

Adapting Poetics:

A Fusion of Ideas in Literature to Film Adaptation

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Abstract

This study attempts to formulate and test an original idea in adaptation theory, one that exploits the productive aspects of the two main tendencies in adaptation studies, fidelity and intertextuality. The question that is addressed here is how the prioritization of a novel's poetics as the focal point for the transposition of the literary text can inform the study and practice of literature to film adaptation. It will be argued in this thesis that an abstract description of the literary and filmic work can be used as a blueprint for the transposition between the two media. In the context of this study, adaptation is defined as a mode of engagement with the source text, while the adapter is defined as the agency responsible for the transposition. Poetics, in the context of this study, is a system of aims and methods, that represent the work of art as a system of creative decisions. Michail Bakhtin's concept of dialogism, as well as his view of the author, have informed the theoretical structure of this thesis to a significant degree.

The proposition has been tested in the context of adaptation criticism, through an examination of Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* based on Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The application of the rationale of this thesis on the specific case has revealed a complex system of interaction between two works that are superficially very different. In the context of adaptation practice, a form of practice based research has been employed in the discussion of the filmic possibilities of Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*. The system that derives from the conceptual framework of this thesis has created a discussion of alternatives, through a joint consideration of source poetics and medium demands.

The conclusion of this research is that the focus on the poetics of a work can potentially provide fertile ground for the examination of adaptation as product, and for the practice of adaptation as a re-contextualisation of literary works in the filmic medium.

Introduction

In his article “Twelve Fallacies in Contemporary Adaptation Theory”, Thomas Leitch (2003) tries to expose the misconceptions that he argues govern current theories on adaptation. The first one on his list is that there is such a thing as contemporary adaptation theory. He claims that “adaptation studies have been practised in a theoretical vacuum without a presiding poetics” (Leitch 2003, p.149). This position seems all the more disturbing if one takes into account the cultural ubiquity of adaptations, since a great percentage of the global filmic output is based, in varying degrees, on literary texts. James Naremore (2000), in his introduction to the collection of essays *Film Adaptation* cites statistics published by Variety (Dan Cox, 1998) “indicating that twenty percent of the movies produced in 1997 had books as their sources. Another twenty percent were derived from plays, sequels, remakes, television shows and magazine or newspaper articles” (Naremore 2000, p.10). Leitch’s position may also seem exaggerated in the context of the literature that has been compiled around the subject. It is indeed significant in size, and covers a wide range of approaches. Nevertheless, it does seem like a theoretical framework that is commonly accepted as valid has not been established yet. An examination of the various available approaches reveals a consensus only in negative aspects of the discussion. For example, most scholars have until recently completely dismissed fidelity discourse as a valid tool for examining an adaptation. “For some time, the leading academic trend has ignored or disparaged this concern with fidelity, finding the *vertical* line that anchors a film to its literary substrate exasperating and constraining. Scholars today tend to detach the anchor and let the films they write about float free” (Andrew 2011, p.27). When one looks for positive features of a theory, the different opinions start to diverge wildly. Many of the ideas proposed are incompatible. In many cases the essential questions are answered differently and in others they are not even the same. In many cases a prioritisation of one of the two media is clearly implied.

1. Research Question

The question that will be addressed in this thesis is whether a focus on the poetics of the literary and of the filmic work can inform the study and practice of literature to film adaptation. The term poetics will be defined in the course of this thesis. It is essentially a conceptual description of the work in terms of artistic aims and methods, a translation of the elements of the work into their functions and a mapping of their structure. This thesis argues that the concept of poetics, thus defined, can facilitate the exploration of the transition between the media, by operating on a more abstract, but also more substantial, level of engagement with the texts. It is suggested here that this abstraction circumvents a major obstacle in the field of adaptation studies, that of translation between word and image, by interposing the idea of functions.

Word → Image

Word → Function in source → Function in new work → Image

The direct transition from word to image is indeed problematic. The second one is easier to perform, as functions are not entirely medium-specific. This means that a notion of structural fidelity, dialogic fidelity as it will be termed here, can serve the examination of the connections between the works by providing a flexible connective tissue between them.

The question will be tested on two levels. In terms of adaptation as criticism, Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 film *Apocalypse Now*, will be examined in conjunction with its source text, Joseph Conrad's 1899 novel *Heart of Darkness*. In terms of adaptation practice the possibilities of a transposition of Michail Bakhtin's reading of Fyodor Dostoevsky's authorial method to the filmic medium will be discussed according to the argument of this thesis.

2. Key Theories in Adaptation Studies

The argument will be outlined through an exposition of the current state of adaptation scholarship.

The contemporary consensus against fidelity discourse, one of the main tools of past critics, has been attacked since George Bluestone's *Novels into Film* (1957). Kamilla Elliott argues that "surveying work published in 2010-11, the most common claim to innovation is that a new publication challenges prevalent fidelity mandates. And yet scholars who have read prior work know that fidelity has *always* been robustly challenged in adaptation studies ... Indeed, the critique of fidelity has become so commonplace that the *critique* of this critique is also widely reiterated" (Elliott 2013, p.24). This dismissal of fidelity discourse created a void that has been filled through a turn to intertextuality. Kate Newell suggests that "because intertextual approaches open the discussion of fidelity to the possibility of *fidelities*, they provide a more flexible base from which adaptations can be critically evaluated" (Newell 2010, p.80). An elusive term that covers a wide area of study, intertextuality is hard to define and thus has given shape to very different theories. In the context of adaptation and in the most general possible terms, it can be described as the study of a text in conjunction with previous texts (with the term defined broadly, able to incorporate non verbal media like film). An intertextual approach does not study the connections between texts as influences but in a less linear, more complex format as an intricate web of quotations, allusions and appropriations. This widening of the scope applied to adaptation studies gives a potential discourse room to manoeuvre and allows for the formulation of a theory that is not biased towards one or the other of the media.

On the other hand, this thesis will argue that the demonisation of all forms of 'fidelity discourse' has reached a point where it is becoming counter-productive. It is possible to dismiss views and opinions that are fruitful along with the ones that are obsolete. Rachel Carroll claims that "as a cultural value fidelity can indeed be reductive; however, I would suggest that fidelity as a mode of cultural practice can be complex and productive. The almost ritual denunciation of fidelity in contemporary adaptation studies has taken on the function of a founding disciplinary gesture"

(Carroll 2009, p.40). An intertextual approach offers limitless discursive possibilities but if left unchecked, it introduces too much chaos on a subject that could benefit from some order and perspective. Each of these theoretical trends can still be used productively and it will be argued here that there could be common ground between them through a process of delegation. This thesis will suggest a hybrid approach to adaptation studies with fidelity governing the macroscopic and intertextuality the microscopic level of the process. The microscopic level is comprised of the specific decisions of the text(s), including narrative, style and thematology while the macroscopic level is the work's presiding poetics, a blueprint of the work in terms of aims, methods and functions.

3. Theoretical Background

Adaptation research that still advocates a strong link to the original material at this point in time tends to approach the subject through the two great obstacles of inter-media transposition, the word/image divide and the form/content discourse. This approach is analysed in depth by Kamilla Elliott in *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate* (2003). The most prominent strategy implemented to address those issues is a shift of focus from the source to the product, from the original text to the creative process. This strategy signifies the shift to intertextuality. The original is treated as a pool of material from which the creative agency can pick and choose with absolute freedom. This thesis argues that both approaches are imperfect. Fidelity discourse often gets bogged down on the microscopic level in an attempt to achieve a very literal transposition of the source, while intertextuality discourse often sidelines the source to the point of irrelevance. Alternatively, fidelity could be employed on a more abstract, macroscopic level, leaving intertextuality free reign on the microscopic but under an organising authority. That would remove the demands of scholastic transposition from the process and would allow for a free creative force that would operate in an intertextual environment while being filtered by a strong link to the original.

4. A Reappraisal of Fidelity

The main theoretical thrust of this thesis is the idea that fidelity is a notion that should be re-evaluated. It is the contention of this research that fidelity still matters. Firstly, it is very difficult to dismiss the cultural ubiquity of fidelity discourse. More importantly, adaptation cannot be easily defined in complete absence of fidelity. The link to the source cannot be completely severed without compromising the analysis. A comparative element is necessary in the discussion of inter-medium transposition. Furthermore, if used correctly, fidelity discourse is analytically useful. This thesis argues that the attack on fidelity sidelines important issues. It also claims that fidelity can be combined with intertextuality to create a fuller understanding of the interaction between the media. The answer to the question “why fidelity matters” is the following: it matters because it can't be avoided, and also because it can be analytically useful, if properly qualified. The previous statements will be examined, supported and situated in the relevant literature in chapters one and two.

5. The Concept of Poetics

At this point it is important to further define the macroscopic level and describe the organising principle. The suggestion of this thesis is that such a principle could be found in the work's poetics, an estimation of what the author was trying to achieve with the work in general terms, and how it was achieved on a narrative and stylistic level. If the author's artistic system, as inferred from the text itself, is extracted and transposed into filmic terms, it might offer a potential guideline for the organisation of the new work. The transposition would then operate on a more abstract level and therefore would be much easier to perform. Furthermore, this approach would, to a certain degree, alleviate the semiotic strain of the specificity of the media. The extracted system could then be applied to an intertextual process that could stay close to the details of the original, or, having engaged with them, choose to transform them creatively.

The term poetics is used here to describe the way the elements of a work of art are combined by an agency to create certain effects. In that sense, each element performs certain functions. The structure created by these functions comprises an artistic design. The specific formulation of the concept of poetics in the context of this thesis, is a three-tiered structure of aims, methods and implementation. The concept is based on the Aristotelian notion of poetics, as has been interpreted by James Griffith (1997) and Wayne Booth (1983). So, the term poetics in this study, means a description of a work, based on its interrogation, according to the following three questions:

1. What goals are pursued through the text?
2. What are the methods employed to achieve them?
3. What means are used to implement the methods?

The last question is the link between the abstract system and the actual work. An objection to this strategy might be that the imposition of a presiding principle on the new work, and specifically one that derives from the original, is too restrictive, and that the source text should be used in the service of a new structure. That would be a valid point if this thesis was suggesting a guideline for adaptation practice, but it is not. Nevertheless, an important distinction is being made based on the level of engagement with the text. This thesis is refocusing the discussion to the source by asking what the most meaningful connection to the text could be, assuming that this connection is desirable. The implication is that a process that completely dismisses any kind of fidelity cannot be deemed an adaptation as it invites the question of what it would be an adaptation of. Cartmell and Whelehan address the paradox: “we share Geraghty’s frustration with the tendency to foreground the literary in a nod to its still privileged cultural status; but we wonder whether focusing on the

‘films themselves’ is possible or desirable when studying the process of adaptation” (Cartmell & Whelehan 2010, p.12). Strict fidelity is an impossibility. A dry transposition of the narrative, however accurate, is as insufficient as it is superficial. The argument here is that the process that would most meaningfully engage with the source text would be one that is shaped by its poetics more than anything else. The narrative, style and enunciation of the piece could then stray intertextually from the original, even borrowing from other works, without compromising that engagement. This is the practice that seems to come closer to an idea of adaptation as a meaningful engagement with previous works in the process of creating new ones.

In summary, adaptation scholars have rigorously attacked fidelity discourse for years. Intertextuality has taken its place and arguably introduced the danger of making the source irrelevant. Where academic papers used to focus on evaluations of how the film departs from the book, they now search a film for ‘clues’, fragments of the original or other works. In other words, fidelity and intertextuality discourse are both potentially guilty of focusing on the details (microscopic level). As Thomas Leitch points out “either adaptations have a responsibility to stick as close as possible to their sources, it seems, or they have an equally strong responsibility to strike out on their own” (Leitch 2010, p66). This thesis proposes a foregrounding of the larger picture, through a notion of poetics (macroscopic level). It is also suggesting the examination of the possibilities of the source itself, rather than the identification of the choices made in specific films.

6. Michail Bakhtin

The thesis will need to be tested on specific applications. These experiments will allow its clear formulation and scrutiny. A theorist that will be very helpful in that respect is Mikhail Bakhtin. The name of Michail Bakhtin comes up often in the context of intertextuality as he was one of its precursors. The term was coined by Julia Kristeva (1986) in two essays, “The Bounded Text” and

“Word, Dialogue, Novel”, that built on Bakhtin’s work. Some of his concepts are very useful in the context of film adaptation. Bakhtin never addressed the film medium directly, but his theory is flexible enough to allow for very wide application. The core of Bakhtin’s theory is based on the concept of dialogism. It is a term that permeates his work and as one familiarises oneself with that work it becomes clear that it is not so much a theoretical concept as a methodology. In general terms, it could be said that Bakhtin’s dialogism is the interaction of voices (situated utterances) in a linguistic environment. Bakhtin discusses the novel, setting it apart from other literary genres, as the medium best suited for the artistic representation of dialogism and what he terms heteroglossia, the co-existence and interaction of different languages (Bakhtin 1984). He describes that artistic representation in the novel as polyphony, borrowing the term from a different medium, music.

Bakhtin applies the concept of dialogism to all possible dialogues/interactions within a novel, those between characters, between the author and his characters, between a text and other texts, as well as those between different elements of the text itself. The first two applications prove very useful in a narratological discussion and therefore can easily be applied to the narrative aspects of film as well. His discussion about text and its precursors is itself the precursor to intertextual studies and is very relevant to a study of adaptation. “For Bakhtin, literature was not properly conceptualized until it was ‘translated.’ Bakhtin’s brand of poststructural thought seems potentially productive and empowering for adaptation theory, since adaptations are, in effect, free translations or reworkings of texts into new ‘languages’ “ (Albrecht-Crane & Cutchins 2010, p.20). An obstacle to the application of Bakhtin in adaptation theory is the introduction of another element of complexity in the form of non-verbal signifiers. Nevertheless, one of the reasons that Bakhtin is appropriate in this discourse is that his theory is more abstract and thus more flexible whereas subsequent theories are more specifically focused on purely verbal systems. His discussion about the interactions between different elements of the text through co-existing but unmerged voices and double-voiced discourse

is ideal for a discussion of the hybrid medium of film with its hybrid verbal/visual nature and its dual image/sound track.

The second reason for the use of Bakhtin in this study is his reading of the work of Dostoevsky. The clearest formulation of Bakhtin's theory of dialogism comes in a book of literary criticism, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984). His reading of Dostoevsky's work is still considered one of the most incisive and complete accounts of the author's oeuvre. Bakhtin presents Dostoevsky as the pioneer of what he calls the polyphonic novel. In Bakhtin's reading, Dostoevsky was the first to realise the core potential of the novel as an artistic representation and intentional organisation of heteroglossia. This reading clearly outlines Bakhtin's theory and also provides a rigorous account of Dostoevsky's artistic aim and system. That is why it represents an appropriate case for the application and testing of the ideas of this thesis.

7. Thesis Outline

The first chapter will present an outline of the academic work on adaptations and a brief historical background of the evolution of ideas in the field, concerning the issues facing the discipline. Subsequently, the theoretical approach will be outlined through a discussion of fidelity and intertextuality.

The second chapter will expand the theoretical structure, introducing the discussion of the merits and limitations of fidelity discourse as well as intertextuality. The structure of the new approach will then be presented as a combination of the two. Bakhtin's theory of dialogism will be expanded and adapted to the issues at hand. Finally, the relationship between Bakhtin and Dostoevsky will be established and arguments will be offered as to why their connection offers fertile ground for the experiment. The second part of the second chapter will contain the methodology of the thesis. The

case studies, informed by the theoretical structure of the first part of the chapter, will be planned in detail and aimed at the evaluation of the thesis. The terminology will be clarified and the scope of the theory established. The ground for its application will be set through the presentation of a coherent plan for both strands of the testing, through a series of analytical stages. In the test of adaptation criticism, the methodology will entail a distillation of the poetics of both works and a juxtaposition of the results. In the test of adaptation practice, the poetics of the literary work will be examined according to their filmic possibilities. In both cases the works' poetics will be described through the questions mentioned before.

This kind of interrogation can provide multiple sets of answers, so the subjective nature of the endeavour will be addressed at this point. As Rachel Carroll points out, "a film or television adaptation of a prior cultural text – no matter how 'faithful' in intention or aesthetic – is inevitably an *interpretation* of that text: to this extent, every adaptation is an instance of textual *infidelity*" (Carroll 2009, p.1). This thesis accepts the relativity of interpretation and does not suggest the existence of singular readings. The idea that is put forth is a general approach and not a universal method.

In the test of adaptation criticism, the juxtaposition on this level will hopefully reveal connections that were previously concealed, and allow for a meaningful comparison of the two works. In the test of adaptation practice, the analysis will offer a somewhat subjective, but rationally argued, account of the filmic potential of the literary work. In both cases, the aim is not to suggest guidelines, but to ascertain the fruitfulness of the proposed way of thinking about adaptation. Through the description of the strategy, theoretical objections that could be raised will be identified and addressed. Problems that might conceivably arise and limitations of the approach will eventually surface.

The third chapter will contain the test of adaptation criticism through the examination of a specific instance of adaptation, Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 film *Apocalypse Now*, based on Joseph Conrad's 1899 novel *Heart of Darkness*. The choice is highly relevant to this study, as the examination of this specific adaptation invites a discussion of issues of fidelity. The experiment will operate through the stages outlined in the methodology, with the aim of evaluating the theory. The specific choice is based on the observation that the film, although removed from the source text, retains the effect of the original to a significant degree. Kathleen Murray, discussing Howard Hawks' *To Have and Have Not* (1944), based on Ernest Hemingway's 1937 novel, observes that "while superficially the novel and film are extremely divergent, to the point where it is difficult to recognize the similarities of setting, plot, character, dialogue, or even theme (that is the elements we normally consider as transferable from one medium to another), there are deeper and intriguing connections between the two in terms of approach, style and attitude" (Murray 2011, p.92). The tentative initial assumption of this thesis is that in the same sense, *Apocalypse Now* operates on similar poetic grounds as *Heart of Darkness*, even as it departs from it in many respects. It needs to be noted here that there is no implication of authorial intentionality at this point, nor a suggestion that the creative process was modelled on a system similar to the one described here. The suggestion is that this type of analysis is a useful tool in the examination of the interaction between the works and that it can help scrutinise that interaction in a meaningful way.

