Tending to the Endings.

BA Thesis English Language and Culture, Utrecht University.

Remus Thijssen, 5699843.

Supervised by David Pascoe.

June 2019.

Abstract

In this thesis the question of how two film versions of *Great Expectations* alter the plot of the novel to adapt it to the film medium. Beginnings and endings being the most important points for the plot, they will be the focus of my analyses. It will be shown that the films apparent fidelity to the original is only retained up until the ending, where the most significant differences become clear.

Table of contents:

Title……………………………………………………………...3

Chapter I……………………………………………………….4

Chapter II………………………………………………………8

Chapter III……………………………………………………..10

Chapter IV……………………………………………………..16

Chapter V……………………………………………………...20

Works Cited…………………………………………………24

Tending to the Endings

Comparing two film adaptations of Dickens' *Great Expectations*

The multiple endings of Dickens' *Great Expectations* have always been and probably shall always be a bottomless well of criticism and speculation. Unsurprisingly, both film adaptations that will be considered in this thesis opt out of taking a position on the question of which of Dickens' endings is better, coming up with their own. This may be an equally dangerous endeavour, but let us begin by looking at another ending of sorts from the novel which both films have entirely omitted, Pip's departure for Egypt, where he remains for eleven years. Despite its glaring absence from both films, Pip's "self-imposed exile" (31), as Jerome Meckier calls it, is quite relevant to the story's resolution. In a way, it is the enactment of Pip's penitence, in another it is the end his whole journey has been in service of. Daniel Cottom writes that, when Pip returns from the East, "the narrative develops its evolutionary form while diverting readers from this end, drawing them back into questions about origins" (104). The end in the east is the end that is furthest from the beginning, both physically and figuratively. It is where Pip becomes an independent middle-class tradesman. In this thesis we shall ask how two film adaptations alter the complex plot of *Great Expectations* to fit it to the silver screen, namely David Lean's adaptation from 1946 and Mike Newells' from 2012. We shall do this by looking primarily at beginnings and endings.

I

“(The) small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and starting to cry.” (*GE,* 10). Thus reads the first proper description of Pip in *Great Expectations*, immediately followed by the convict’s “Hold your noise! Keep still you little devil or I’ll cut your throat”. Dickens’ introduction of his main protagonist could scarcely show us a more pitiful child. As the convict is prowling about, Pip has just been struck with the realisation that his parents are dead, and loneliness abounds before fear takes over.

Both Lean and Newell open on a long-shot of the marshes showing Pip running to the churchyard. This scene being absent in the novel, it was a decision from the directors as a way to situate the viewer in Pip’s marsh country. A sense of loneliness is sure to follow from the vast, wet and dreary images. Lean’s shot of Pip running on a dyke is accompanied by foreboding, hand-painted clouds (Marsh, 10). There is a departure from the novel, however, in introducing to us a running Pip, rather than a “bundle of shivers”. How does Pip’s movement impact our first impression of his character?

It lessens our initial sense of Pip as a passive figure. In both instances he is shown running towards the camera, approaching us. Dickens’ dehumanization of Pip as a “bundle”, a static object with the agency of a tombstone, is the inverse of this image. In Lean’s adaptation the shot of the marshes is preceded by a shot of the novel in print, accompanied by its first sentences in the voice of John Mills as adult Pip. Then, before introducing the shot of the marshes, the howling wind is heard and

seen turning the pages. This simple but cunning segue from one medium to another emphasises the demands of film adaptation.

Anthony Wager, playing the part of young Pip in Lean's film, looks like an intruder as he enters the churchyard. He climbs over the wall carefully looking around him, besides emphasising the scene's eerie atmosphere, again indicating a less passive Pip. The shot also helps make a transition from the wide-open marshes to the close confines of the churchyard. The cemetery's haunting qualities were mostly achieved through trick perspective. Pieces like the church and the nightmarish trees were hand-crafted, only through foreshortening with a special lens could they attain their remarkable presence. Although set designer John Bryan's innovations were partly due to budgetary limitations, they undeniably comply to the novel's demand described by Joss Marsh of painting a "hyper-real" image that puts "ordinary people into a fairy tale story and background" (Marsh, 10).

