presented affect the presence of the adaptation work of *Pride and Prejudice*. The cinematizing of the book presents the truth of Austen's work.

Understandably, Joe Wright's version of *Pride and Prejudice* is not as faithful as the BBC's miniseries. Šustková (2014) asserts that the movie portrays a romantic fairy-tale and captivating Austen modern World. After examining Charles Dickens' adaptation, Tchapanian proposes an idea to attract a contemporary audience; the filmmaker should be allowed to do what he likes to create and not depend on the author's task (2018). Equally, the adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* has been modified. On the whole, the changes of the conflicts in the story have a few changes from the main conflicts movie, but it has different themes. The conflict focuses on Elizabeth's love story with Mr. Darcy, and the other conflicts are only shown briefly. Finally, Wright successfully exposes the romantic conflict of the Victorian era to capture the young generation's interest.

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