The fourth chapter will contain the implementation of the theory in a case of adaptation as practice, through Bakhtin and Dostoevsky. It will present the distillation of Dostoevsky's method from Bakhtin's reading of his oeuvre. It will then go on to propose a transposition of that method into film. The work that will form the object of this discussion is the 1864 novel *Notes from Underground*. This part of the study will allow for the examination of various scenarios and different interpretations of the basic ideas. Other readings of Dostoevsky will also be considered,

like the one provided by Malcolm Jones in *Dostoevsky After Bakhtin* (1990). Subsequently, specific solutions will be suggested that will eventually form the description of a feature film based on this process. In the course of this chapter, major issues facing adaptation will be addressed, including point of view, narration and style.

The final chapter will attempt to ascertain what general conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this research. By this point, it will be possible to estimate whether the theory can indeed offer an original view on the issue, and to identify possible theoretical or practical obstacles that it could not overcome. This section will re-examine the theoretical assumptions of chapters one and two, based on the tests of chapters three and four. From that point, generalisations will be attempted as to whether the approach suggested here might constitute an innovation in adaptation theory and practice.

8. Contribution of this Thesis

This thesis proposes a viewpoint on literature to film adaptation that has not been implemented before. It examines both major tendencies in adaptation discourse, fidelity and intertextuality, and qualifies them by selecting the productive elements of each. It does so through the concept of poetics, which helps translate elements of works into their functions. More specifically, it addresses each case separately and flexibly. This approach includes the source in the discussion but does not prioritise it, and it includes socio/historical, textual and creative forces, but frames the discussion in the context of the source. The hope is that this study will start a fresh discussion on the complicated subject of literature to film adaptation.

Chapter 1:

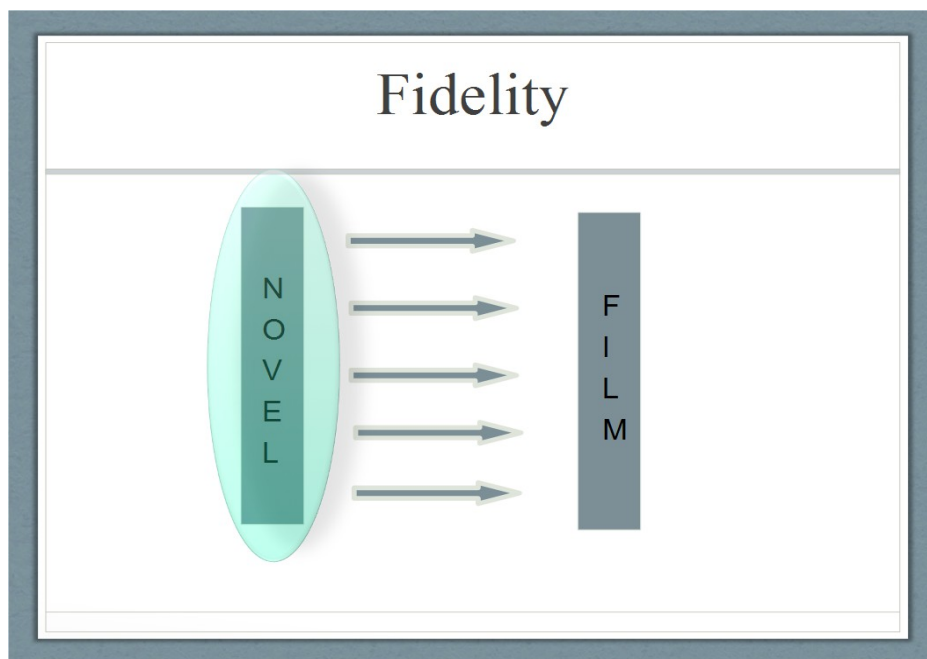
Literature Review, Obstacles in Adaptation Theory and Practice

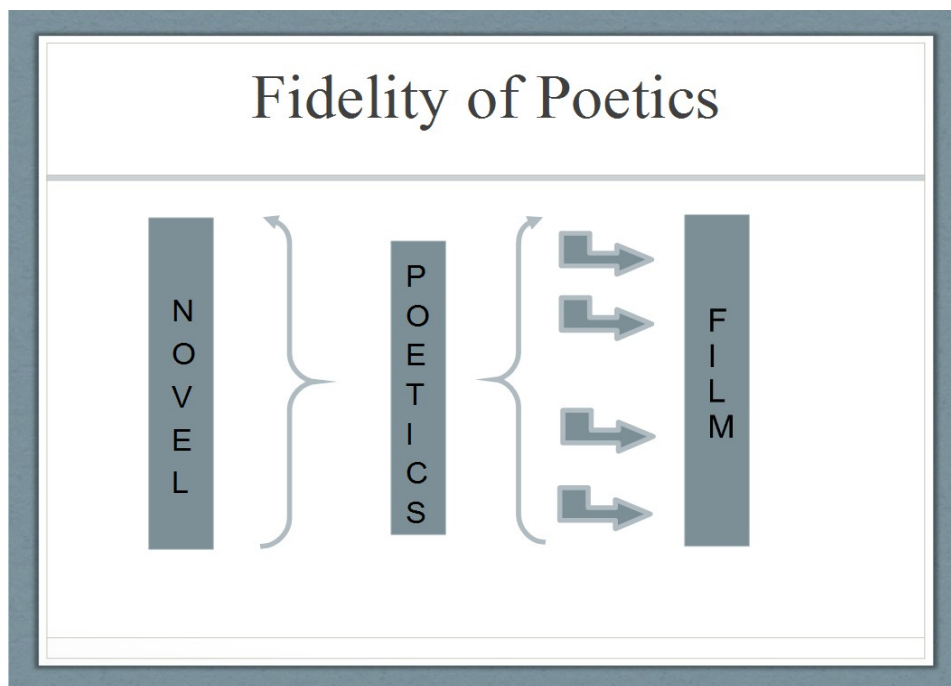
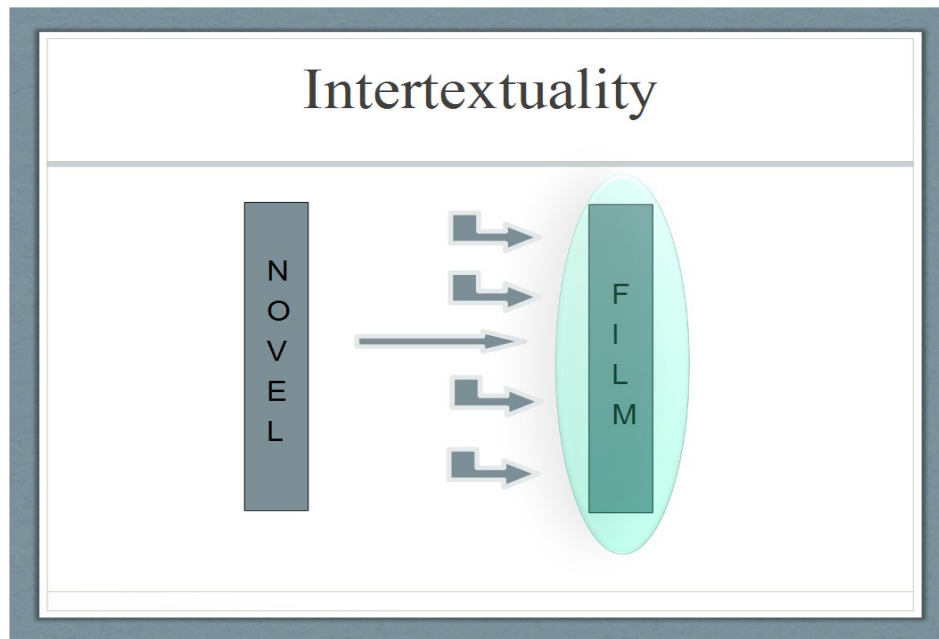
1.1 Introduction

Film critics, as well as popular opinion, have not been kind to adaptations. Films based on novels have been, and to a large extent still are, evaluated in terms of faithfulness to the original. Thomas Leitch suggests that “of all the ways to classify adaptations, surely the decision to classify them as more or less faithful to their putative sources ... is one of the most fruitless” (Leitch 2008, p.64). A recent issue of *Sight and Sound*, one of the more prestigious magazines on film, published an extensive article on Tomas Alfredson’s 2011 film *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy*. A surprisingly large portion of the review was focused on the departures from John le Carre’s 1974 novel of the same name, including the change of hair colour of one of the characters. Another part of the review analysed the film's approach, compared to John Irvin’s 1979 television series, based on the same novel. One might wonder whether this type of analysis really offers much in terms of insight into either work. Films that are based on classic texts or even just popular works are often analysed through a superficial juxtaposition to the original. This phenomenon does not appear only in film reviews, but can occasionally be identified in academic discourse. There have been a great number of essays and papers operating on a principle of strict fidelity, making Leitch wish for “the silver bullet that will free adaptation studies from the dead hand of literature” (Leitch 2008, p .65). This thesis suggests that a new definition of fidelity is necessary. As Kathleen Murray points out “exploring the intersection and differences between the texts provides a clear reading of a process of creation. And that process is far more complex than any simple transference of plot and character from novel to screen” (Murray 2011, p.111).

On the other end of the analytical spectrum, one can find adaptations addressed solely on the merits of the new work, completely disregarding their literary source. This is usually the case in the

examination of films based on books that are not part of the literary canon or that do not possess recognised literary value, as in the case of many of Alfred Hitchcock's films. These films are often addressed as if they were based on original screenplays. This thesis will argue that regardless of the literary status of the original, the engagement with it offers much in terms of useful analytical insight into both works. Adaptations need to be addressed as adaptations. The corrective to a superficial analysis of the connection between the media is not an equally superficial severing of the tie, but a sustained exploration of the interaction. It is short-sighted to address adaptation through a viewpoint based solely on the source as much as from one focused solely on the product. The following images demonstrate the two approaches, as well as the one suggested by this thesis, that uses the intermediary of poetics to shift the focus on the space between the works, rather than on any one of them.





1.1.1 Detractors of Adaptation

The superficial view of the subject can be considered responsible for attacks on the concept of adaptation in general. Virginia Woolf, as quoted in many academic books on adaptation, suggests that “we lurch and lumber through the most famous novels of the world. So we spell them out in

words of one syllable, written, too, in the scrawl of an illiterate schoolboy” (cited in Cartmell and Whelehan 2010, p.41).

Although empirical data often reinforce this feeling of pessimism, as in cases of uninspired, financially motivated projects, there are also a great number of important films that have a literary origin. It will be argued here that *Apocalypse Now* (1979) is an important transposition of *Heart of Darkness*. Karel Reisz’s *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* (1981) arguably found a creatively sophisticated way of handling a structurally difficult text. Woolf’s view is based on the assumption that a canonical work of literature will only be made into a film in order to popularise the content and bring it closer to the lowest common denominator. This does not have to be the case, even though it often is. Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan attempted to rationalise the negative opinion of adaptations since the beginning of the practice in *Screen Adaptation: Impure Cinema* (2010). “For some the field of adaptation studies remains too literary focused and for others it gives unwarranted precedence to inferior films” (Cartmell & Whelehan 2010, p.8). They argue that adaptation scholarship is essentially snubbed by both literature and film studies. Both camps see the practice as an anomaly with an unattainable goal. Literature scholars see adaptations as poor relatives of the books that could never ‘do them justice’, and whose only merit might be to familiarise the audience with the works. The argument suggests that the movie audience essentially watches on the screen, much like on Plato’s wall, mere moving shadows of the original. Film scholars see adaptations as unnecessary and derivative, pointless and artificial imitations of works whose value they could never reach. Dudley Andrew in his essay “Adaptation”, argues that the study of adaptation is “frequently the most narrow and provincial area of film theory” (Andrew 2000, p.28). Film scholars also tend to bring literature into their domain by ‘recruiting’ authors, like in the often quoted Eisenstein claim that Dicken’s work contains cinematic elements. This view intricately attempts to reverse the order of influence through the suggestion that the authors are

being prophetically influenced by film. This approach might suggest some level of compatibility between certain authors and the filmic medium, but has little general application in the field of adaptation studies. Both views imply a prevalence of one medium over the other, when it could be argued that the subject is in need of a more conciliatory approach.

1.1.2 Hindering Preconceptions

Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation*, (2013) identifies a number of clichés in the view of adaptations. She frames her discussion of those clichés through her distinction between the telling and showing modes of engagement with an audience. She claims that pairing each medium strictly to one mode of engagement is unrealistic and essentially separates the two media with a very simplistic straight line in terms of what each of them can and cannot do. Hutcheon's clichés are essentially the main points of debate around adaptation theory: the issue of the limited point of view of cinema, the interiority of prose and exteriority of film, the cinema's 'present tense' and the inability of cinema to translate irony, ambiguity, metaphor and symbols.

The rigid categorisation between the media that Hutcheon points out is a major inhibitor of progress on the subject. Many academics have attempted to 'solve' adaptation once and for all by prescribing what each medium can do and thus end the conversation. A notable example is Seymour Chatman who attempts to do that in the aptly named essay "What Novels Can Do That Films Can't (and Vice Versa)". "Each medium has its own properties, for better and worse usage, and intelligent film viewing and criticism, like intelligent reading, needs to understand and respect both the limitation these create and also the triumphs they invite" (Chatman 1980, p.140). Seen from this perspective, adaptation is a kind of compromise, a triage in terms of what will be lost in the translation. This point of view essentially makes the product appear inferior from both sides of the academic arena: from the side of literature, the film will inevitably be inferior to the original as there are bound to be

missing elements, the ones that the new medium cannot address, whilst from the side of film, the adaptation will appear irrelevant as the medium's potential cannot be reached.

This delegating system of reference appears to be objective, which is an improvement over the entrenchment in film or literature studies, but it essentially maintains the role of a referee. It inflexibly prohibits certain forms and ideas, describing essentially a mechanical process of elimination. This rationale often informs the practice of adaptation. Kenneth Portnoy in *Screen Adaptation: A Scriptwriting Handbook* (1998), assumes all the dicta of the can/cannot do list and goes on to propose a method for the salvaging of the narrative from the book into the more accessible form of film. He practically suggests all the changes that are necessary to make a commercial script out of a literary property. His mention of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is characteristic, in which he proposes that the modern story of the film was added so that the audience would have a familiar storyline to identify with. It is not difficult to see how this approach could be interpreted, rather accurately, as pandering to the lowest common denominator, confirming Woolf's objections.

It is understandable and inevitable that many adaptations will be uninspired attempts to capitalise on the success of a popular book or the status of a classic novel. The study of the commercial aspect of the practice of adaptation can be illuminating but cannot be a central preoccupation of this study, as it would widen the focus considerably. Nevertheless, such concerns will be addressed when they prove essential in the examination of a specific strategy of transposition. The primary aim of this work, having identified the academic shortcomings of the discourse, is to propose a new approach based primarily on an examination of the works themselves. I hope this will facilitate the exploration of the dialogue between the two media.

1.1.3 The Cultural Context

There is no denying the significant cultural connections of literature and film. Kamilla Elliott suggests that it “is not simply that the nineteenth-century novel influenced western film, but that it in some sense became film, while the modern novel evolved in a different direction” (Elliott 2003, p.3). She quotes Christian Metz as saying that “it fills the same social function, a function which the twentieth-century novel, less and less diegetic and representational, tends partly to abandon” (cited in Elliott 2003, p.3). The next logical step in this thinking is the utilisation by the visual medium of the actual works that it replaced. On a similar note, Michael Anderegg, in his essay “Welles/Shakespeare/Film: An Overview” (1998) suggests that Orson Welles’s Shakespeare films attempted to reconcile the author’s work with popular taste.

A humorous article in the blog/magazine hybrid *The Hooded Utilitarian* discusses the fictional Victorian author Horatio Bucklesby Ogden and his novel *The Wire*, obviously referring to the critically acclaimed television series. The article describes the work as a serialised novel and juxtaposes it to the works of Charles Dickens, often finding it superior to them. This presentation of *The Wire* as a literary ‘forgotten masterpiece’ is indeed very poignant as it points out very vividly the cultural and aesthetic affinities of the media. There is also the suggestion that the illustrations of the book were essential to its reception, raising the subject of the word/image connection.

One way to see this article is as an affirmation of the opinion that modern culture has transcended literature. As John Patterson wrote in the Guardian: “If today you want to sink your teeth into the kind of rich, vivid triple decker Victorian state-of-the-nation, weekly serial novel that depicts society from top to bottom in all its colour and depravity, don’t bother with *Vanity Fair* or *Bleak House*. Just buy a box-set of *The Wire* or *The Sopranos* – bottomless works of art that are not based on novels” (cited in Cartmell and Whelehan 2010, p.130). It is argued here that it is actually more

productive to see it is as a reminder of the fact that categorical distinctions and superficial transpositions do not take advantage of the wide potential for interaction between the media.

This thesis suggests that the question that needs to be asked in the context of adaptation is not *how* to adapt or *what* to adapt, at least not in a universal sense. There cannot be a black-box-like practical manual with rules and guidelines that can be applied to a work of literature and transform it into a film. There can also not be a simple answer to the question of which elements of the work can and should be adapted. These questions need to be allowed to have different answers in different cases. It is the contention of this thesis that a more fruitful approach would interrogate the source in search of the *questions*, not of answers to predetermined ones. Assuming that the objective of an adaptation is a meaningful engagement with the text, it would be an oversimplification to assume that all books are operating through a similar strategy. It would also be reductive to assume that adapters operate through similar processes. Elliott quotes Westbrook, who claims that “a grand unifying theory for adaptation studies is not, in fact, possible; the sheer volume of everything involved in a discussion of film adaptation is virtually immeasurable, which means that no one single theory has the capacity to encompass every aspect of an adaptation” (cited in Elliott, p.29). The way to achieve a conceptual flexibility that will allow for the address of a widely diversified field is to create a system that adapts its structure through an interrogation of each work that it addresses. Discussions of narrative or style are irrelevant without the knowledge of their function in the whole.