Arguably, the film elevates the churchyard's role in the story. According to Harry Stone, Pip "falls under his spell" when he meets Magwitch, and submits to it.

> [A] submission accompanied by ritualistic portents. The moment of yielding occurs at the instant Magwitch upends Pip—Magwitch's hypnotic eyes bore "powerfully down" into Pip's, while Pip's innocent eyes look "most helplessly" up into the convict's. In this fateful instant of weakness, Pip yields himself to evil, a yielding marked by a magical meeting of the eyes, the first of many similar looks (324).

In the film, rather than an instant of weakness, Pip's entering the churchyard is an act of bravery. Pip seems half-aware of the danger lying behind the churchyard walls, but in spite of his fear he resolves to go on. When the scene's atmosphere intensifies, he falters, and tries to make a run for the marshes only to be stopped in his tracks by Magwitch. However briefly, Lean's Pip struggles against the convict but he has no choice but to submit in the face of his strength. However, it was the churchyard's apparent reaction to Pip's presence, the howling wind and creaking trees urging him to turn back, that terrified the boy most. Magwitch's sudden appearance only fulfils the threats conveyed by the hostile environment.

Thus the scenes haunting qualitiy that in the novel emanates from Magwitch rough handling of Pip and his horrific threats of cannibalism, is instead achieved by the set, the churchyard itself. After repeating Magwitch's oath as in the novel, the churchyard trips Pip up and spits him out with a last loud gush of wind, urging the fulfilment of his promise. One could find many wider implications from these alterations, but I would argue that they mostly indicate an effort from the filmmakers to visualise Pip's terror. Lean wanted to create "the world as it seemed to Pip when his imagination was distorted with fear." He said: "that, after all, was what Dickens himself did." (Marsh, 10, citing Lean himself from Brownlow's biography) The filmmakers have relied on the strengths of their medium in achieving this. Pip's fear, however, is in one instance overcome, and putting him to flight in another, but never immobilizing or moving him to tears, indicating the more far-reaching alteration to Pip's character in Lean's film which will be discussed.

Toby Irvine playing Pip in Mike Newell's adaptation makes a different impression. With the acclaim of Lean's film, we may note that Newell's version is an

adaptation of both the novel and the previous film. The opening shot of the running boy, for example, is a que taken from Lean. Only this time the shot is preceded by a number of shots of the marshes: close-ups of some wet and windswept vegetation; cattle; a dim sun growing dimmer; and finally the foreboding of the hulks looming in the distance. Pip, this time, is entirely unaware of what is to come. Comparatively, the churchyard seems more welcoming, Pip calmly approaches his parents' tombstone and starts cleaning out the moss growing in the inscription of his mother's name with a twig. This clever detail serves a purpose; to an informed reader, it evokes Dickens' rendering of Pip's introduction, occurring "in the act of trying to read." (Byrd, 259) Max Byrd wrote on the great importance of reading in *Great Expectations*: "In *Great Expectations* the dimensions of education are reduced to a single theme, that of learning to read, but the astonishing pervasiveness of that theme carries it far into the heart of the novel." In the novel, Pip's initial illiteracy has his imagination go awry with the names of his parents and brothers. In Newell's film, Pip's occupation with the inscription of his mother's name allows Magwitch to creep up from behind.

The convict's appearance which follows is significantly more violent than Lean's version. Ralph Fiennes as Magwitch throws Pip on the ground and picks him up by his feet to upend him and squeezes and pulls on Pip's cheeks as he says he might eat them. Throughout the scene his face is rarely more than a few centimetres removed from Pip's face. Newell's version of the novel's first action is more faithful to the original than Lean's. Pip's terror, like in the novel, is to come from the convict. Indicating that Pip will be punished for his compliance, a gibbet is placed directly above Pip's head. Instead of meaningfully glancing backwards at the convict, he

slows down to look at the horrible instrument of punishment above him. This indicates the film's shifted emphasis on Pip's education and its harsh nature, and the themes of crime and punishment that will be meted out on Magwitch, Miss Havisham and Pip.