In a similar sense, adaptation criticism cannot examine films based on preconceived frameworks of the transfer. The question whether the film does a good job of adapting the book will usually lead to a dead end. The question of how the film addresses the potential of the novel is arguably more fruitful.

1.2 Early Approaches to Adaptation

In the first years of film, adaptations were employed as a way to give some respectability to the new art form, that originated as popular entertainment. “Some filmmakers were of the view that a dependency on literature or 'great art' would also elevate the status of the film” (Cartmell 2012, p.2). The first instance of organised academic analysis of the subject didn't appear until 1957 in George Bluestone's *Novels Into Film*. The main reason for that is the disrepute of the discipline by literary scholars as well as the fact that film studies were mostly branches of literature departments at the time. This condescending view of adaptation was not entirely unsubstantiated, as the practice was to a large extent a reproduction of canonical works for commercial purposes. That is not to say that the practice didn't produce some important films and also some that engaged with the source material on an aesthetic level, as for example Erich Von Stroheim's *Greed* (1924) based on Frank Norris's 1899 novel *McTeague*.

Bluestone in his book, subtitled *The Metamorphosis of Fiction into Cinema*, bases his analysis on the categorical distinction between literature and cinema as two very different media. “The end products of novel and film represent different aesthetic genera, as different from each other as ballet is from architecture” (Bluestone 1957, p.5). His aim in doing this is to provide the younger art-form with the respectability that comes from a medium-specific aesthetic language. This approach seems to suggest a fair analysis of the possibilities of transposition from one medium to the other. But Bluestone, in his subsequent analysis, still seems to foreground the literary work and essentially places the product of adaptation in a derivative position. He practically claims that the only element that can pass from one medium to the other is the narrative. As James Naremore points out in his introduction to *Film Adaptation*, “his subject matter and entire approach tend to confirm the intellectual priority and formal superiority of canonical novels which provide the films he discusses with their sources and with a standard of value against which their success or failure is measured”

(Naremore 2000, p.6).

This approach implies that the way for cinema to gain its independence from literature demands the sacrifice of adaptation. For cinema to be able to find its own language, it has to burn the bridges with literature. Unfortunately, this doesn't leave much room for a theoretical structure for adaptation. Fredric Jameson suggests that "what is to be avoided is then the illusion that there could ever be anything like an organic or referential, undifferentiated unity in what the printed text shares with its moving image" (Jameson 2011, p.215). That sacrifice was put in practice in the next logical step of the process, the French New Wave. This movement attacked the filmmaking "Tradition of quality" as it was termed by Francois Truffaut, that was based on transpositions of canonical literary works. Nevertheless, the films of the movement borrowed heavily from literature. Rick Warner claims that "Truffaut's quarrel is less with adaptation itself than with its undue focus on the 'scenarist' instead of the director" (Warner 2011, p.197). But the perspective had changed, the source was no longer in the forefront. The product of adaptation was now the main focus of the examination.

This conceptually bipolar state, with Bluestone's fidelity on one side and the New Wave's intertextuality on the other, has survived until today. Adaptation theory, although more advanced today, still has not concluded this debate, although the consensus seems to favour intertextuality. Attempts have been made to find a theoretical middle ground and they will be addressed later in this chapter. The idea suggested in this thesis is close to Rainer Werner Fassbinder's view on the subject. He proposes "an unequivocal and single-minded questioning of the piece of literature and its language" (cited in Naremore 2000, p.12).

1.3 Obstacles to a Theory of Adaptation

The hostility toward adaptations is long standing. The view that it targets the lowest common denominator and that film is too restricted by financial objectives to do otherwise is rather popular. Literature on the other hand, is often considered free of restrictions and thus pure of any commercial motives. As Cartmell and Whelehan point out, the language used to describe the practice reminds one of a “chaste woman whose honour demands defence” (Cartmell & Whelehan 2010, p.129), the novel being the woman and the adapter in the role of the vile corrupter. Robert Stam in *Literature and Film* collects the terminology of the attacks while making a point against fidelity. “Terms such as ‘Infidelity’, ‘betrayal’, ‘deformation’, ‘violation’, ‘vulgarisation’, ‘bastardisation’, and ‘desecration’ proliferate, with each work carrying its specific charge of opprobrium” (Stam 2005, p.3). But fidelity is not the only point of contention regarding the practice. There is a number of theoretical obstacles that come up in the discourse on adaptation. These obstacles hinder the formulation of a concrete theoretical structure on the subject.

This thesis proposes an interdisciplinary approach, one that does not suggest a hierarchy between the media but tries to find the most fertile ground for their interaction. Inflexible categorisations have been avoided and the system that has been formulated can be applied to a variety of works. The definition of adaptation has been limited to accommodate a more specific and targeted analysis of the subject, placing the bar lower, as the aim is not a complete transposition, and higher at the same time, as it assumes a substantial engagement with the text. The theoretical choices of ideas and terminology have been chosen as needed to support this thesis and facilitate its application. The distinction between two levels of the adaptive process, the microscopic and the macroscopic and the delegation of different functions to each, is the central notion of the structure. What follows is a discussion of the aforementioned problems through the choices made in the context of this thesis.

1.3.1 Specialisation of the Media

The attempt to approach the subject from a viewpoint of delegation of duties often leads to a dead end. It is true that not every type of signification can be transferred smoothly between the media, but it is suggested here that a decision on what each medium can accommodate does not address the problem adequately on its own. Rochelle Hurst claims that “the discourse of adaptation theory, informed by the binary opposition that underlies Bluestone’s approach, posits literature and film as innately different, diametrically opposed, and hierarchically positioned. Film, as literature’s other, cannot adopt its narrative devices for fear of disrupting the polarity through which the process of adaptation is commonly understood” (Hurst 2008, p.179). This categorisation is not as popular today as it used to be, although there are still proponents of the proposition, like Seymour Chatman in the aforementioned essay. On the other hand, we have academics stretching the data to suggest that there is nothing that cinema cannot do in terms of signification and therefore there is nothing that cannot be transposed from one medium to the other. Examples of that approach can be found in James Griffith’s *Adaptations as Imitations* (1997). This defensive extreme is also misleading and not entirely realistic, as it transfers the discourse back to a demand of strict fidelity.

The thesis does not eliminate the issue of medium specificity but it can potentially circumvent it. It is not based on a framework of transfer of information but on an appreciation of a transfer of functions. The suggestion is that an examination of the functions of components of the interacting works, can provide a useful alternative. From this perspective, the specific signification of each element of the literary work does not need to be transferred and thus the discussion of categorisation becomes secondary.

1.3.2 The definition of the Term Adaptation

Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation* (2013), points out the problems in defining the term and

suggests that this difficulty stems from the fact that there is no distinction between adaptation as process and as product, with the same term being used for both. “As a product, an adaptation can be given a formal definition but as a process – of creation and of reception - other aspects have to be considered” (Hutcheon 2013, p.15). She argues for the importance of separating the two entities, as the joint study of the two can be theoretically confusing. The other aspects are according to Hutcheon, “the adapter’s creative interpretation” and “the audience’s intertextuality”. Essentially she is opening the discussion from a viewpoint of film criticism to a discussion of artistic creation and reception theory.

In that spirit, this thesis will examine its premise through both aspects of adaptation. Furthermore, the definition of the term has been focused through an assumed objective of engagement with the text. Dicecco points out that “it is exceedingly difficult to outline a conceptually coherent and media-inclusive theory regarding why the statement, ‘This is an adaptation’, rings true in certain cases and not in others” (Dicecco 2015, p.2). In that spirit, the aim of this thesis is not a general definition of the concept of adaptation but rather the demarcation of a specific viewpoint in the field of adaptation studies.

1.3.3 The Word/Image Divide

Hutcheon, discussing audience perception, also makes the distinction between different modes of engagement. She points out the oversimplification of assigning the telling mode to literature and the showing mode to cinema. The assignation is not illogical, but the boundaries are not clear enough to allow for a universal application, especially if we take into account the hybrid nature of cinema. Hutcheon’s distinction mirrors another one of the main theoretical obstacles in adaptation theory, namely the assumption that words cannot be translated into images. Although this statement is technically true, when applied to adaptation it proves analytically inadequate. The immediate

objection is that cinema is not entirely visual, as dialogue is also comprised of words, and the cinema screen can easily accommodate text. Also, the mere existence of sound forbids categorisation of cinema as a strictly visual art-form. Elliott argues that “the designation of novels as ‘words’ and of film as ‘images’ is neither empirically nor logically sustainable” (Elliott 2008, p.179).

The answer suggested here regarding the claim that words cannot be translated into images is that it's not necessary for them to do so. The attempt to translate completely is impossible in any literal sense, so it cannot realistically constitute the objective of a process of adaptation. The word/image divide is insurmountable if we consider as an aim for adaptation the semiotically complete transfer of information. But such a definition would be illogical unless the goal is to prove the impossibility of its subject. If on the other hand, it is assumed that the aim of adaptation is the engagement with the source text on a more abstract level, the examination is afforded the reasonable flexibility to replace the words with their functions, to study interacting utterances instead of a series of signs. The suggestion here is the focus on the dialogic relationships between the functions that operate within the source as well as in the new medium.

1.3.4 The Concept/Percept Discourse

This issue is linked to the word/image divide but is more focused on matters of reception rather than semiotics. The novel and the film refer to different parts of our intellect. The world of the novel is *conceived* intellectually whereas the world of the film is *perceived* through sight and sound. Jean Mitry uses an argument of precedence to make the point: “Time in the novel is constructed with words. In the cinema it is constructed with actions. The novel creates a world while the cinema puts us in the presence of a world which it organises according to a certain continuity. The novel is a narrative which organises itself in a world; the film, a world which organises itself in a narrative”

(cited in Griffith 1997, p.26). This argument reinforces the categorical separation of the two media, and is used to support the claim that there can be no meaningful transposition from one to the other. But if the proposition is examined carefully it can be noted that the distinction is only valid with regard to the initial reception of the work. At the point of the first contact with the work, if one disregards the verbal elements of a film as secondary, it is true that a novel and a film are ingested as concept and percept respectfully. But on the subsequent level, of the processing of the received information, this is no longer the case. The novel's concepts are translated into images, such as visualisation of locales and characters, while the film's images are translated into concepts, like narrative and themes. Thomas Leitch goes a step further to suggest that "the difference between percept and concept may well be more properly a function of rereading and of a specifically analytical kind ... with each rereading converting more percepts into concepts" (Leitch 2003, p.158). Concepts are eventually translated into images (novel) and images into concepts (film). But even in cases where initial perception is key to the effect of the work, there is still the possibility of different signifying systems creating the same emotional or aesthetic effect regardless of the mode of deliverance. A sense of shock, for example, can easily be accomplished by film as it can by literature, albeit through a different signifying strategy. This thesis proposes an examination of those strategies, rather than specific content.

1.3.5 The Form/Content Debate

An equally strong barrier as the one erected by the word/image discourse, the form/content argument is especially powerful in the structuralist and post-structuralist theoretical environment. The structuralist view that form cannot be separated from content restricts a work of art to its original medium and forbids the possibility of translation. The post-structuralist dismissal of content altogether, and the view of the work of art as pure form, makes the situation even more problematic as it doesn't leave any common ground between the media and no object essentially to be

transposed. This semiotic obstacle is not easy to overcome and seems to suggest that a study of adaptation requires a different theoretical basis. Kamilla Elliott in *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate* (2003) describes the theoretical approaches that have been employed to overcome or circumvent the issue. In an evocative analogy, she sets the form/content discourse parallel to that about body and soul and uses *Wuthering Heights* as a metaphor. “The various ways in which Heathcliff tries to connect with Cathy after her death provide templates for the various ways in which films seek to connect with novels in adaptation in terms of form and content” (Elliott 2003, p.136). Elliott is not recommending any of the methods that she presents as completely successful, but she does argue against the strict adherence to semiotic formalist dicta. She also suggests that further study of the relationship between form and content can prove fruitful in the context of adaptation.

Against the structuralist view that content cannot be separated from its native form and the post-structuralist view that form is all that can be recognised, this thesis proposes a Bakhtinian approach. His opposition to Saussurian structuralism and Russian Formalism is based on the denial of the stability of the sign. While the concept seems to further hinder the discussion of adaptation, in fact the opposite is true. By denying stable signification, Bakhtin undermines the structuralist theoretical impossibility of adaptation. By undermining the connection between form and content, he defeats the denial of transposition that was based on that connection. Against post-structuralism’s denial of intentional meaning, one could position Bakhtin’s notion of the author as an organising agency. The non-existence of content and excision of the author are not universal truths, just analytical points of view. Bakhtin’s diplomatic view of the authorial agency as conductor of interacting voices/ideas is a potent alternative.

1.3.6 High Literature Cannot be Adapted

The notion that literature of quality cannot produce important films has always been popular in the context of adaptation. Bela Balazs bases his analysis on the form/content argument: “The theoretical reason on which the opposition to adaptation is based is that there is an organic connection between form and content in every art and that a certain art form always offers the most adequate expression for a certain content. Thus the adaptation of a content to a different art form can only be detrimental to a work of art, if that work of art was good. In other words, one may perhaps make a good film out of a bad novel, but never out of a good one” (cited in Griffith 1997, p.19). Leitch makes a similar point when he talks about “art as a series of expressive works, whether literary or cinematic, whose value inheres in their finished, achieved qualities, their success in *being themselves*” (Leitch 2007, p.7 [original emphasis]). These propositions are based on a consideration of what is lost in the transition, but there is no reference to what is gained. This argument holds water only if adaptation is viewed as a non-creative, mechanical process. The concept seems to be fostering an entrenching mentality that allows for the existence of only one creative agency, one author in this case. There is not enough room for two authorial perspectives connected to the same work, so one of the two will have to be assigned the ‘low’ status. From the point of view of an entrenched film scholarship, a great director does not require an important novel, as it would serve the same purpose as a piece of pulp literature. The adapter is essentially creating another work, the examination of which cannot benefit from a juxtaposition to a source. From the point of view of short-sighted literary scholars, any attempt to tackle the classics is a priori doomed to failure. The work will surely be distorted in the process. Apart from this limited view regarding authorship, the assumption of value is also problematic. Matthew Bernstein (2000), discussing Akira Kurosawa’s *High and Low*, based on a pulp novel by Ed McBain, claims that film criticism dismisses the book as creatively irrelevant source material for the director to transcend. He then goes on to discuss how Kurosawa actually did engage with the text. Artistic value is too subjective a criterion to be employed in the examination

of adaptation. In this thesis, adaptation will not be addressed as the transfer of a specific set of elements that constitutes a content but as engagement with a text. This engagement will be modelled according to a system that is shaped by each individual case.

Opposed to the arguments against adaptations of canonical works, Linda Hutcheon suggests that multiple adaptations of a classic work constitute an evolutionary process. She claims that the retelling of a story through different prisms, through various intellects and personalities and through changing socio-political contexts makes it richer, more complex and always relevant. “Stories also evolve by adaptation and are not immutable over time. Sometimes, like biological adaptation, cultural adaptation involves migration to favourable conditions : stories travel to different cultures and different media. In short, stories adapt just as they are adapted” (Hutcheon 2013, p.31). This evolution implies the existence of a specific content that moves through multiple forms. But it is indeed productive to see the process as a series of reinterpretations or discussions on the work. From this perspective the examination can offer significant insight into the text, its time, the modern situation and the new viewpoint. This thesis allows for the examination of the dialogic relations between novel and film as well as the exploration of the evolution of a work through what Bakhtin calls ‘great time’.

1.3.7 The Interiority/Exteriority Argument

The claim that the novel form is better suited to express the inner lives of characters and that film can portray them only superficially, is related to the discussion of the showing and telling modes of engagement. George Bluestone supports the categorisation: “The film, by arranging external signs for our visual perception, or by presenting us with dialogue, can lead us to *infer* thought. But it cannot show us thought directly. It can show us characters thinking, feeling, and speaking but it cannot show us their thoughts and feelings” (cited in Griffith 1997, p.63 [original emphasis]). This

argument implies that thought is purely verbal and furthermore that feelings can only be expressed through words. It also disregards film's verbal elements by claiming that film cannot *show* thought. The novel operates through the composition of a series of imagined events, put together to achieve dramatic effect. Thought, of the character or the narrator, is one of those events. In film, the process is the same; what changes is the signifying method. Therefore, a more accurate statement would be that film does not signify primarily on a verbal level (although that is not always the case) but it can use its visual and auditory codes to transfer information about character's thought processes and emotional charge. Thomas Leitch gives a different answer to this problem: he suggests that fiction works through its 'gaps'. His claim is that they are not "an inevitable corollary of a given story's incompleteness but the very basis of its appeal" (Leitch 2003, p.159). The demand from the audience to infer the information that is missing is a productive part of the process. Written fiction employs its gaps to that effect just as filmed fiction. In the case of adaptation, the nature of the gaps might be different, but their existence does not diminish the result. The questions that remain are how the purpose of the original gaps can be transferred to the new work and how the gaps of the new medium can serve the functions of the original work.

Film does indeed operate primarily through visual means and thus is not ideally equipped to represent large sections of verbal discourse, that would provide insight into the hero's psyche. In many cases of adaptation those sections are omitted. Omissions are unavoidable, as a complete transfer of information is impossible, but the choice of the omissions is critical to the process and should not be made on grounds of facility. If the reading of the work dictates that sections of internal discourse are crucial elements of the poetic structure, a strategy for their transfer might be necessary. Additionally, significant departures could be employed to accommodate the inclusion of the crucial discourse, for example by externalising it through the introduction of a new character.

1.3.8 Film Can Only Adapt the Narrative

The claim that film is able to carry the narrative elements of a novel is not widely contested. The discussion of enunciation is trickier. The distinction between narrative and enunciation seems like a logical step in a discussion of fiction, but applied to the issue of adaptation it gives a false sense of simplicity to a process that is more complicated. This approach implies a definition of adaptation in terms of inclusion. What actually lies under the argument is a compromise. To accept it is to relinquish the high ground to literature. Accusations of ‘scavenging’ can no longer be defended against. The film takes the place of a poor relative of the source text. This approach constitutes a very poor theoretical half-measure. The separation of the narrative from the source and the construction of a film based solely on that basis is an easy solution, one employed to a great extent by commercial cinema. This is the approach that produces shadows on the wall aiming to capitalise on the name of the original. It is argued here that narrative is not the only element that *can* be transferred, but also that it is not even an element that necessarily *needs* to be transferred. Hurst suggests that “the implication of McFarlane’s classificatory approach is that those narrative functions that are directly transferable should be so transferred. The expectation of an accurate filmic rendition of all but the most intangible elements of a source text is thereby justified” (Hurst 2008, p.175). What is proposed here is an approach that addresses narrative as one of many elements of the text, that will be evaluated along with the rest. The assertion of this thesis is that the study of that system can provide the key to a more meaningful and more ambitious mode of adaptation.

1.3.9 Analogy

All the arguments discussed up to this point have been based on categorical distinctions between the two media. They all implied the existence of two opposing camps. A more diplomatic approach could focus on the similarities, rather than the differences between literature and film. There is

common ground between them and it could potentially be used productively in the context of adaptation. Kamilla Elliott, in *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate* (2003), considers this approach a mistake. She sees the discussion of analogy as a trap, dismissing the tendency to address films generally as texts. She claims this takes adaptation studies back under a literary purview. On a semiotic level, Elliott suggests, to try to describe the 'language' of cinema in verbal terms means to categorise film as a subsection of literary studies or even worse, an illustration of literature, essentially disregarding all the elements of the filmic medium that are unique to it. "The categorical legitimization of film as a 'real' language subjugates it to methods and models derived from linguistics" (Elliott 2003, p.27). The dangers she recognises in this practice are that the actual verbal elements of film, like dialogue, are not addressed or are considered uncinematic, and that the focus moves to the director while the screenplay is dismissed from the discourse. Elliott sees most arguments of analogy as hidden categorical distinctions. She also points out that they work on a figurative level, not offering much in terms of actual analytical potential. Elliott expands on this point to discuss "cinematic novels" and "literary cinema". She opines that the practice of finding cinematic structures in literature by christening specific novels or authors as cinematic is used by literary scholars to assert the superiority of the novel and by film scholars to assert the superiority of film. On the other hand, she finds that what is addressed, positively or negatively, as literary cinema can only lead to extreme positions: either toward a strict fidelity or toward a complete severance of the ties between the two media.

Analogical discourse is indeed often guilty of going too far, stretching its argument too thin. Anne Gjelsvik claims that "the downsizing of the borders between media has been done to the extent that important differences seem to be forgotten" (Gjelsvik 2013, p.247). In defence of adaptation as a marriage between 'sister arts', academics have gone to great lengths to prove that there is no element of a text that cannot be adapted. While it is true that some sort of solution can probably be

found in most issues that arise in the process of adaptation, the implementation of many of those solutions would create a peculiar effect. For example, it would be possible to transpose a metaphor from a text to the screen through the insertion of the relevant image, but where in the novel that juxtaposition is organic, in film it could be rather jarring. The attempt to carry over every single element of the text will always be met with failure and cannot constitute a realistic objective. Anne Gjelsvik argues that “cinema can generate a more immediate and visceral response than can novels ... The differences in how we feel when we read something and when we see something cannot be ignored, and should be used as an analytical tool when analysing the artworks in question, they should also be used for theoretical perspective in the studies of media transformations, such as the adaptation of novels into films” (Gjelsvik 2013, p.259). The differences of the media cannot be ignored, the strategy of transposition needs to create the best possible conditions for their evaluation on an individual level. The correct adjustment of the level of abstraction is one of the crucial parameters in this process. The attempts to disregard the differences between the media are either figurative and thus of little analytical value, too abstract and thus confusing, or too universal and thus unrealistic. The position of this thesis is that the differences of the media need to be included in the discussion, but not allowed to govern the examination. A search for the key that will facilitate the translation is more productive than the assumption that the languages are the same.

1.3.10 Point of View and Narration

Two issues that have attracted significant academic attention in the context of adaptation are those of point of view and narration. The way each medium handles perspective has always been a point of contention in adaptation studies. Point of view is a difficult term. It is often misinterpreted or used in a much more restrictive way than is productive. One reason for that is that it suggests a visual framework when that is not necessarily the case. But the visual specification of the term is not the only problem. It is a loaded concept, used also to suggest an ideological position. In film, on

the other hand, there is the danger of merging the term with the literal camera angle, the image of a character's field of vision. This confusion has led to many attempts to rename the term to something closer to its meaning and less ambiguous. Genette in *Figures III* (1972), suggested the term "focalisation" to describe the relationship of knowledge between character and narrator. For the purposes of this study the term point of view will be used in its narrative capacity to suggest the perspective from which the story is told, unless otherwise stated.

The main argument against adaptation on the subject of point of view is that where the novel can switch between different points of view seamlessly, film cannot. According to this, the novel can play intricate and complex games with point of view while film can only propose a clumsy literal point of view that dismisses the character from the frame. Essentially, the argument is that film only has the choice between an objective point of view and a single poor subjective alternative. This is a simplistic view based in part on the misconception of merging narrative point of view with its literal, visual counterpart. Film is capable of suggesting the identification with a character's cognitive angle. Empirically it could be argued that the audience is always led to intuitively identify the agency of the assumed perspective. This works through camera positions but also through sound; it cannot be ignored that film is a multitrack format and therefore can signify on multiple levels. Also, the dissemination of narrative information, rather than the visual perception of a character, is the main establishing factor of point of view and that aspect does not suffer in the transposition. Gilberto Perez in his essay "Landscape and Fiction: A Day in the Country", (published in Naremore 2000, p.129-153), offers an analysis of point of view in the case of Renoir's *A Day in the Country* (1936). He explains how landscape and nature are presented through the story and the characters, creating an impressionistic effect. He also describes how Renoir frees the landscape from the characters, by not employing a literal point of view, but a possible one that could be the viewer's. Identification is achieved not directly with the characters but with an

approximation to them. This suggests that cognitive, narrative point of view can be conveyed seamlessly in film but also that visual point of view does not have to be literal.

Narration is a subject that is closely linked to the discussion of point of view. The argument against film in this case is that it essentially does not have a strong narrator. Where in the novel the narrator, omniscient or not, can comment extensively on the story, in film they cannot. In the novel they can be perceived as an entity with personality whereas in film they stay hidden somewhere out of frame. Verbal narration, on or off screen, is the obvious way to overcome that obstacle and there has been a lot of discussion on whether that practice is cinematic or not. Defining the term cinematic would be a challenge, but in any case a verbal rendering of a verbal structure is not always the only option. It could be argued that film operates in a constant Bakhtinian double-voiced discourse, where the narrator's and the character's point of view coexist in an indistinguishable merger. An example of narrative ingenuity is Karel Reisz's 1981 adaptation of John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. The book is to large extent comprised of the modern narrator's commentary on the story that he is telling. The screenplay by Harold Pinter created a second narrative strand that carries the narrator's view and juxtaposes that to the original story. This constitutes a significant departure from the text but an interesting attempt at mirroring its poetic structure. It is not suggested here that the narrator's role necessarily needs to be dramatised, this is merely an example of an adaptation that engages with the text in terms of narration.

The second objection against adaptations in this context concerns the rendering of unreliable narration. A novel written in the first person has only one point of reference, the narrator. The reader's window into the story is limited and they have no way to overcome ambiguity or omission. The disorienting effect of a confused, unstable or false character cannot be transferred in the same way in film. It is not possible for film to provide a completely singular perspective. Even with a

literal point of view shot, the information on the screen will be at the same time more (background, details) and less (subjective interpretation of the data) than the novel form could offer. As Robert Stam points out, in *Literature Through Film*, “The discursive power of unreliable autodiegetic narration is almost automatically relativised in film. In a novel the narrator controls the only track – the verbal track ... In the film, the other characters gain a physical presence denied them in the novel” (Stam 2005, p.232). In general terms, film does not allow for the application of a filter in the same way that literature can. While film cannot render literal subjective narration in perceptual terms it can very easily achieve the same result in terms of narrative. A shot of someone starting to tell a story is enough for us to know that what we are seeing from that point on is his interpretation of events. The fact that there is more information on the screen than would be logical in a verbal account does not disturb our suspension of disbelief. Interpretations of events can be added as voice-over. Also, film is able to achieve more in terms of the implication of ambiguity or falseness through use of its multi-track nature. The possibility of discord between image and sound, for example a voice-over that contradicts the image, does not have its equivalent in the novel. This discussion demonstrates that adaptation can tackle such issues, but only through a flexible framework that uses comparative methods and accepts divergence. This is the type of framework that this thesis is attempting to provide.

1.4 Alternative Approaches

This section will contain a number of theoretical approaches that have been implemented in the attempt to overcome the problems facing adaptation and formulate a viable theory.

1.4.1 The Narratological Approach

Brian McFarlane in *Novel to Film* (1996), taking on board the assumption that film can only really carry the narrative of the novel, suggests a turn to narratology. He opposes fidelity criticism and

suggests that whereas narrative can be transferred from one medium to the other, enunciation has to be adapted. Even though he discusses the subject of enunciation, it is clear that his main focus is the narrative, which he considers the central agent of both arts. Kathleen Murray claims that “while McFarlane discusses the specifically filmic elements of point of view and mise-en-scene, the bulk of his work is spent on detailed plot and narrative analysis” (Murray 2011, p.92). McFarlane argues that film has evolved culturally as a primarily storytelling medium and therefore its relationship with literature should be based on that common ground. As for the other elements of the novel, they have to be adapted through a model of equivalence whenever that is possible. He proposes a strategy for the transfer of the narrative based on Barthes’ “cardinal functions”, the hinge-points in the narrative (McFarlane 1996, p.47). He then goes on to support his view through some of the categorical distinctions mentioned earlier, about the different signifying systems and codes of the two media.

This view is not as popular as it used to be. Murray asks: “Why is the whole notion of adaptation so tied up in narrative? What are the other means available to a filmmaker, or rather, what are the elements, besides narrative, that are ‘adaptable’?” (Murray 2011, p.92). While McFarlane’s arguments toward a turn to narratology are logical, his position signals a certain admission of defeat. It does not present a productive basis for conversation but rather a limited triage situation. His discourse assumes the aim of adapting a novel rather than engaging with it. He assumes the need for a product of adaptation rather than an attempt at dialogue. It could be argued that a transposition of the narrative of *Mrs Dalloway* is not really necessary. It could also be argued that Stephen Daldry’s *The Hours* (2002) is a creative re-conceptualisation of the novel. It would appear that McFarlane’s method might struggle to deal with novels that contain limited narrative. He would find it difficult to approach many of the modernist authors. This approach would render large parts of literature unfilmable whilst compromising the adaptations of works that would not be able to

survive the loss of their non-narrative elements.

1.4.2 Textual Studies

Thomas Leitch in “Twelve Fallacies in Contemporary Adaptation Theory” (2003), attributes the inadequacy of adaptation studies primarily to institutional misrepresentation, and suggests a different approach. He argues that the struggle to incorporate adaptation into either literature or film studies is misguided. He proposes what he calls textual studies, a field that would incorporate both literature and film and that could be the ground, albeit not exclusively, of adaptation studies. He proposes a turn to questions like “In what ways are precursor texts rewritten, as they always are when they are read? Such questions, though not subsuming dialogism to adaptation, would extend both dialogism and adaptation study in vitally important ways” (Leitch 2003, p.168). Similarly to Linda Hutcheon’s notion of textual evolution, Leitch’s proposition is rather more ambitious than McFarlane’s. By widening the conversation he multiplies the analytical possibilities and creates a new forum for creative discourse and interaction.

One limitation that could potentially be attributed to this approach is that the switch of the focus from the source of adaptation to its product serves criticism more than it does theory. While the discussion of a text based on its predecessors is very productive, it is not positioned adequately to answer questions of the process of adaptation. As it foregrounds the links from the new work to the previous one(s), it does not shed light on the opposite direction, the routes from the previous work to the new one. As far as adaptation is concerned, this thesis will contend that the study of the possibilities of the literary text is the area that has not been explored to its full potential. This study will examine the dialogue between the works and a creative agent, rather than that between a film and its predecessors.

1.4.3 Equivalences

The model implied by a broader application of fidelity discourse, one that does not focus on the narrative, is that of equivalences. Kamilla Elliott in *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate* (2003) cites Joy Gould Boyum as saying that “The rhetoric of fiction is simply not the rhetoric of film and it’s in finding analogous strategies whereby the one achieves the effects of the other that the greatest challenge of adaptation lies” (cited in Elliott 2003, p.184). A practical application of this approach would address every element of the text in an attempt to identify its equivalent in filmic terms. As McFarlane pointed out, that is more easily achieved in terms of the narrative part of the work. It is a reasonable approach and one that is arguably rather popular in the practice of adaptation. Nevertheless, it will be argued here that it is inadequate on its own. A series of analogous solutions will achieve a feasible proximity to the original, but that proximity can be superficial. Emulating specific narrative or stylistic elements is an exercise in fragmentation. The fact that Boyum refers to the effects of the elements rather than the elements themselves is a step in the right direction but it needs to be paired with a wider consideration of the connections between the elements as well. It is important for the transfer of each element to be informed by the consideration of the function that it served in the original, but it is also important to address each element in the context of the whole. The fragmenting approach will struggle to address issues of elements that do not offer solutions of equivalence. To eliminate these elements from the adaptation would be arbitrary. In other cases, the equivalent of a literary strategy might not function organically in the context of the new work. An example of this can be seen in Jack Clayton’s 1974 adaptation of Francis Scott Fitzgerald’s 1925 novel *The Great Gatsby*. Chapter four starts with the presentation by the narrator of a series of names at one of Gatsby’s great gatherings. This device is organic in the written prose, establishing the kind of people that attend the party and the social environment. In the adaptation this part of the chapter is spoken by one of the characters, Tom Buchanan, as he and his company walk through the crowd. This speech stays very close to the text, as does most of the film, but in this case it seems

rather artificial. While the idea to dramatise the segment seems reasonable since it helps transfer an important element of the text, the resulting scene clashes with the overall style of the film and pushes, in a negative way, the limits of the medium itself. It could be argued that a consideration of equivalences needs to be organised by a wider strategy that can structure the connections between elements in the original but also in the product.

Robert B. Ray, in his essay “The Field of ‘Literature and Film’ ” (2000), suggests that a model of equivalences is inadequate for further academic analysis. “If ... knowledge about adaptation simply entails the ability to isolate systematic equivalences capable of generating the same signified, then the commercial media, never fussy about mixing forms, have long since beaten academics to the punch” (published in Naremore 2000, p.48). He proposes a focus of the study on the transactions between word and image, on the ways that they can be adapted or combined. He suggests that we should be looking further than the commercial model into new possibilities. Ray’s position, although not specifically focused on the subject of actual adaptation, has the advantage of being objective, not prioritising film or literature. In general, the scholastic correspondence from one text to the other seems to lack depth, a presiding principle that would put the process in perspective, organise and prioritise the material. Kamilla Elliott cites The Monty Python’s *Semaphore Version of Wuthering Heights* as a parody of this piecemeal practice of semiotic correspondence: “As Heathcliff and Katherine wave flags to each other, subtitles indicate the reduction of their literary speeches” (Elliott 2003, p.195).

1.4.4 The Looking Glass Analogy

Kamilla Elliott dismisses the existing analogical models and warns against the dangers of literalising analogical propositions. She also opposes structural analogy, the model of equivalences, which she sees as partly based on the conception that images are subservient to words. She proposes

an original theoretical alternative. She introduces a discussion on dreams and the subconscious and draws a parallel to the process of adaptation. She suggests a view of both the novel and the film as a combination of manifest and latent content. In the novel, the manifest content is the word and the latent the image, in the sense that the words evoke the images in our consciousness. On the other hand in film, the image is the manifest content and the word is the latent, as the images that we see create conceptual connections. On the basis of these assumptions, she suggest that the transposition from one medium to the other is a matter of changing the hierarchy in this structure, namely visualising the mental images implied by the novel while making sure that these images also evoke the conceptual structures of the text.

This model has the advantage of circumventing many of the theoretical obstacles facing adaptation, primarily by addressing the word/image divide. From the perspective of this study it has certain limitations. Firstly, it is not easy to imagine its practical application. In abstract terms it feels like an elegant solution but a closer examination would invite the question of what that image could be that can simultaneously originate in the text and imply its concepts. That is a challenging question and it could be argued that an answer will not always be attainable. Another consideration is that the switch between primary and secondary content might not always be productive. Prioritising different sets of information than the original may very well defeat their purpose. A third objection could be raised at the point of reception. The images evoked by a text as well as the concepts evoked by an image are to a certain extent subjective. The signifying chain from the text, to the adapter to the audience is not as good a conduit of information as this approach seems to require. Despite these arguments, this mode of thought could be a useful tool in specific cases of adaptation.