II

Before moving on, a brief exploration of the themes or genres frequently attributed to *Great Expectations* relevant to the two film adaptations will be allowed here. Most important to Lean's adaptation, there are the pervasive, yet ambiguous, fairy-tale motifs, explained in great depth in Harry Stone's book *Dickens and the Invisible World*. Fairy-tales are imaginative stories that occur in a world of fantasy, usually featuring a child as their protagonist. They are meant for children, often involving some moral lesson for them to remember. According to Harry Stone they were very important to Dickens, for him "all fairy stories stood for the saving grace of childhood imagination and childhood escape, and in larger perspective, for the saving power of all imagination and art" (10). Examples of fairy themes prevalent in the novel are enchantment, fairy godmothers and witches. But, as Stone writes, "*Great Expectations* is an exceedingly subtle fairy story: things are rarely what they seem; values, identities, and relationships are hidden or reversed" (309). Lean's

adaptation, as will be shown, is a less subtle fairy story, with a more conventional protagonist.

Secondly, there is the tricky designation of the bildungsroman, or *Bildungsroman*, a significant distinction according to John R. Maynard. The German term was originally applied to a novel by Goethe: *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre*, and for some this remains the only true *Bildungsroman*. But as the term became more widely used in other languages such as English, the bildungsroman became "the lead term to describe a larger and larger class of the novel" (Maynard, 280). According to Maynard, it is currently a portmanteau term (281), meaning that many different Victorian novels can bear to be called a bildungsroman in its "Englished" use. Consequently, it will not suffice to simply assert that *Great Expectations* is a bildungsroman, but it is an exemplary one. What Maynard calls the "lowest common denominator" (281) for a bildungsroman is "something about youth growing up and coming of age" (281). Pip, like Goethe's Wilhelm, is made to grow up among the upper-class, despite his humble origins. Maynard writes: "Pip of *Great Expectations* is an allegory not just of the rising bourgeoisie, even out of working-class origins, but of the conflict of values in his changing society. […] Like the society itself, he embodies contradictory impulses to move up in class to great expectations and also to be loyal to the world of working class, petty bourgeois, or convict abject" (288). Pip's story is not just about his development, but as importantly about the developments of Victorian society that occupied Dickens. Robin Gilmour writes: "Dickens could write *Great Expectations* because he was so deeply involved in the process of social evolution which lies at the heart of the novel" (Gilmour, 577). To use some of the narrower terms Maynard lists for the bildungsroman, whereas is in some

way each of them applies to the original, it is primarily a novel of development and one of socialization, while in Newell's film the story becomes one of youth, adolescence and initiation. Although Newell emphasises the novel's bildungsroman aspects in a broad sense, their specific significance is changed.

III

Throughout the novel there is an emphasis on the virtue of being what one seems to be, the lowest are the impostors like Pumblechook and forgers like Compeyson, while good people like Biddy are "never insulting, or capricious, or Biddy to-day and somebody else tomorrow". (*GE,* 103) Daniel Cottom's reading is similar to Maynard's, focusing on Pip as a symbol of the rise of the middle class. At one point, he mentions *Great Expectations* being a middle-class novel, and that "In such novels, the opposite of mastery is not servility but plagiarism" (107). Pip's journey is one that leads him, from an ill-conceived need to become something he is not, towards a mastery of his destiny. Cottom writes "Like all snakes, Sirens, and seeming dead ends that test the values of characters in literary works, the errancy Pip experiences outlines a road of truth" (103).

This journey begins at Satis. It is there that he is first infected with a sense of lack, and the desire to become a gentleman and to be betrothed to Estella starts to form. Moreover, it is through his newfound discontent that Pip starts to deviate

morally, with the lies he tells his family when he comes back from Satis. His justification for these lies is very telling: "I entertained an impression that there would be something coarse and treacherous in dragging her (Ms. Havisham) as she really was before the contemplation of Mrs. Joe." (*GE,* 56) Pip's values are inverted, his lies are a consequence of Miss Havisham's directness, with a question like "You are not afraid of a woman who has never seen the sun since you were born?" (*GE,* 50) she has the upper hand, presenting herself as she is makes her a master of her situation. Pip's response does the opposite: "I regret to state that I was not afraid of telling the enormous lie comprehended in the answer 'No.'" This first interaction between Miss Havisham and Pip seals their bond, he remains under her spell as long as his desire for Estella lasts, as long as he can deceive himself, and Satis House does not repulse him as it should.