1.4.5 A Sociological Turn

James Naremore, following Dudley Andrew, states in his introduction to the collection of essays on adaptation *Film Adaptation* (2000), that he would be interested to see a sociological turn in the study of the subject. “What we need ... is a broader definition of adaptation and a sociology that takes into account the commercial apparatus, the audience, and the academic culture industry” (Naremore 2000, p.10). Bazin, in the essay “Adaptation, or the Cinema as Digest” (Bazin 1948, p.32-40), defends adaptation “as digest”, discussing film’s position in modern society. He acknowledges cinema’s position as a popular medium and opposes the claim of analogy between artistic value and intellectual effort. Dudley Andrew in his essay “Adaptation”, also sees the potential of the study of adaptation in context. “The stylistic strategies developed to achieve the proportional equivalences necessary to construct matching stories not only are symptomatic of a period’s style, but may crucially alter that style” (Andrew 2000, p.35). While the study of adaptation in socio-historical context can indeed yield results, it can be noted that both Bazin and Andrew assume that in terms of its practice, an adaptation can mainly transfer the narrative. They also assume the implementation of a model of equivalences. Naremore on the other hand, suggests a departure from the study of adaptations of canonical works. The view of this thesis is that while a situation of the practice of adaptation in its society is necessary, it cannot adequately illuminate all aspects of the practice itself. For example, an examination of the historical context of *Apocalypse Now* and *Heart of Darkness* creates a very potent discussion, but cannot address the adapter’s process to a significant extent. Examination of the external social condition on its own cannot provide adequate insight into the internal processes. A supporting theoretical structure that supports the examination from within is also necessary. Thus, a discussion that only pursues this angle runs the risk of being a sociological discussion through adaptation rather than a discussion of adaptation through its context.

1.4.6 The Shaping Cause Approach

James Griffith in *Adaptations as Imitations* (1997), presents an original approach based on Neo-Aristotelian theories of literary criticism. He suggests that the elements of primary importance in a work of art are the author's solutions to aesthetic problems. Applying that assumption to the subject of adaptation, he gathers that the transposition of those solutions is the most crucial aspect of the process. Through this approach Griffith sidelines the form/content debate. He uses Aristotle's method of discussing "concrete wholes" rather than fragmenting his object. He cites R.S. Crane in his viewpoint on criticism. "We can talk about the internal necessities and possibilities in poems and the problems these posed for their poets rather than merely about the necessities and problems defined by us by our special choice of dialectical premises" (cited in Griffith 1997, p.37). Griffith stresses the importance of recognising that both narrative and style are formed by larger choices and that the recognition of those choices is the key to the transposition of a work between different media. "This ... should help us separate elements of artificial objects that occur as a matter of artistic choice and purpose from elements of natural objects that occur as a matter of organic necessity" (Griffith 1997, p.38). The "shaping cause" of the work is its core and to ignore it makes the process arbitrary. Griffith also points out the utility of such a method in adaptation criticism that can now be applied as the evaluation of the realisation of the inherent possibilities of the work, rather than a transfer of specific elements. He makes an interesting distinction between the concept of copy, a transfer of all the parts of the original and imitation, a transfer of its qualities. "Fidelity concerns the kinds of choices made, not the number of choices that match the author's" (Griffith 1997, p.41).

This approach, that shares certain features with the one employed in this thesis, offers some possibilities for tackling some of the problems facing adaptation. It also opens the fruitful discussion of the countless possibilities that can potentially lead from the source to the product

rather than the other way around. The implication of this method that Griffith doesn't explore in depth is the possibilities *under* the dome of the "shaping cause" that could make the discussion more flexible to creative and interpretive influence. It could be argued that this turn to a modified fidelity requires another layer of complexity in order to form a complete proposition, a layer that would incorporate the ideas of intertextuality. Another issue that a theory based on this approach would have to address, is the challenge of identifying the shaping cause in a given text, as well as the possible existence of multiple interpretations of that cause. A solution to this problem might be the substitution of the biographical author with their inferred agency through the text. The use of the implied author as the agency responsible for the work moves the discussion from the realm of biographical research to one of interpretive analysis. This offers a multitude of ways to identify the shaping cause as well as the pluralism of interpretive flexibility.

1.4.7 Mutual Illumination

Robert Stam, in *Literature Through Film* (2005), manages to keep a rather objective stance between literature and film. His approach focuses on the interaction between a work and its adaptation, rather than the transfer of the work in question, in a process of mutual illumination. He sees the films not merely as transfers of the novels, but as (re)interpretations of them. "Adaptation is potentially a way of one medium seeing another through a process of mutual illumination. It can potentially be an example of what Bakhtin calls 'excess seeing', the process of reciprocal relativisation and complementarity of perspectives whereby individuals and communities, and, I would add, media, learn from one another" (Stam 2005, p.365). Stam also prefers to see the differences between the media in positive terms, as they allow for the uncovering or illumination of aspects of the novel that only film can reach. Stam's mention of Bakhtin in the previous quotation is characteristic of his work. He has engaged in great depth with Bakhtin's theory and his own view is influenced by it. Bakhtinian theory will be widely applied later in this thesis through his theory of

dialogism as well as his reading of Dostoevsky. Stam's interpretation of the scholar's work serves to adapt Bakhtin's work into filmic territory. Stam's view of adaptation as reinterpretation offers fertile ground for discussion. It departs from the demands of strict fidelity while maintaining a strong link between the works.

1.4.8 The Argument of this Thesis

The approach to adaptation suggested by this thesis incorporates some of the ideas that have been proposed in the relevant literature as solutions to the issues facing adaptation. Other approaches have been deemed incompatible with the rationale of this study, and some are in direct contradiction with it. Narrative is accepted as a component of the process of adaptation but not, as Brian McFarlane suggests, singularly so. Instead, this thesis will deal with a number of transferable elements, arranged and treated according to a plan specific to each work. Thomas Leitch's textual studies and Robert Stam's mutual illuminations, both suggestions for a turn to intertextuality, have been considered in the structure of this project. Leitch's view of the study of a text in the light of its predecessors has been incorporated in the proposed analytical structure but not placed in the centre of the analysis. It constitutes one of the parameters that inform the process. The main argument that has been made in this thesis against a singular reliance on intertextuality is its inability to adequately address the one-to-one model of interaction that is necessary in a discussion of adaptation as it is defined here. On a similar note, Stam's notion of works informing each other's understanding is integrated as a discussion of historical/cultural situation and creative reinterpretation. Andrew and Naremore map a similar route when suggesting a sociological turn. The view of this thesis is that external influence on the process cannot be disregarded without undermining the analysis but also that internal forces must be taken into account.

Models of equivalence are valid as tools employed in specific instances of transposition, but not as

governing principles of the process. The alternative that is proposed here is a model of functions. There are two main differences between the two approaches. Firstly, while equivalences operate on the media-specific terrain of form and content, functions transport the process to a realm of effects (narrative, emotional or intellectual). The second difference is that unlike the models of equivalence that operate on a one-by-one base, treating each element as a possible candidate for transposition, a model of functions structures its parts in complex systems, specific to each work and deriving from it.

Kamilla Elliott's analysis of the form and content debate has been very useful. Her points have been taken into consideration and used to support the theoretical structure of this thesis. Linda Hutcheon's distinction between product and process is also integral and has been employed in the testing of the theory. Seymour Chatman's discussion of the implied author has been utilised. The medium differences that he observes are accepted as facts that inform the analysis but they are not enforced as a priori restrictions.

James Griffith's shaping cause approach is an important parallel of the view of fidelity that is presented here. The basic principle of his idea, the prioritisation of aesthetic aims in the study of the transposition, has been retained but refined through the filter of the theoretical and practical needs of this thesis. The agency that is being interrogated has been defined as the implied author in the case of the literary work. It has also been paired with the agency of the adapter that operates in the transposition. The notion of poetics has been introduced to define and structure the aims. Furthermore, this refined form of fidelity has been paired with intertextuality to incorporate the crucial influence of external forces.

1.5 Fidelity Discourse – Why Fidelity Matters

If there is one thing that adaptation scholars agreed on until recently, it is the dismissal of fidelity as a valid tool for the criticism and analysis of adaptations. There are few introductions to academic works on adaptation written in the last two decades that don't include a segment repudiating fidelity discourse. Thomas Leitch in "Twelve Fallacies in Contemporary Adaptation Theory" states that "fidelity to its source text ... is a hopelessly fallacious measure of a given adaptation's value because it is unattainable, undesirable, and theoretically possible only in a trivial sense" (Leitch 2003, p.161). Kate Newell suggests that fidelity is often motivated by ulterior motives: "fidelity discourse is agenda-driven and not based, as has been commonly maintained, solely on correspondences between the source and adaptation" (Newell 2010, p.93). Shelley Cobb believes that fidelity discourse establishes a gendered relationship between source and adaptation: "the language of fidelity constructs a gendered possession of authority and paternity for the source text within adaptation: the film as faithful wife to the novel as paternal husband" (Cobb 2010, p.30). Stam, in *Literature and Film* (2005), attacks the notion of the existence of a transferable 'core' in a novel, that the adapter needs to find and portray. James Griffith dismisses fidelity as an attempt to quantify a likeness to the original. Brian McFarlane in *Novel to Film* points out the unattainability of fidelity in terms of the subjectivity of interpretation. Cartmell and Whelehan (2010) discuss the case of the first *Harry Potter* film and its relative failure due to the overzealous struggle to stay close to the book.

While many of these points raise valid questions, the fervent hostility toward fidelity is an interesting fact in itself. Casie Hermansson suggests that fidelity "has fallen so far from critical fashion, and for so long, that it is worse than merely unfashionable to use it in contemporary criticism" (Hermansson 2015, p.5). Rachel Carroll notices that often fidelity is perceived as having an emotional basis: "what seems to be improper about fidelity is not merely the critical passivity

which it is thought to induce, but also the emotional investments by which it is motivated. What is being renounced here is not simply the sentiment of fidelity, but the impact of affect and its apparently compromising effect on critical judgement” (Carroll 2009, p.40). Significant academic effort appears to be invested in attacking a concept that seems to have been positively debunked quite a long time ago. It appears that the academic community is still trying to convince itself. J.D. Connor makes this point in his essay “The Persistence of Fidelity”. “What I am calling the fidelity reflex, though, is not the persistence of the discourse, but the persistent call for it to end. For adaptation theory to have any chance of success, it must do two things. First, it must account for the persistence of fidelity discourse despite decades of resourceful argument against it. Second, it must account for its own blind spot: what has the campaign against fidelity failed to get at? And given this consistent failure to achieve its goals, why do critics persist in calling for an end to fidelity?” (Connor 2007, p.2). Nico Dicecco claims that “the identification of fidelity as a problem is itself a potential problem ... If no one is actually advocating fidelity then there is no critical value to be found in overturning the concept” (DiCecco 2015, p.4). Erica Sheen states that “the current ‘anti-fidelity’ consensus within adaptation studies need more thought ... The arguments that inform this position ... are grounded in generalizations that simplify the idea of fidelity as it performs in particular contexts of filmmaking and, as a consequence, impose potentially damaging limitations on the cultural and historical scope of adaptation studies as a discipline” (Sheen 2013, p.243).

It is possible that a re-examination of the term fidelity is in order. Instead of a counter-productive attack on the concept, maybe it is time for a careful reappraisal of its potential. A publication that attempts to address fidelity through a more positive lens is *True to the Spirit*, a collection of essays that opposes the anti-fidelity trend. In the introduction of the volume, Colin MacCabe suggests that “modern studies of adaptation are primarily interested in the horizontal meaning that adaptations perform in the present rather than the vertical meaning that tie them to the past. The endless attacks

on fidelity, common to almost all the new literature on the subject, meant that they were ill equipped and unwilling to sketch that particular form of productivity that preserves identity at the same moments that it multiplies it” (MacCabe 2011, p.7).

On a superficial level, fidelity poses an easy target. There are many examples of uninspired faithful adaptations and numerous essays of dry fidelity criticism. It could be suggested that the attack on the concept could be seen as the aftermath of a revolution. The young theory of adaptation was governed by fidelity criticism in its starting steps. The overthrow of that restrictive regime was bound to happen through polemic discourse. On the other hand, dismissal of fidelity is not only a declaration of independence of adaptation studies from a rigid system of discourse. It is also a declaration of independence of film from literature studies. Film is still trying to detach itself from the servitude to literature studies. Tom Gunning makes that point: “Discussion of filmic adaptations seems to me to remain stuck in a defensive posture set by earlier generations of film critics anxious to maintain the value of cinema against the cultural hegemony of literary studies ... Adaptation might best be approached as an area in which cinema foregoes this preoccupation with its autonomy (without actually losing its identity) and becomes sincerely interested in how it can interact with literature ... The question for a film scholar must be: when, why and how have films adapted literary sources, and why has this relation been sought out when it could have been avoided?” (Gunning 2011, p.42). Linda Hutcheon points out that completely eliminating fidelity from the discussion is not an option. “While ‘fidelity criticism’ seems to us both unproductive as the sole means of studying works and their adaptations, we can never deny that adaptations do have a relationship to a prior text, so we have to deal with that” (Hutcheon 2013, p.4).

This thesis argues that fidelity does not necessarily imply hierarchy. The concept can be utilised much more neutrally in terms of comparison. David Kranz argues that “post-structural characterizations of fidelity criticism make some good points but generally miss the virtues of this

traditional approach to cinematic adaptation ... The heart of fidelity criticism is the *comparative textual method*, which allows critics to put a source and film adapted from it side-by-side in order to see what the similarities and differences are, what patterns emerge from the variety of these contrasts, and what these patterns might say about the consciously or unconsciously intended meanings in both source and adaptation” (Kranz 2008, p.203). Bruhn, Gjelsvic and Hanssen, in their introduction to *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges, New Directions*, suggest that “Adaptation must necessarily incorporate some kind of comparative element – seeing one text in relation to another – and the strategic and almost universal move in the field has been to ‘translate’ fidelity into the more neutral, and thus useful, measure of similarity and difference on various levels of the compared texts” (Bruhn & Gjelsvic & Hanssen 2013, p.5).

Whilst in academia the consensus is not in favour of fidelity, that is not the case in the context of popular opinion. Audience reception and film reviews still focus on issues of fidelity to a great extent. Mireia Aragay opposes fidelity discourse but understands its cultural significance. “While fidelity cannot be considered a valid yardstick with which to judge any adaptation, adaptation studies cannot afford to ignore the institutional and performative nature of the discourse of fidelity as found above all in reviews” (Aragay 2005, p.20). A limited fidelity-based approach mirrors the lack of an analytical alternative but also reminds one that a connection with the source may not be entirely misguided. The important question here is whether something useful is dismissed along with the restrictive discourse of the past. To answer this question one needs to attempt a careful definition of the theoretical entity that is being examined. This task will be undertaken in chapter two.

This reappraisal feels necessary now because complete dismissal of fidelity discourse entails certain risks. Lars Elleström argues that “fidelity is obviously a blunt and ambiguous notion upon which to

base one's artistic evaluation. However a discussion of similarities and differences between media products without normative aspects is quite a different thing. In fact, notions such as adaptation and media transformation collapse into nothingness if the aspect of similarity and difference is withdrawn. Transmediating, transforming and adapting is equivalent to keeping something, getting rid of something else and adding something new" (Elleström 2013, p115). Casie Hermansson advocates restraint: "Claiming the 'death of the source', while it undoubtedly catalyzed adaptation studies, now needs to reckon with what has been lost in the process ... It behooves adaptation studies, therefore, to move beyond, not fidelity, but the unreflecting dismissal of fidelity, and to transcend the hierarchy prevailing in adaptation criticism that privileges some intertextual approaches over others. Pitting intertextuality against fidelity is a logical fallacy ... A fuller working version of intertextuality would sufficiently correct the 'aporias' of fidelity (Stam 64) without curtailing the critical possibilities" (Hermansson 2015, p.10).

1.6 Intertextuality Discourse, Advantages and Limitations

The gap in the study of adaptation in the enforced absence of fidelity was bound to be occupied by attempts at a new theoretical approach. The new context on the view of the interaction between the media came in the form of intertextuality. More of a theoretical approach, rather than a concrete theory, intertextuality originated in literature studies as the examination of texts in conjunction with their precursors in terms of interaction rather than influence. This approach was bound to take the next step into the examination of interactions between different media and therefore it was organically applied to adaptation. The first surge of intertextual ideas in the field of adaptation came as an attack on fidelity with the French New Wave and its dismissal of the "Tradition of Quality". As James Naremore points out in his essay "Film and the Reign of Adaptation", "they made sure that the auteur would seem more important than the author" (Naremore 2000, p.6). So even in the fifties, the tendency existed to focus on the creative process, rather than the source. It took some

more time for academia to examine the theoretical implications suggested by the New Wave. It is important to note that the New Wave was not attacking the practice of adaptation in general, but a specific approach to it. Rick Warner makes that point: “Godard’s own views notwithstanding, I want to suggest that he is actually among the most prolific ‘adapters’ in cinema, and that adaptation plays a critical role in his still evolving practice as a multimedia montage artist” (Warner 2011, p.196). Also, Truffaut, in his essay manifesto “A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema” was not opposing the notion of fidelity. Erica Sheen points out that Truffaut seems to suggest that “when the process of writing is undertaken from the standpoint of a personal commitment to film rather than a cynical professional negotiation of an individual system of production, fidelity manifests itself as a positive rather than negative value within filmmaking” (Sheen 2013, p.249). It could be argued that the New Wave produced a rather complex practice of adaptation, opening the field creatively and intertextually but not dismissing the concept of the source. MacCabe suggests that “Bazin and Truffaut’s fidelity ... made film and novel combine to produce an ‘ideal construct’ greater than the sum of its parts” (MacCabe 2011, p.7). Rick Warner describes Godard’s method in a manner that is relative to the approach of this thesis, as reworking of possibilities. “Godard opens the original and brings it into an ‘always taking place’. He samples, modulates, re-adapts, not repeating the original as it was but reworking the conditions of possibility attached to it” (Warner 2011, p.203). Linda Costanzo Cahir, observes Godard as well and addresses the issue of interpretation and fidelity. “For Godard, originality invariably enters the moment someone begins reading the literature; and the unavoidably original way in which one reads a text affects how one translates the work into film and affects one’s notions of faithfulness” (Cahir 2008, p.199).

Today, the general consensus among adaptation scholars is that an intertextual approach is much more productive and better equipped to deal with the intricacies of the subject. Its broader scope allows for a more complex examination of the connections between the media. A film is now

approached not as a transfer of elements from another, singular work but as a collection of references, allusions, distortions and loans from a variety of texts. The potential of such an approach has been pointed out by most of the academics in the field of adaptation. Robert Stam in the essay “The Theory and Practice of Adaptation in Literature and Film” (Stam 2005, p.1-52), describes the fruitful examination of the interaction between literary and filmic genres. He bases his approach on Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism and Gerard Genette’s theory of transtextuality, a general framework that incorporates intertextuality. “Notions of ‘dialogism’ and ‘intertextuality’, then, help us transcend the aporias of ‘fidelity’ and of a dyadic source/adaptation model which excludes not only all sorts of supplementary texts but also the dialogical response of the reader/spectator. Every text, and every adaptation, ‘points’ in many directions, back, forward, and sideways” (Stam 2005, p.27). Stam also points out that this approach stems from larger theoretical movements: structuralism that set all signifying practices on the same level of texts, and post-structuralism that dethroned the author as the sole originator of the work. Brian McFarlane in *Novel to Film*, discussing intertextuality, poses the original work as a “resource” and cites Christopher Orr: “Within this critical context, 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 serve the film’s ideology” (cited in McFarlane 1996, p.10).

Another aspect of the application of ideas of intertextuality on adaptation is that of contextualisation. While the previous discussions focused on interactions between texts, this one takes into account the influence of the socio-historical environment on the process. In the spirit of Bakhtin’s notions of situated utterances, texts seen in the context of their specific time and place, this branch studies adaptations as manifestations of the socio-historical differences between the various incarnations of a text. An adaptation of a classic work offers insight not only on the author’s time but also on the adapter’s own. The new work clarifies not only the author’s viewpoint on his

environment but also the modern viewpoint on that viewpoint. Linda Hutcheon's view of adaptation as an evolutionary process follows that path. In *A Theory of Adaptation*, she claims that "Like evolutionary natural selection, cultural selection is a way to account for the adaptive organisation, in this case, of narratives. Like living beings, stories that adapt better than others (through mutation) to an environment survive" (Hutcheon 2013, p.167). Darlene J. Sadlier in the essay "The Politics of Adaptation" (Sadlier 2000, p.190-205), points out adaptation's capacity for comment through a portrayal of what the text omits rather than what it says.

The discursive potential of the turn to intertextuality is significant. Nevertheless, it could also be argued that a universal application on the subject of adaptation contains certain conceptual pitfalls. The view of this thesis is that the attack on fidelity can go too far. There is a limit to the devaluation of the original work, after which a discussion of adaptation becomes irrelevant. Rachel Carroll argues that "one implicit, and rather paradoxical, effect of this strategy is to seem to argue for the abolition of adaptation or remake studies as such, but to do so by suggesting that in some fundamental way all cultural forms are themselves 'remade' or 'adapted' " (Carroll 2009, p.35). This thesis will argue that there is value in the examination of the adapter's engagement with a specific text.

An objection that can be raised against the reliance on intertextuality as the sole theoretical background for adaptation is its one-sidedness. While the focus on the interaction between texts gives great opportunities in the discussions of existing works, it is not as readily helpful in the discussion of the creative process in relation to the source. While the search for clues of previous works in a film is an intriguing enterprise, the reverse side of the study is often neglected. The process of adaptation poses a number of issues, such as a definition of the modes of engagement with a text, an examination of the elements of the text in terms of their transpositional potential, or

the formulations of methods for the interrogation of the text. These are issues that an examination based solely on principles of intertextuality cannot address in a satisfactory manner. In the view of this thesis, a purely intertextual approach can serve adaptation criticism up to a point but cannot produce a theory of adaptation.

Kamilla Elliott makes a point of refusing to accept the term “text” in its general meaning as inclusive of all signifying practices: “Once films are decreed ‘texts’ in a literal rather than analogical sense they become subject to textual evaluations and textual concerns” (Elliott 2003, p.28). She points out that this generalisation, which originated in literature studies implies a priority of the verbal element and she believes that this is not a good basis for a study of adaptation. Although a careful use of the term could solve that problem, Elliott makes a valid point. Theories of intertextuality originated with verbal systems of reference. Although their scope seems wide enough to incorporate different media one might wonder if it is wise to carry those theories over into adaptation without a filter. It would be short-sighted to apply modern literary theories on adaptation without conforming them to the object of the study. “Rather than solely adapting adaptation to theories, theories also need to adapt to adaptations” (Elliott 2013, p.32). Intertextuality is a very wide area of study and it is comprised of different, and contradictory branches and applications. Before it can be applied to adaptation it needs to be examined, in the same manner as fidelity, in terms of its specific parameters in the field. This will also take place in the second chapter.

1.7 Initial Conclusions and The Approach of this Thesis

The main points developed in this chapter will now be summarised in order to illuminate the main arguments of this thesis.

1. It is true that there are things that literature can do and film cannot (and vice versa) but this fact does not produce an adequate strategy for the formulation of a theory of adaptation.
2. A strict regimen of fidelity cannot support a theoretical structure. A model of equivalences is also inadequate without an organising structure. A process based solely on fidelity is the equivalent of translating from one language to another word for word, without taking into account the grammar.
3. Theories of intertextuality provide useful tools for analysing textual interactions in a wider scope but cannot address issues of process to the same extent.
4. The connection with the source cannot be severed according to a definition of adaptation as based on the engagement with the literary text. The weakening of this connection does not prohibit the production of substantial work but it does make the subject irrelevant to a study of adaptation in the context of this thesis.
5. Abstract blueprints of both works can arguably be used as a bridge between them, and between the concepts of fidelity and intertextuality.

Based on the points above, it appears that a viewpoint that can combine an intertextual view and a connection with the source text might serve the study of adaptation. This would constitute a fusion of the two tendencies that have governed adaptation theory since the beginning. This thesis claims that this kind of fusion could operate through a separation of the strategy into two aspects. Fidelity and intertextuality would each inform a different level of the process, performing the tasks that they are best suited for. For the purposes of this framework the two levels will be referred to as the macroscopic and the microscopic.

The macroscopic level is that of the artistic plan, the poetics of the work, the organising principle, the aesthetic problems that the author was trying to solve and the methods that they used to solve them. It will be argued here that a regimen of fidelity is better equipped to tackle the issues facing this level of the process. The choice to be faithful to the text on this more abstract level makes the inter-media transposition not only easier but also more substantial. The definition of the terms fidelity and poetics will be presented in theoretical detail in the next chapter but at this point the main idea that is being put forth is the focus on the functions of literary elements rather than on the elements themselves.

The microscopic level then, is the work itself, its narrative and enunciation, its details and form-specific devices. This level does not have to, and in many cases cannot, stay close to the original. It can be governed by a creative force unrestrained by the text in an environment of intertextuality. With the organisation provided on the macroscopic level, the result has the advantages of being close to the text but also free from it at the same time. The restriction as well as the freedom thus occur when appropriate, in the service of a meaningful but creative engagement with the source.

To summarise, literal fidelity is superficial but the need for engagement with the text can be meaningfully addressed in more abstract terms through a fidelity of poetics. On the other hand, intertextuality is productive but needs an organising principle that can be provided by the fidelity of poetics. Literal fidelity is a simplistic one-to-one model. Unchecked intertextuality is a chaotic many-to-one model. This thesis is advocating for the one-through-many-to-one model, the study of the balance between meaningful engagement and creative complexity.

1.8 Methodology

In order to test the thesis once it has been clearly formulated, a concrete strategy will need to be employed. The first distinction that needs to be made before that can happen, is that between the practice of adaptation and its criticism, adaptation as process and as product. A discussion of the definition of adaptation will take place in the second chapter but at this point the double aspect of the subject demands a fork in the testing strategy. Therefore, chapter three will be devoted to a study of a film that is based on a novel and chapter four will be the discussion of a practical simulation of adaptation. The methodology will be further analysed in chapter two.

Chapter 2 :

Definitions, Theoretical Basis and Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The most general definition of the verb ‘adapt’ in the Oxford English Dictionary is “To make (a person or thing) suitable or fit for a purpose, or conformable to specified conditions, standards, or requirements” (Hoad 1993, Web Resource). The main implication of this definition is the existence of a set of changes and modifications that the entity in question needs to undergo. The first distinction that needs to be addressed at this point, is that between changes that are outwardly enforced and those that are instigated internally. On the one hand, there is an entity that is forced to fit in a specified space, rather like liquid in a glass jar, and on the other, a conscious movement of an entity that organically explores its surroundings and yields to the limits that they pose. The dictionary definition seems to suggest the former approach but the latter is also analytically useful. Another point for exploration is the purpose of the action. The end that the changes are aimed at is an important parameter of the event. The mention of specific conditions seems to imply a one-way transformation but that may not always be the case. Choice almost always exists as to what the new environment will be, which links the stated purpose of each alteration to a different result. The final issue raised by the definition is the nature of the changes themselves. We cannot assume that given a specific environment and purpose there will be a single set of changes that will bring about the required transformation. Different sets of alterations will bring about different forms of the organism, with results that may or may not be subject to measurement or comparison.

What is gained from this viewpoint of the definition is a series of questions that can be applied to the more narrow subject of literature to film adaptation. These questions are: what is the instigating agency in an act of adaptation? What is the purpose of the act? And what is the nature of the

changes that take place in the transition? These three points will be examined in the context of the transfer of a literary work from its original form to the filmic medium. The first question can be answered in any of three ways. The transfer can be viewed as an appropriation of the work by another agency, the adapter, who handles the original and tames it in order to make it conform to a new mode of existence. From this angle the point of reference is the adapter, and his/her agency controls the process. Adaptation can also be viewed as an evolutionary mechanism, determined by the work itself in an attempt to survive through a changing environment. Since there is no actual human agency at work in this view, the result is a somewhat historicist approach that implies an almost deterministic trajectory. The third approach, the one that this thesis favours, is more diplomatic. It adopts a neutral perspective and observes adaptation as an interaction rather than a submission. Agency is recognised in both parties but none of them is omniscient. They both operate under a blanket of indeterminacy. Adaptation is not, and cannot be viewed as a concrete system.

The second question is one that causes the subject to branch out significantly. The purpose of the adaptive process can be any one among a number of possibilities. From the most cynical capitalisation on a literary property, to the most devout, respectful treatment of a canonical text, to the subversive adaptation that questions the original, the end will have a greatly significant impact on the choices made to achieve it. An instance of adaptation cannot be examined fully without an initial estimation of its aim. As soon as that estimation exists, the third question arises. Even with an established goal, the necessary adjustments that inform the process are the hardest elements to determine. To entertain the possibility of formulating a rigid strategy for adaptation that will cover all the analytical aspects would mean underestimating the complexities of the process. Such an endeavour would contradict the basic premise of this thesis. The argument presented here is an approach, a way of thinking that seems fertile and flexible enough to accommodate an intelligent exploration of the inter-medium transition.

The system that has been outlined in this introduction is clearly too complex to examine in a single study. Choices need to be made regarding scope and analytical possibilities. The following one is made simply because it appears to be the most fertile and challenging among the existing possibilities: this thesis will deal with adaptations through a filter defined by the level of engagement with the text. Adaptations are usually categorised according to their relation to the source text through authorial intent as close readings, general correspondences and distant references (Boozer 2008). This taxonomy seems to address the issue on a quantitative level, making the distinction between varying amounts of information that survive the transition. This thesis suggests another scale, one that distinguishes between varying levels of engagement with the source. This scale would not measure how much narrative or textual information has made it through. It would observe the quality of that information, judging whether the choices are strengthening or undermining the intellectual connection with the source, to what degree the adapter is internalising the material and is thus able to transfer something more than selected pieces of information, namely, the design that this information was meant to construct. In this sense, an adaptation that transfers most of the narrative of the novel as well as verbatim dialogue could be positioned lower on this scale than the one that completely transforms the surface of the novel but manages to mirror its patterns and achieve a similar intellectual or emotional result. This scale is clearly more difficult to formulate and less reliable as a tool for objective categorisation but it is crucial to the point being made here and the rationale of this thesis. It will be argued that this approach is more fertile in terms of analytical possibilities. It needs to be pointed out here that this thesis is not attempting to propose a method for measuring engagement or fidelity. The narrow scope of the research is dictated by the focus on fidelity discourse, it does not constitute general assumptions or prescriptions about how adaptations should be performed.. Limiting the scope of the study does not aim to create distinct categories, but to afford the opportunity to better examine the

intricacies of this particular branch of adaptation. Nico Dicecco points out the danger of excessive inclusion: “If we wholly embrace the notion that every work of art adapts something (a prior work, a historical circumstance, an idea, etc.), then adaptation criticism cannot distinguish itself effectively from the study of representation in general” (Dicecco 2015, p.2).

There is one more clarification to be made at this point. Both the original categorisation as well as the amended one seem to be based on a reference to authorial intent, with the adapter in the role of author. This is not the view of this thesis. Authorial intent cannot always be known and even if it is, it cannot be considered completely reliable. The level of engagement can only be inferred, to an extent, by an examination of the work itself. The distinction will not always be clear. Nevertheless, what is important here is not the correct categorisation but the prioritisation of the specific parameter. Adaptation will be treated here as an interaction, a dialogue between a text and its adapter with the purpose of producing a hybrid work.

One last thing that needs to be made clear in the context of this study is the nature of the adapter. The term will not refer to a specific person. It cannot be the screenwriter and it cannot be the director. Both roles are partially responsible for the final result and that result is the film in its entirety. Only one entity will be considered responsible for the transition from novel to film, in the same way that the notion of the implied author is used to represent the theoretical entity behind the literary text. This simplification will unburden this project from a number of complications that don't have a direct bearing on the questions that are being pursued. If at some point distinctions between different creative agencies become crucial to the analysis, they will be addressed.

2.2 Definitions

2.2.1 Adaptation

The term adaptation poses a number of challenges in the context of literature and film. Christa Albrecht Crane and Dennis Cutchins write that “ ‘adaptation’ as the key term might be a misnomer altogether because it assumes that sameness forms its operative lens. However, as poststructural theory suggests, the making of texts as well as their reception are both destabilizing processes” (Arbrecht-Crane & Cutchins 2010, p.17). This is a valid point, but more important than the name that is used for the concept is its definition. Jorgen Bruhn attempts to do that: “Novel to film adaptation studies is the systematic study of the process of novels being turned into film, focusing on both the change of the content and form from novel to film and the changes being inferred on the originating text” (Bruhn 2014, p.73). This is a useful definition, that views the works on equal terms and points out the dual aspect of the interaction. Gordon E. Slethaug separates the agencies and texts that are involved in the process: “adaptation is a nexus for, and mosaic of, context, writing/directing subjects, originating texts and intertexts, discursive practices, and viewers/readers” (Slethaug 2014, p.5). Colin MacCabe views adaptation as a dynamic balance between forms: “Each adaptation allegorizes a conflict between film and novel as forms, strongly anchored as it is in Bakhtin’s theory of the novel, and responding as it does to something which is in the current intermedial air” (MacCabe 2011, p.23). Linda Hutcheon (2013), in her attempt at a definition of the term, makes the essential distinction between adaptation as product and as process. “Seen as a formal entity or product, an adaptation is an announced and extensive transposition of a particular work or works ... as a process of creation, the act of adaptation always involves both (re-)interpretation and then (re-)creation;” (Hutcheon 2013, p.8). Hutcheon uses the word *announced* in her definition, implying her view of addressing an adaptation as such, but also eliminating from the discussion cases of simple reference or allusion. On the other hand, she opens

the discussion by suggesting the possibility of an adaptation of multiple works. She protects her work from too much data but doesn't insulate the discussion from the possibilities of an intertextual environment. This thesis takes a similar approach. The connection between text and film will remain in focus but the analysis will be kept open to osmotic influences. As for the distinction between product and process, it is incorporated into this study through separate tests of the theory, in a context of adaptation criticism (product) and adaptation practice (process).

Hutcheon introduces another level of analysis when she discusses the modes of engagement with the audience. The more complex mechanics of the showing and telling distinction are very useful in the context of adaptation, as they allow for a discussion of the transformation of impact of a given literary element. An element that is transferred from one mode to the other can have a different effect and serve a different function in the new work. For example it is completely different to read about a gruesome murder and to see it re-enacted. A verbal description of a musical piece has a radically different effect than its physical existence on a soundtrack. Anne Gjelsvik argues that "we tend to react differently towards different art forms due to a combination of medium characteristics and conventions. The emotional difference between ... reading and watching controversial representations calls for a phenomenological approach to the question of medium specificity" (Gjelsvik 2013, p.247). To ignore this fact is to turn adaptation into a mechanical process of transposition, one that is sure to strip the source of many layers of meaning and impact.

Dudley Andrew views adaptation as an intersection. "Perhaps better than other uses of the medium (documentary, experimental), adaptations show cinema dead center in the vast two-dimensional cultural economy. The vertical economy is ruled by past and future, measured by the ancestors and the gods from whom literary, religious, and moral values derive. The horizontal economy creates value in spreading this patrimony out as widely as possible" (Andrew 2011, p.35). This two

dimensional structure is eventually received by the culture in which it is created. The reception of any work by an audience cannot be taken out of the equation. Not only does it affect the aims of the adapter, it essentially constitutes the world in which the new work will live, a world that it will inform and be informed by. In the context of adaptation, this system becomes even more complicated as the work is not singular but hybrid, containing, in a sense, both times. An audience that is familiar with the source will have a very different reaction to the adaptation than one that is not. That also brings up questions regarding the adapter's position, whose work may be different depending on whether they are addressing an initiated audience.