The films struggle to emphasise the manor's otherworldliness as experienced by Pip; the language describing his inner fancies and sensations may have been too subtle for the films to adapt. When he was first let through the gate for example, he felt that "[t]he cold wind seemed to blow colder here, than outside the gate; and it made a shrill noise in howling in and out at the open sides of the brewery, like the noise of wind in the rigging of a ship at sea" (*GE,* 48), wonderfully conveying a sudden sense of isolation and transgression and simultaneously evoking the lonely convict in the hulks. One of the first things one realises, seeing Satis appear on screen, is the inescapable immediacy that it must be presented with. The place cannot be drawn as slowly as Dickens did, so the directors will opt for more of a shock-and-awe approach, introducing Miss Havisham in the midst of her decay.

The roles of Martita Hunt and Jean Simmons, playing Miss Havisham and young Estella respectively in Lean's film, made a lasting impression. Particularly Jean Simmons as Estella, who has been said to have usurped the role to the point where it eclipsed Valerie Hobson's demure, grown-up Estella (Marsh, 214). Regina Barreca argues that Lean's film "completely reversed the thrust of Dickens' story" (39) by making the relationship between Estella and Miss Havisham "the most interesting relationship" (ibid.). While many will disagree with the extent to which she proposes this changed emphasis dominates the entire film, I would definitely agree that the first scenes at Satis are some of the most memorable scenes, which seems to be the main reason for her argument. The domination of these scenes by the two women conveys the position of Miss Havisham in her domain.

The absence of first-person narration required visual representations of Pip's state of mind. Brian McFarlane mentions "subjective camera-work that compels us to share Pip's literal – and, by extension, metaphorical – point of view" (157). For example, in the shot right before Pip enters Miss Havisham's room, Estella leaves Pip for him to go in alone. The camera follows Estella holding her candle, and as she disappears the end of the hallway is illuminated far brighter than the candle would. This emphasises Estella's role in Pip's subjective experience of Satis. Barreca writes: "[s]he is the artificial light of the cloistered, nightmare environment created by Miss Havisham. […] She is the go-between in these scenes, conveying Pip from the real world to a world created by obsession and madness" (42). Barreca argues that Miss Havisham and Estella are sirens, but perhaps a better way to look at it would be to say that Miss Havisham is a siren, and Estella is both her song and deceptive beauty.

Most of these alterations, like in the graveyard scene, are consequences of the exigencies of film adaptation; the question remains if we can observe more significant departures from the original. Pip's uncommon bravery is best depicted in the scene where Estella tests her effect on Pip before delivering him to her mistress. When she asks: "Why don't you cry again you little wretch?" he declares: "I'll never cry for you again!" (28:00). The dialogue is identical to the novel's, but the difference here again lies in the absence of Pip's first-person narration, adding: "[w]hich was, I suppose, as false a declaration as ever was made; for I was inwardly crying for her then" (*GE*, 68). In the film, although the scene's composition has Estella standing above him on a staircase, he defies her by looking her straight in the eyes for this line, abruptly ending the conversation.

This brings us to Pip's reward for defeating Herbert: kissing Estella on the cheek. Once again, Lean's insistence on fidelity to the source material is clear. Apart from what the narrator recalls ("I felt that the kiss was given to the coarse common boy as a piece of money might have been, and that it was worth nothing" [*GE*, 75]), Lean reproduces the scene exactly as it is described. Yet the absence of Pip's reservation regarding the value of his reward changes the entire scene's significance. Particularly regarding our impression of Estella. Contrary to the original, we know exactly what Estella is rewarding Pip for, as we have seen her looking at Herbert and him. Her sudden change in attitude may never have been the most compelling mystery. Nevertheless, showing us her reaction first-hand and giving the audience a leg-up on Pip information-wise is a significant change. The scene may in both instances grant Estella a touch of life, a brief instant in which she is acting independently of Miss Havisham on behalf of Pip. The difference is that in the novel,

Pip does not believe that she is sincere, while in the film it seems like she is, and it does not matter what Pip thinks because we have no way to know. Estella's role in the film comes to a very different conclusion, and Barreca suggests that the aspect of her that is trapped and waiting to be released, is emphasised, she writes: "Repeatedly, we see the young Estella behind bars, boxed in by windows, behind enormous gates. She is like a bird trapped in a cage, imprisoned by her adoptive parent" (41). This scene is a good example of this, standing at the window she is separated from the two boys by a row of thick iron bars.