On a more abstract scale, the work of art can be seen as a platonic idea that inhabits different forms in order to achieve physical contact with the ever-changing world. It manifests physically only when it is culturally and historically situated. Thus, examining the situated form without taking into account the environment would be a gross oversimplification. *Apocalypse Now* (1979) transferred the narrative of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) to the Vietnam war, highlighting the relevance of the older setting to the new one. It would be as unreasonable to separate the film from its time as it would be to separate it from its source. *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012), reportedly inspired by Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities* (1859), achieved a very controversial modern relevance in the time of the Occupy Movement, even if the creator states that he did not intend the reference. There are even cases of films that depart from their source's genre in order to accommodate a better connection with modern audiences. Eugene Burdick's *Failsafe* (1962) became a comedy, *Dr Strangelove* (1964), in the hands of Stanley Kubrick. Jacquelyn Kilpatrick offers an example of this phenomenon in her essay "Keeping the Carcass in Motion: Adaptation and Transmutations of the National in *The Last of the Mohicans*" (2005), discussing an ambiguous book that contains ideological contradictions. Kilpatrick suggests that this ambiguity is the reason why it has conformed to very different adaptations. D.W. Griffith (1909) produced one with clearly racist

overtones. Maurice Tourneur and Clarence Brown (1920) went in completely the opposite direction. George B. Seitz's version (1936) employs an "American Dream" approach, placing the good settlers in a wild-west setting. Michael Mann's (1992) version is more politically sensitive but the Indian issue is still in the background, while the cross-race relationship is, as in all the other cases, doomed. Dudley Andrew argues this last point eloquently in his essay "Adaptation" (2000). "Adaptation is a peculiar form of discourse, but not an unthinkable one. Let us use it not to fight battles over the essence of the media or the inviolability of individual artworks. Let us use it as we use all cultural practices, to understand the world from which it comes and the one toward which it points ... We need to study the films themselves as acts of discourse" (Andrew 2000, p.37).

It is time then, to attempt a definition of adaptation as it will be used in this thesis. Adaptation as process is the complex interaction between a novel, a creative agency (adapter) and the filmic medium in a socio/historically situated environment. If either of the two connections is absent, the result will not be categorised as adaptation. If the first link (novel-adapter) is missing, it will be addressed as a loan. The films of Alfred Hitchcock might be placed in this group. If the second link (adapter-film) is severed, the product will be termed an illustration. This group would include dry, mechanical productions of canonical works. Socio/historical situation is not a choice, therefore there is no exception to the definition on that front. Consequently, adaptation as product is a film that can be seen as having originated through engagement with literary work(s). When this engagement is poor the product will be termed an allusion.

2.2.2 Definition of Fidelity and its Function in this Thesis

The next item that needs to be explored more rigorously is the notion of fidelity. It is imperative to examine what it means, how it might be pursued, which aspects of it are dismissed by its detractors and in what sense it can provide fertile ground in the study of adaptation. The first thing that needs

to be dismissed is the romantic as well as the religious context of the word. For the purposes of this study the term needs to be disassociated from any moral connotations. It could be argued that fidelity discourse reigned in the first years of adaptation practice due to a misplaced, almost religious respect for the classics. Words like “betrayal” seem to imply a romantic involvement with a piece of fiction. Words like “sacrilege” imply religious respect. Although metaphorically, these aspects of the term fidelity might carry meaning, there is always the danger of confusing a metaphor with a literal truth and that is when these notions become disruptive. A more clinical approach is necessary and it requires a revisiting of the term without emotional or moral prejudice.

The first question that arises when fidelity is discussed is its object. The first obvious compromise that needs to be made when thinking about adaptation is the impossibility to transfer the information of a text in its entirety. Thus, any notion of fidelity is a priori linked with choice and therefore subjectivity. The need to break down the source into its components arises. A selection is necessary, between those elements that will survive the transition and those that will not. An easy way to address this tricky question is to provide a declaration of which elements *can* be transferred as opposed to those that cannot. Seymour Chatman attempts to do just that in his essay “What Novels Can Do That Films Can’t (and Vice Versa)” (1980). This approach severs the Gordian knot and offers a clear practical path, but it could be argued that it is conceptually limited. For example, Chatman explains that “if it is the case that story-time necessarily continues to roll in films, and if description entails precisely the arrest of story-time, then it is reasonable to argue that films do not and cannot describe” (Chatman 1980, p.129). This type of point raises useful questions but if it is used in a prescriptive rather than a discursive manner, it is rather limiting. The process of adaptation through a specific list presupposes the existence of the complete list. The completion of the list is not a viable task, as it is partly based on subjective analyses of the general nature of a work of fiction. There can always be new ways to create categories according to different parameters.

Having said that, it could also be argued that the search for new items on the list, new components and therefore strategies of adaptation, is a productive enterprise.

The list of elements that have been nominated for transfer contains a small number of entrances. The main contender, as discussed in section 1.3.8, is narrative. While the choice to base the transition on the narrative as the driving force of the work is the sensible one, it can be misleading, mainly because the danger exists of making every other element an afterthought. This phenomenon immediately removes from consideration a great number of literary works, some of which will be “lost in translation” while others will not even be tackled. Most poetry is immediately dismissed from the field while formally complex novels (Beckett, Joyce, Woolf) can be addressed only in a very limited manner. Also, it cannot be ignored that the argument for narrative as common ground between the media is based on the assumption that film cannot operate without it. The delegation of the filmic art form to storytelling is arguably a cultural imposition. But even if narrative were the logical base for an adaptation, that would not clear a path to a universal solution. The majority of written fiction contains more narrative than could be accommodated by a reasonably long film. Television has provided a release valve on that front. Many long novels have worked much better on the small screen, given room to breathe by the augmented timeframe. Notable examples are Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s rendition of Alfred Döblin’s *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1980) as well as the BBC’s 1972 production of Leo Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* (1869).

The second most popular transferable element in the discussion of adaptation is style. This is more complicated territory as it introduces the question of form. Here, the common ground is less secure and compromises are introduced in the form of equivalences. If style is not dismissed as non-transferable, the radical differences of the media will need to be addressed here, much more than in the discussion of narrative. If the limits of the discourse are stretched, almost every element of

enunciation can be somehow represented in the new work. But a reasonable objection to this would be that the representation cannot be expected to serve the same purpose in the new environment. Again, the question of choice arises, coupled with that of method. The selection of stylistic choices to be transferred and the search for ways to implement them creates a very complex system. The easy solution of selecting the ones that are easier to accomplish is inadequate. Another system seems necessary, that will put those choices into perspective, help select the stylistic elements that are more crucial to the work and propose a rationale for their transfer or replacement with an element that serves their function in the new work.

The question of form brings with it its companion term, content. If enunciation is accepted as a structure that points to specific referents, it would appear that the identification and transference of those is adequate. This sounds reasonable but is practically void until the term content is specifically defined in this context and that is not an easy task. Content is a category that incorporates some of the others. Very often it is mistakenly identified with narrative, but it also evokes thematic and ideological elements. It is an abstract term that encompasses many layers of meaning. The narrative cannot be trusted to carry the underlying ideas, so again the need for another organising structure seems necessary. The microscopic examination of semiotic analysis does not appear to be adequate in this case.

The most metaphysical item that has been nominated for inclusion to the list of transferable aspects of a literary work is the so-called ‘spirit of the text’. It sounds like the most respectful solution but it is realistically impossible to define. It serves only as a metaphor and a rather morbid one at that, as it implies the death of the original. One way to make it more concrete is to identify it with authorial intent in the sense that the author is, or at least is responsible for, this ethereal entity. This assumption does not seem to make things much better in terms of analytical potential, but it does

structure the question in a more useful manner. If an agency with concrete goals and methods of achieving them is identified, it might be possible to obtain necessary information, like what is integral and what is functional in the text, and based on that information to establish the structure for the new work. The interrogation of this agency could provide credible answers to all the questions of choice posed earlier. And since the real author is not an accessible or reliable source of information, the next best thing would be the inference of the author through the work, the implied author.

There are ways to approach an adaptation from any of the aforementioned positions. One could opt to stay faithful to the narrative, try to convey the style, the ideas or one's definition of the spirit of the text. But if the aim of an adaptation is considered in the sense that is suggested in this thesis, as optimisation of the engagement with the text, the outline of an answer starts to form. Neither of those elements, nor any combination of them, offers a complete solution for every literary work. From the perspective of this thesis, engagement with the text dictates a different choice of parameters for every individual work. The reading of the work can provide the map of its transposition, identifying the importance of every element and its place in the larger picture. Thus, one work will be read with priority on the narrative while another will be interpreted as a primarily stylistic experiment. One work will be easily transferable to another setting while another will not, again depending on the interpretation of the material by the adapter. A failure to recognise "The Figure in the Carpet" leaves no reliable way to choose the means of the transposition.

A consideration of a few points from the evolution of literature might serve to illuminate this point. Classic realist novels mostly operated through a strong authorial presence. When adapted, they are often dealt with solely on narrative terms, with the authorial commentary excised or used in brief voice-over interludes and the style being incorporated into the cultural transformation of a period

piece. Templates have been formulated that treat every work in the same manner, ignoring critically important differences. Modernist literature, diminishing the authority of the narrator's voice (Kafka, Faulkner), seems more suited for filmic transposition. Fragmented narratives are also easily transferable and seem organically suited to a form based on editing (Burroughs). On the other hand, unreliable narration or internal discourse and stream of consciousness seem a priori incompatible with film (Woolf). Post modern literature, with the turn to reflexivity, collage and pastiche also seems to favour its transfer (Welsh). The dual track of the film medium even gives more opportunity for juxtaposition. But the foregrounding of diegesis as well as the experimentation with form will often not conform easily to cinematic language. This thesis holds that different genres of literature, but also different works within a genre, will require radically different adaptive techniques and also different critical strategies. A general recipe that covers all bases cannot be realistically imagined.

2.2.3 Modes of Departure from the Source Text

The decision to be faithful to certain elements of a novel implies infidelity to others. This aspect of omission or even subversion is critical when discussing engagement with a text. If the adaptive process is viewed as an interaction, the implication is that the film will inform the novel as it is being informed by it. One of the main reasons for choices of omission or alteration is cultural relevance. Often, elements of the original will not be familiar to modern audiences and thus will have to be explained or removed. Such elements could be for example the functions of political or social institutions, issues of decorum and others. The more drastic transfer of the events of the novel into a contemporary setting is also common practice, and can often serve the purposes of the original on better terms. Genrefication is also a popular approach, that deals creatively with the narrative and cultural differences between the media. The conforming of a novel to a cinematic genre essentially attempts to facilitate the connection with the audience but at the same time creates

a cultural dialogue without necessarily damaging the connection between the two works.

If an adaptation is seen as a re-writing of the original rather than a mechanical translation, the discussion is exposed to a wealth of opportunities. Julie Sanders, in *Adaptation and Appropriation* (2005), in the context of a discussion on the limitless retellings of Shakespeare's works, cites Steven Connor. "If rewriting of this kind compromises the cultural authority of the original text, then this never amounts to a simple denial of it; in its attention to its rewritten original, its fidelity-in-betrayal, the rewritten text must always submit to the authority of an imperative that is at once ethical and historical" (cited in Sanders 2005, p.51). Adaptation in that respect takes the form of a political act, changing the original in the cultural consciousness. An alienation from the source can facilitate its re-examination from new perspectives. In the same sense that Jean Rhys' novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) revisits Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) through the perspective of the "madwoman in the attic" and thus offers a post-colonialist, feminist take on the original, Jack Gold's film *Man Friday* (1975) critiques Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe's* (1719) ethics by making Friday's character the protagonist of the story. The study of master-texts, major canonical works that have been reworked countless times, offers limitless opportunities for discussion. The evolution of a text through different cultures and personalities tells us as much about the text as it does about the cultures and personalities themselves.

Dismissing ideas of reverence to the canon can therefore not only offer creative potential, but may also prove more meaningfully faithful to the original. MacCabe, discussing Fredric Jameson's essay "Adaptation as a Philosophical Problem", describes Jameson's view of unfaithful adaptation as "the most faithful – faithful to each medium's desire to flaunt its superiority" (MacCabe 2011, p.23). Jameson argues that for an adaptation to be of value it needs to stray from the source. "It can happen that the two texts are of equal merit, but then in that case the film must be utterly different

from, utterly unfaithful to, its original. The novel must give rise to a filmic adaptation that is not only governed by a wholly different aesthetic, but that breathes an utterly different spirit altogether” (Jameson 2011, p.218). This view seems to point against fidelity discourse but that is actually not the case. Jameson releases the adaptation from the demand of a copy but retains the discursive structure between the works, in a fluid environment of medium specificity.

The extra parameter of subjectivity introduced to the process by every new reading of the work offers a plurality of approaches. Joy Gould Boyum suggests that “in assessing an adaptation, we are never really comparing book with film, but an interpretation with an interpretation – the novel that we ourselves have re-created in our imaginations, out of which we have constructed our own individualised ‘movie’, and the novel on which the filmmaker has worked a parallel transformation” (Boyum 1985, p.61). This means there can never be a ‘correct’ adaptation of a novel, only suggestions at possible solutions. Therefore, an adaptation can only be evaluated as a reading, and not as a rendering, of the original. The new work will always be a result of creative decisions based on the potential of the source and the adapter’s view of its hierarchies. The point is made eloquently by Cahir: “There is a hierarchy of purpose and intent within the dynamics of translating. In the large and small decisions that attend the work of translating, each individual translator must determine what is most crucial, what is of secondary importance, and what is of least importance. The literal letter of the parent text? Its structure? Its unique music? Its rhythms and sounds? Its meaning? Its accessibility to a popular audience? Its *beauty*? While a translator may want to be faithful to all these features of the source text, translation, at its finest, is an art, with the translator’s values determining the subtle decisions that attend the complex process of translating” (Cahir 2008, p.200 [original emphasis]).

2.2.4 Qualifiers of Fidelity – In Defence of the Concept

It is time to approach a definition of fidelity as it will be used in this thesis. But first, the aspects of the notion that are cited as grounds for its dismissal need to be examined. The main objection against fidelity is its perceived implication of a reverence to a canon, a defence mechanism from the time when film studies were part of literature departments, as Kamilla Elliott (2003) points out. This objection is reasonable but outdated. The defence is no longer necessary and hinders certain aspects of further study on the subject. It implies that fidelity by definition places the source above the adaptation. This does not have to be the case. Casie Hermansson argues that “any comparative adaptation criticism that draws heavily on the source literature, no matter the dominant methodology, has become tarred with the same brush as fidelity and has come to be treated as inseparable from it ... Any comparative work - the case study approach most obviously – can be seen as fidelity criticism in essence, even when evaluative criteria may be entirely absent from the analysis” (Hermansson 2015, p.2). Hermansson distinguishes between fidelity and comparison. This thesis suggests that comparison is an aspect of a healthy concept of fidelity.

Another argument against fidelity is its theoretical impossibility. Elliott again describes the structuralist claim of the form and content bond. This is a valid argument but by no means universal, and dependent on definition. While complete fidelity is indeed an unreasonable demand, the possibility of the existence of a substantial interaction cannot be easily disputed.

Another opponent of fidelity is the theoretical turn to intertextuality. The switch to the new system of reference makes the old one seem obsolete, especially since intertextuality seems to be able to offer a wider and promising view of the field. This approach, by force of sheer momentum, is taken to imply the complete incompatibility between the two viewpoints. As this thesis is trying to claim, that is not the case. Co-existence of fidelity and intertextuality is not only possible but crucial in

providing a system of thought complex enough to accommodate the debate.

In order for fidelity discourse to regain some respectability in adaptation studies, it needs to be carefully defined through a series of qualifiers. Each one addresses one of the problems of fidelity discourse. The first row of the following table is the accusation against fidelity and the second, the qualifier that allows it to be analytically productive. This table is the distillation of the discussion of this section.

| Negative aspect of fidelity discourse | Qualifier |
|--|------------------|
| strict | flexible |
| microscopic | macroscopic |
| specific | abstract |
| prescriptive | adaptive |
| objective | subjective |
| deterministic | relativistic |
| static | dynamic |
| mechanical | creative |
| evaluative | comparative |
| hierarchical | neutral |
| complete | partial |
| isolated | situated |

This thesis argues that a flexible, macroscopic ... situated fidelity is not only useful but necessary in the context of adaptation. In Bakhtinian terms, and for the purposes of brevity, this fidelity will be called dialogic. The term encompasses all of the above and illuminates Bakhtin's influence on the concept. While Bahktin has been used by adaptation scholars as a force towards intertextuality, here he is used to sustain a theory that reintroduces fidelity. This is not so peculiar if we notice that the two tendencies are not as conflicting as current scholarship tends to suggest. It is argued here that Bakhtin's theory can indeed be used in defence of fidelity discourse. The question that can address

that decision is whether fidelity is dialogic or monologic, in Bakhtinian terms. Through an initial examination, it would appear that fidelity fosters a singular relationship, in contrast to the plural one of intertextuality. But actually, the view depends on the point of reference. If that point is the film, then it is true that fidelity is monologic. But if the vantage point is objective, favouring neither novel nor film, then fidelity is in fact dual, discursive, and therefore dialogic. In that sense, fidelity is as monologic as the view that embraces it. If that view is narrow, fidelity is damaging to the discourse, if the view is wide, fidelity can produce useful results. The choice of perspective is crucial. Cahir views adaptation as a diptych: “Something happens when you hinge the two panels together. A third truth is added, that the panel on the left illuminates the panel on the right, and the panel on the right illuminates the panel on the left. And the interchange between the two is what ... I want to see. How do they illuminate each other, and how do they yield what I would almost call a third truth? So that’s where I would see the future of adaptation studies” (Cahir 2008, p.224). This thesis embraces this view as well as Hermansson’s argument for fidelity “for its continued usefulness, and for the ability to use fidelity as an approach – with context, perhaps, but without apology” (Hermansson 2015, p.5).