Finally, the last childhood scene at Satis House does not have Joe coming over to receive Pip's indentures, instead Miss Havisham hands Pip a pouch of "golden sovereigns" to do with what he pleases (37:00). Contrary to the novel, it seems as though Miss Havisham regrets having to see Pip leave. In the novel, as Jerome Meckier notes: "[n]ow that Estella has completed what may be considered her apprenticeship, Miss Havisham seems anxious to dispense with Pip." (102-3) The idea of Pip as a subject for Estella to practice at breaking the hearts of men seems less acceptable in the film. Following the scene where Pip receives his financial reward, he says goodbye to Estella in a short conversation original to Lean's adaptation.

Estella: You'd better say goodbye to me because I'm going away too

Pip: Going away?

Estella: Yes. I'm going to France to be educated for a lady.

Pip: Educated for a lady?

Estella: Yes. — Well? Aren't you sorry I'm going?

Pip: Yes, Estella. I'm very sorry. I wish I knew when you were coming back. I wish…

Estella: What do you wish?

Pip: I wish I could kiss you goodbye.

Estella turns cheek, Pip kisses it, Strings swell on soundtrack as they descend (38:00).

This scene is far more explicit in giving the audience hope for a bright future for the children than the novel.

Similarly to Lean's, the alterations in Newell's adaptation are also centred around Estella, but they are taken a step further. In Newell's film the children get along so well that Miss Havisham needs to intervene. Catching sight of Estella teaching Pip to dance, she knows that her scheme is souring, and that she must get rid of the boy at once. Thus we might say that both films have demystified Pip's love for Estella by making her reciprocate his affection to varying degrees. Instead of having a childish, fairy tale dream repressing a nightmarish reality within Pip, the films sketch a simple opposition between Pip's natural and reciprocated desire and Miss Havisham's evil plan. This is more obvious in Newell's film, to the point where the opposition is no longer between Miss Havisham and Pip alone, but involves Estella silently on the side of Pip, which is conveyed by a series of meaningful looks filled with contempt and concern as Estella observes Miss Havisham and Pip, respectively. This in fact elevates Estella's position in the contest to that of a kind of arbiter, protecting Pip while not betraying Miss Havisham.

IV

Miss Havisham's quest for revenge, is resolved through her demise. Not unlike another death in *Great Expectations,* Miss Havisham's consumption by fire is accompanied by a redemption of sorts. None doubt the sincerity of her repentance after the incessant repetitions of "What have I done!" (*GE* 297, 298, 300). Pip observes a "phantom air of something that had been and was changed" (*GE*, 300) in Miss Havisham, lying on the table as she said she would. The new plot she then desires is an inversion of her old plot, in her death she is looking to the past, when she refers to the first time Estella came to Satis.

Miss Havisham's about-face is caused by Pip, in her supplications for forgiveness she falls into a bit of exposition; "Until you spoke to her the other day, and until I saw in you a looking glass that showed me what I once felt myself, I did not know what I had done. What have I done! What have I done!" (*GE,* 298). Pip's speech to Estella is where Miss Havisham experiences first hand that observing the same slight she suffered in others only causes her more suffering. But the movement towards this begins even sooner, when Miss Havisham is confronted with Estella's heartlessness. Thus the resolution of this plot is in three parts which can be summarized as Miss Havisham's disappointment, in seeing what a heartless creature Estella has become. Followed by Miss Havisham's revelation, seeing herself reflected in Pip, her victim, and finally resolved in Miss Havisham's transformation by fire. Returning to Brooks' article on the significance of plot, he writes of the end "as that moment which illuminates, and casts retrospective meaning on the middle, and indeed defines the beginning as a certain desire tending toward the end. If the promised end may once have offered an arrest of time in the timeless, in a secularized world the resonance of the end has increasingly become the anticipated

echo of the individual human death" (504). How does Miss Havisham's death resonate through the plot? How is the retrospective meaning cast by her demise wrought on Pip's memoir? As noted earlier, Pip's journey leads him eventually to a mastery of his destiny in acquiescence to the life of a respectable middle-class tradesman. Read as the allegory of a nation's transformation, Miss Havisham used to be the alienation of the higher classes from the lower, her boastful directness created the desire in Pip to belong to her caste. Perhaps the desire tending toward the end is best illustrated in Pip's hallucinatory visions of Miss Havisham hanging from a beam in her brewery. Right before the end this vision reoccurs, and it has been interpreted as Pip's subconscious hatred of Miss Havisham, even read as making him blame himself for her death (Moynahan, 662). But in the imagery of Miss Havisham's death there is a suggestion of Pip and her both stepping down from their upper-class positions.

> In the same moment I saw her running at me, shrieking, with a whirl of fire blazing all about her, and soaring at least as many feet above her head as she was high. I had a double-caped great-coat on, and over my arm another thick coat. That I got them off, closed with her, threw her down, and got them over her; (…) I knew through the result, but not through anything I felt, or thought, or knew I did (299-300).

The thoughtless sacrifice of Pip's rich apparel, Miss Havisham's running towards him, and his throwing her down on the ground all imply a breaching of boundaries between the two, a relinquishment of pride and property. Miss Havisham gave Pip

her ivory tablets mounted in tarnished gold (*GE*, 296), but their value no longer lies in their material for either Miss Havisham or Pip, but only in their contents. Although intended for a friend, their content still means wealth to Pip, because his journey is not yet completed. For Miss Havisham, all that matters are the words "I forgive her" to be written under her name, something Pip expresses willingness to do but may or may not have done. Pip seems to obscure some particulars surrounding their final interview, omitting an account of its ending by substituting "No matter with what other words we parted; we parted" (*GE*, 299). Jerome Meckier writes of Pip's following hallucination "This is not an accurate premonition but it could be a subconscious wish that presages his false fairygodmother's demise. It may also symbolise the inherently self-destructive outcome of revenge schemes" (44). In fact the end of Miss Havisham that Pip sees is in many ways the opposite of the end that occurs. Sanctioned, by Pip or by herself, instead of accidental; freezing instead of burning and repressive instead of expressive. Barreca writes "her ultimate consumption by fire seems to indicate an outward movement of the anger and rage she has internalized for so long; it is as if, confronting her own power, she is consumed by it" (44).

David Lean opted for an emphasis on Pip's guilt. Omitting the hallucinations, there is no premonition of Miss Havisham's death. Instead Pip's hand in it is far more immediate: as he slams the door a coal is dislodged from the hearth, rolling onto Miss Havisham's dress and setting her ablaze. Whereas in the novel, Pip's guilt is merely a sensation, something he feels through the power of his subconscious wish, in Lean's adaptation it is reality. Rather than a painful reconciliation, Miss Havisham's final scene is a humiliating defeat. In the moments leading up to her

death, Miss Havisham begs “What have I done!” as in the novel, Pip on the other hand is all stone, rehearsing his judgment (“If you can ever undo any scrap of what you’ve done amiss in keeping part of her right nature away from her, it will be better to do that than to bemoan the past through a hundred years” [*GE,* 298 and Lean, 1:27].) and leaving no time for Miss Havisham to respond. Giving Pip the last word from the moral high ground elevates him far above his false benefactress, the destruction of this witch of Satis House by his hand gives him the makings of a true hero.

In Newell’s adaptation, more attention is given to Estella’s childhood at Satis. As Miss Havisham tells Pip of her original intentions, flashes of Estella’s arrival with Jaggers are shown. Contrary to the novel, there is barely any conversation between Pip and Miss Havisham, instead Pip merely looks at her with contempt and turns away. As Miss Havisham stumbles after him begging for forgiveness, a candle hangs on her dress and ignites it. The focus of the scene being on Estella, and on Pip’s contempt of Miss Havisham on her behalf, can be related to the previously observed emphasis on and changed nature of the relationship between Estella and Pip. In the scene of Pip’s speech to Estella and Miss Havisham, this is even clearer. Whereas in the novel Estella is completely unaffected by his words, in Newell’s film she is moved to tears, and they kiss. Miss Havisham is moved as well: she remarks how cold and hard Estella treats Pip, provoking Estella’s revealing monologue (“I am what you have made me” [*GE*, 230].) which in the novel occurs a number of chapters earlier, with none of the “easy grace” (*GE,* 230) from the original, but rather passionate anger.

V

We shall only look at the other death that comes with a redemption briefly. The nature of the Magwitch-Havisham relationship is finally expressed in the opposing functions of their deaths. Whereas Miss Havisham was redeemed by Pip in her final moments, Magwitch is there to redeem him. Although he gradually wins Pip's favour as he corrects his misinterpretations, the plot is only completed as Pip's acceptance of him, his abandonment of gentility, is released from obscurity in the courtroom scene.

Lean's Pip never seems too stubbornly obsessed with a pursuit of gentility, shrugging off his disappointed expectations. Despite the scene being so like the novel's, we might go as far as saying that its function of Pip's ultimate redemption is lost, there being no real need for Pip to be redeemed for his snobbery, or to abandon his coveted gentility. In the courtroom scene, Pip is not placed next to Magwitch, but among the rest of the audience, retaining his distance in the public sphere. As Jaggers tells him that his property is forfeit, he simply says "The money is of no interest" (1:42), but we are hardly convinced that Pip will go on to lead the life of a poor blacksmith's son. There is a greater emphasis on the loss of Pip's expectations in Newell's film, as Jaggers tells him "You have nothing, Pip, Not a penny." Pip asks: "Can we keep that from him, I'd like him to think I'm a gentleman still" (1:57). Pip's

moral development being the focus of Newell's film, it makes sense for his redemption through Magwitch to be retained.

Finally, we come to the last ending of the novel. And it is here that Brooks' statement, about endings being the most significant conveyors of meaning for the plot, is most prominent. There could be as many as four completely different endings to discuss, as neither film is faithful to either of Dickens' endings. Both films having omitted Pip's self-imposed exile in Egypt, Estella and Pip are not reunited in their early thirties, both are still quite young, and the potential for a happy future together seems all the more promising for it. Dickens' endings have provoked slews of criticism, and the discussion of which is superior may never end, it may be for this reason that both adaptations have their own original ending, eschewing some of the criticism Dickens' has incurred. In *A Defense of the Second Ending*, Jerome Meckier mentions that "many assessments of the novel find her (Estella's) change of heart abrupt and unconvincing" (32). This could not be remarked of Newell's ending. Instead of having Pip return from working abroad for eleven years, Pip's starts work at Clarrikers' London branch alongside Herbert. There, a letter arrives for Pip delivered by a lady. We are left to infer the contents of Estella's letter from what happens next. We cut to a luxurious art gallery next to a park, Pip finds Estella just outside. In their conversation, some of the novel's lines are rehearsed, namely the summary of Drummle's fate. Eventually, however, Estella repeats Pip's words to her from his speech back at Satis ("You said that you will always think of me, that you would think of the good in me, 'You are in the ships', you said, 'And the river.'" [2:01].), this time moving herself to tears. The final words of the film follow:

Pip: I love you, Estella

Estella: I'm glad.

This final couplet is the first step towards Estella's recovery from her stilted childhood. There is a sense in which the roles of Estella and Pip are reversed, compared to Dickens' ending: Estella mentions she has been travelling a great deal, she is the one who has been abroad, not Pip; they are in a splendid public park rather than a private ruined garden; and their meeting is intentional and instigated by Estella, rather than accidental and instigated by Pip. Estella shows a desire to change, to look up her friend and to be glad to be seen and loved, and perhaps one day love herself.

Lean's ending is even more unlike Dicken's. Pip returns to Satis House and finds it unchanged. As he enters through the gate and into the house as he has many times before, memories of Estella and Ms. Havisham echo in his mind by means of voice over. Upon entering Ms. Havisham's chamber, Pip finds Estella in her place. The explanation of her changed circumstances is different, instead of being widowed, she has been rejected by Bentley Drummle whom, rather preposterously, has been informed by Jaggers of her true parentage. This means that her social station has been damaged beyond repair. The rest of the scene is all in service of Pip's heroic climax, tearing down the curtains in defiance to Estella's resignation to a life like her mother by adoption's. Pip becomes a real hero, fantasy becomes reality. Dickens' ending shows a tired Pip, passive and resigned, letting Estella do the talking. Lean's ending is infinitely more uplifting, a lovely young couple walking out

into the sunlight. The title “Great Expectations” is superimposed upon the last shot; it is what awaits them.

The endings of both films bear out the slight departures from the original that were previously analysed, they, to repeat Brooks’ words, cast retrospective meaning on them. In Lean’s film there is the culmination of Pip’s hero narrative, his coming into his “authentic male power” (40), as Barreca calls it, with the destruction of Miss Havisham and the capture of Estella. In Newells’ several aspects stand in service of the film’s focus on Pip’s and Estella’s ascent to maturity and independence like the clerk’s job at Clarrikers and Estella’s travels abroad where she was bent and broken. What these endings lack, however, is the sense of a return to origins. Pip’s departure to and return from the east gives the readers this real sense of a new beginning, a *renouement,* if you will. With the omission of Pip’s time abroad, Pip and Estella’s reunion has to bear a more prominent position in the story’s ending. Rather than being almost *obiter dicta* (Brooks, 521), the last ending becomes the only proper ending to the story. The mistake the films perhaps inevitably fall into is making the ending into the climax of the story, changing the relationship between Pip and Estella into a conventionally romantic one.

Works Cited

Barreca, Regina. "David Lean's Great Expectations." *Dickens on Screen,* edited by John Glavin, Cambridge University Press, 2003, Cambridge, pp. 39-44.

Brooks, Peter. "Repetition, Repression, and Return: Great Expectations and the Study of Plot." *New Literary History*, vol. 11, no. 3, 1980, Baltimore, pp. 503–526.

Byrd, Max. "'Reading' in Great Expectations." *PMLA*, vol. 91, no. 2, 1976, New York, pp. 259–265.

Dickens, Charles. "The Text of *Great Expectations*." *Great Expectations*, edited by Edgar Rosenberg, W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 2003, London, pp. 1-361.

Cottom, Daniel. *Text & Culture: The Politics of Interpretation*, University of Minnesota Press, 1989, Minneapolis, pp. 103-153.

Gilmour, Robin. "The Pursuit of Gentility." *Great Expectations*, edited by Edgar Rosenberg, W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 2003, London, pp. 576-583.

Great Expectations. Directed by David Lean, Cineguild, 1946.

Great Expectations. Directed by Mike Newell, Lionsgate, 2012.

Maynard, John R. "The Bildungsroman." *A Companion to The Victorian Novel*, edited by Patrick Brantlinger and William B. Thesing, Blackwell Publishing, 2002, Oxford, pp. 279-301.

Marsh, Joss. "Dickens and Film." *The Cambridge Companion to Charles Dickens,* edited by John. O. Jordan. Cambridge University Press, 2001, Cambridge, pp 204-223.

McFarlane, Brian. *Charles Dickens' Great Expectations: The Relationship Between Text and Film.* London, Methuen Drama, 2008.

Meckier, Jerome. "Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*: A Defense of the Second Ending." *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 25, no.1, 1993, Baltimore, pp. 28-58.

"Death(s) and Great Expectations." *The Dickensian,* vol. 111, Iss. 495, 2015, London, pp. 42-51.

"Apprentices and Apprenticeship in Great Expectations." *Dickens Quarterly,* vol.33, no 2, 2016, London, pp. 102-108.

Moynahan, Julian. "The Hero's Guilt: The Case of *Great Expectations*." *Great Expectations*, edited by Edgar Rosenberg, W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 2003, London., pp. 654-663.

Stone, Harry. *Dickens and the Invisible World: Fairy Tales, Fantasy, and Novel-Making*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1979.