2.2.5 Fidelity of Poetics

This thesis argues that the poetics of a work of art can constitute a viable viewpoint from which to examine the relationship between the media. It is not suggested here that this is the best and only method to approach the examination. The claim is that this strategy can yield substantial results in the context of adaptation.

Dudley Andrew, discussing Bazin’s view of Bresson’s *Diary of a Country Priest*, outlines the concept of poetics that is used here. “Bresson’s great film taught Bazin that filmmakers could challenge themselves with uncinematic literary material and produce ‘impure cinema’ of the highest cultural

order. Dispensing with the ‘illusory fidelity’ of the replica, they had learned through script construction and mise-en-scene to encounter a novel or a play and therefore *produce something close to the equilibrium of form and ideas that operates in the original*. Subservient to their source, but not slavishly mechanical in rendering it, they achieved a deeper fidelity” (Andrew 2011, p.37 [my emphasis]). The concept of poetics will be explored in this context of “equilibrium of form and ideas”.

James Griffith in *Adaptations as Imitations* (1997), proposes an approach to adaptation based on a view of the novel as an integration of solutions to aesthetic problems. He claims that the identification of the author’s approach to those problems could offer more useful information for the transfer between the media than close readings of the work. He cites the Chicago School of Literary Criticism and its founder R.S. Crane. Their form of criticism, often referred to as Neo-Aristotelianism because of its adherence to the Aristotelian system of thought, was the opposing force to the ideas of New Criticism. New Criticism prioritised the study of language and style, and addressed a text separated from its author’s intentions, its time, or the response of its audience. The Neo-Aristotelians suggested a focus on the structures of the works based on critical evidence. While New Criticism undertook microscopic analyses of the works, New-Aristotelianism opted to search for macroscopic systems of organisation and general definitions much like Aristotle did in his *Poetics*, studying “the poetic [art] in itself and the various kinds of it, and what [particular] effect each kind has, and how plots should be put together if the making is to prosper; and how many elements it has and of what kind; and likewise everything else that belongs in this area of inquiry” (Aristotle 1997, trans. George Whalley, p.45).

Griffith takes on the Neo-Aristotelian approach of prioritising the system over the specifics and essentially suggests authorial intent as the shaping parameter of that system. He poses that it is

necessary to identify the aim, the shaping cause of the text, in order to understand it, and shape any strategies of transposition accordingly. Although Griffith's proposition is compatible with the idea of this thesis, it requires a better definition of the agency whose aims are being examined. The physical author is not an ideal candidate. Any attempt to collect enough information as to his intentions will be incomplete, and even success on that project would not guarantee reliable results. Wayne C. Booth, also a member of the Chicago School, offers a theoretical alternative. In his book *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1983), he coined the term Implied Author, denoting the authorial agency as inferred by the text. The implied author is the entity that "chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read; we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man; he is the sum of his own choices. It is only by distinguishing between the author and his implied image that we can avoid pointless and unverifiable talk about such qualities as 'sincerity' or 'seriousness' in the author" (Booth 1983, p.74-75).

Having defined the agency that will be interrogated, the specifics of the information to be obtained need to be addressed. A description is required of what constitutes the structure that will facilitate the transposition. One of the advantages of the level of abstraction provided by this approach, is the flexibility it allows in terms of adjusting to an individual work. The first step of the examination of the text will be the identification of a series of established objectives. This will provide a first guide concerning the placement of its specific elements. The second level of examination will ascertain the methods employed to achieve those aims. On this level, a map of the structure of the work is established. The third level will observe the mechanics of those methods, the tools used to implement them. This three-tiered analysis of the work creates a distilled image of it that can then be translated into filmic terms. As Tom Gunning points out "the most interesting thing about a filmic adaptation might be the expansion of both subjects and means that the literary work poses to filmmakers, the ambition of its appropriation of a literary model that challenges film style"

(Gunning 2011, p.54). The conceptual framework that is established in this thesis to formulate what is being termed the poetics of a work, is relevant to Bakhtin's discourse and will be further illuminated in section 2.9.

The information obtained by the interrogation of the text through its implied author will be termed, in this thesis, the work's poetics. The term will encompass elements of narrative, structure, style, aesthetics, themes and ideology, as co-existing and interacting components brought together to form a work of art. The hierarchy and specific nature and function of each of those components will constitute a blueprint of the work.

The subjectivity of the agency asking the questions, the adapter, informs the outcome on two levels. Initially, it influences the interpretation of the information gathered during the reading of the work, and subsequently it affects the translation of that information into the new medium. This fact demonstrates the theoretical plurality afforded by this way of thinking. It would be illogical to expect one 'correct' film version of a novel, as it would be naïve to construct a theory that suggested the existence of such a version. This thesis is flexible enough to address a diverse range of adaptations while offering wide practical potential.

2.2.6 Definition of Intertextuality

In contrast to fidelity, which seems to be a notion that narrows the analytical spectrum, intertextuality widens it considerably. It is a concept that has been utilised in a wide variety of theoretical systems. It is an approach that has informed, and been informed by, many areas of the study of language and art. This has allowed it to develop so many branches that it is impossible to put it to use without carefully selecting one of its definitions. On a more specific level, applied to adaptation, intertextuality brings down barriers between texts, allowing the invasion of a multitude

of works in any discussion. This opening can potentially lead to theoretical inconsistency and analytical superficiality. This is why this thesis will attempt to define intertextuality as it will be used here, choosing the aspects of it that are conducive to the task at hand.

Although the term intertextuality was coined in 1966 by Julia Kristeva in “Word, Dialogue and Novel” (1986), the ideas that have gathered around it have been circulating long before that. The discussion was present in Plato and Aristotle’s work, in their examination of dialogue, their analytical references to other works and celebration of imitation. Montaigne was aware of it, discussing quotation as a centrifugal as well as a centripetal force and commenting on the creative link between studying a work and producing another through a digestive system analogy: “It is a sign of rawness and indigestion to disgorge food just as we swallowed it” (cited in Worton 1990, p.8). T.S.Eliot, a highly intertextual author, in his essay “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (1921), opposes the tendency to address an artist solely based on the original elements of his work. He sees tradition as essential to the artistic process, not as comparison and conformism, but as a collection of elements ready to be combined in new ways. He applauds the connection with the past, noting that it does not, in any way, limit creativity. “The poet ... is not likely to know what is to be done ... unless he is conscious, not of what is dead, but of what is already living” (Eliot 1921, p.42). Eliot sees the author as a catalyst that facilitates the interaction of elements that would otherwise remain inactive. Especially this last point is very poignant when applied in the context of adaptation.

Although the ideas were present, the organised study of intertextual systems arrived with the advent of semiology and structuralism. Ferdinand De Saussure’s notion of the sign as a combination of signifier and signified, and the concept that meaning is the result of linguistic convention, formed the basis for that organisation. “A sign is not a word’s reference to some object in the world but the

combination, conveniently sanctioned, between a signifier and a signified” (Allen 2000, p.8). Although the semiotic principles do not address the interaction of texts directly, they weave, on the microscopic level of the sign, a fabric that accommodates the discussion. The analysis of language and linguistic communication logically leads to a study of literature and the communication between texts. Already, notions that are transferable to a discussion of adaptation can be observed. The essence of a novel can be viewed as a signified that is being given a second signifier. The new work can be seen as a sign that is created through the mediation of the conventions of cinematic language.

Michail Bakhtin accepted the premise but took issue with the structure. He is considered part of the Russian Formalist movement, but he was critical of it as well. Bakhtin went further in opening up the study of texts by examining their external influences. He criticised Saussure’s system as too abstract and argued that all communication is socially situated. “All linguistic communication occurs in specific social situations and between specific classes and groups of language-users” (Allen 2000, p.15). He sees language as an unstable, dynamic system and studies it through its use by focusing on the utterance, a term that incorporates the author and the addressee in any linguistic formation. In the context of literature, Bakhtin sees the author as an organiser and combiner of discourses, some original (but always situated) and some arriving from previous texts. The situation of a text/film in its time is an essential component in any discussion of adaptation, as it informs the structures of communication between all entities involved. The chronological gap in the majority of the cases of adaptation makes this step critical. Also Bakhtin’s view of the author as conductor can be employed usefully in the description of the agency of the adapter.

Julia Kristeva, basing her work on Bakhtin’s ideas, moved the discourse into more abstract territory. She also denies stable signification and creates the notion of the “social text”, the dynamic system

of possible discourses from which every other text emerges. Thus every text is comprised of already existent discourse and every word exists in a constant societal struggle about its meaning. Kristeva's main departure from Bakhtin is her exclusion of the speaking subject. Her approach is one of objectivity and "what such an approach needs to avoid, in order to maintain such an objectivity, is any attention to the human subject who performs the utterance under consideration" (Allen 2000, p.32). While Bakhtin uses the utterance as a notion that incorporates the speaker, in Kristeva the term is separated from the subject, thus in her dealing with literature the authorial function is greatly diminished. Nevertheless, her description of the text as an intersection of two dimensions, the horizontal (author-reader) and the vertical (text-previous texts), is a useful representation of the communicative interactions of texts. One factor that hinders the application of Kristeva's ideas on adaptation is that her theory is rooted in linguistic systems, making some of her arguments untranslatable. Also, her displacement of the authorial agency initiates the tendency to focus on a text in terms of its components, rather than as the product of a creative process. Her view of modernism as a consciously textual production system reflects that point while explaining her focus.

Roland Barthes, operating in the same linguistic theoretical environment as Kristeva, takes the idea of signification to its absolute elimination. He is not suggesting the existence of multiple identifiable meanings, but a chaotic plurality and essentially an absence of meaning, seeing the text as an unordered pastiche of threads and unacknowledged quotations with no intentional signification. For Barthes, meaning comes from the interplay between signifiers and is constructed on an individual basis by the reader. The main force of his argument comes in his approach to the physical author. "The *explanation* of the work is always sought in the man or woman who produced it, as if it were always in the end, through the more or less transparent allegory of the fiction, the work of a single person, the *author* 'confiding' in us" (cited in Allen 2000, p.71 [original

emphasis]). The author is again dismissed from the discussion unless he operates as a scriptor, consciously engaging with the intertextual process. More closely focused on modernist writing, Barthes even dismisses the attempt to construct meaning through a text, arguing against realist fiction. Barthes' textual analysis, the observation of the manner in which the text "explodes and disperses" focused the discussion entirely on the analysis of the text, rather than the process of its creation. Barthes even sees *himself* as a scriptor, going so far as to refuse the formulation of a methodology based on his ideas, as that would constitute an attempt at stable meaning. This seems to suggest that it would be hard to use his ideas in the context of adaptation. Nevertheless, his description of the playful interactions of signifiers does evoke an environment of creative freedom that is necessary in any artistic endeavour. A discussion of adaptation cannot be considered in a context of absent meaning but a certain amount of chaos and creative flexibility in the creative process needs to be accounted for.

Gérard Genette arguably offers more concrete tools for the theorisation of adaptation. His intertextuality is a structuralist project: "the study of the ways in which texts function within and are generated by describable systems and codes" (Allen 2000, p.96). The key word, in contrast to Barthes, is *describable*. Genette's agenda is not exploratory but organisational. His project is Aristotelian in nature. His poetics, not unlike Aristotle's, aim to study the conventions that govern literature, to link and categorise. He attempts to form a map of the literary system, a concept similar in kind to Kristeva's social text but limited to the context of literature, that can then be used to examine individual works. This map, but especially the one of the individual work, seems like a potential tool for an adapter. Genette's notion of Architexts, the only original texts that constitute the building blocks of literature, shows the scientific nature of his project. Genette also juxtaposes the functions of the author and the critic, both of whom he sees as bricoleurs, with the author taking elements from the literary system and then obscuring that system and the critic taking the elements

of the work and finding the connections with the system. This distinction creates a discussion of the differences between creation and analysis, process and product. Genette tries to trace the outline of his subject, not break its boundaries and thus is more amenable to the formulation of a methodology. On the other hand, his work seems to imply a certain determinism and predictability that could prove rigid or dry in the context of adaptation practice. Genette is more fascinated by the drawing of the map, by the recognition of patterns, than its application on specific analytical projects. His plan to describe literature as a closed system could be considered overambitious and his categorisation could be seen as truncating and levelling, inflexible to variations. This thesis does not assume the existence of a template that could describe every work, but it does accept the possibility of a methodology that could be applied to the mapping of individual works. It does not suggest the formulation of a complete map of the literary system that could act as an intermediary for the adaptive process. It does however suggest the formulation of a methodology that can observe the structure of a work of art. From that respect, Genette's structuralist programme is a relevant approach to this thesis.

Michael Riffaterre, again on a project of concrete analysis, chooses to focus on the work, rather than the system. He seeks to enter the work through its uniqueness, rather than its conformity to a predetermined set of rules. His unconventional idea is to approach the work through its inconsistencies. He argues that ambiguity does not exist, and that ungrammaticalities point to obscured meaning. He proposes the analysis of the work through the deciphering of the hidden semiotic connections and uncovering of the underlying sign structures. He approaches literary analysis as a treasure hunt, searching for the clues that will form the key to unlocking the work. That key, which he calls the "matrix", is the only way to access the work in its entirety. "The matrix is hypothetical, being only the grammatical and lexical actualisation of the structure" (cited in Allen 2000, p.119). Riffaterre offers yet another name for the corpus of texts, which he terms "inter-text".

He maintains the closed nature of the work being studied by arguing that signification in the text does not come from its inter-texts themselves but from the nature of their transformation in the new work. Riffaterre's assumption that all signification exists in the text offers a more practical method of analysis. In a discussion of adaptation as practice, the ideas gained by such an analysis would be valuable, albeit not adequate on their own. In a discussion of adaptation criticism, his ideas would be of less use as they would not be able to address the source-adaptation connection in equal terms.

It has been suggested here that intertextuality is a theoretically vast term, comprised of various and often contradictory ideas. This means that to use the term without contextualisation is a dangerous enterprise. Furthermore, in order to use any of the above theoretical structures in adaptation discourse, one would need to make two adjustments, one to accommodate the trans-medium parameter and one to facilitate its application to one-to-one interactions. The first adjustment is necessary, since all of the above theorists have dealt exclusively with linguistic systems. The second is slightly more controversial. It mirrors the resistance of this thesis to the modern tendency in adaptation studies, linked to literary theories of intertextuality and the modernist and post-modernist trends, to eliminate any notion of a singular source. None of the theories presented above are immediately tailored to address the one-to-one interaction between texts that is adaptation. That is an obstacle that will need to be tackled if adaptation is to be examined in the context that has been outlined here, as an attempt to engage with a text.

2.2.7 Qualifiers of Intertextuality – The Need for Focus

The discussion of intertextuality will now be distilled for the ideas and positions that are useful in this thesis. It has been argued here that a discussion of intertextuality belongs in adaptation discourse. An objection may arise when it monopolises the conversation. Intertextuality offers significant analytical potential. It allows for the examination of adaptation on semiotic terms, as an

interaction of languages. It is compatible with a socio/cultural approach that situates the novel as well as the film in their time, thus contextualising the transition. It provides a wider definition of authorship as organisation, that can be applied to the literary author as well as the adapter. It suggests the view of adaptation not as transfer but as dialogue. It is flexible enough to allow for multiplicity of meaning and ambiguity and to account for creative agency. “ ‘Adaptations’ may be understood as ‘readings’, paths the filmmakers take through source text(s) that themselves are paths through other texts” (Albrecht & Cutchins 2010, p.18). Finally, intertextuality attempts to identify structures that govern text interactions and recognise patterns. It provides tools for close readings of the works that can again be applied to novels as well as films.

The analysis of adaptation as product greatly benefits from intertextuality discourse. Adaptation as process on the other hand, does not benefit to the same extent. The momentum of the shift of focus from fidelity to intertextuality (from source to product), has all but removed the source from the picture, thus significantly undermining the study of process. One danger of the application of theories of intertextuality in adaptation discourse is the over-reliance on semiotic systems of analysis that hinder the discussion of transposition. The direct application on adaptation of theories originating in linguistics and literature studies can also be misleading. Another intertextual danger is the undermining of the authorial position to the point of the denial of any kind of recognisable agency, which renders adaptation a void enterprise. MacCabe argues that “[Foucault and Barthes'] essays have given rise to a debilitating academic orthodoxy that blithely assumes, against every common sense, commercial and biological consideration, that authors have no reality whatsoever. Film ... offers a very good example of how we need to retain some notion of the individual author without relapsing into the Romantic concept of a unified creative source” (MacCabe 2011, p.21).

This overview suggests that in some cases, the difference between a productive aspect and an

obstructing one is a difference in degree and not in kind. What is advocated here is a balanced approach between source and product, an approach that can arguably accommodate a discussion of adaptation as it has been defined here. To that end, the ideas that are compatible with the conceptual core of this study are selected among the multitude of concepts that fall under the dome of intertextuality. The qualifiers that allow intertextuality to operate fruitfully in the context of adaptation as it is understood in this thesis are presented in the following table.

| Negative aspect of intertextuality discourse | Qualifier |
|---|---------------------------|
| diffuse | focused |
| open | contained |
| chaotic | organised |
| dismissing the original | engaging with the source |
| unchecked | controlled |
| partial towards film | objective |
| linguistic | hybrid |
| dismissing authorial agency | permitting intentionality |

Intertextuality then, in the context of adaptation and this thesis, will be the opening of the discourse to complex textual and cultural interactions, combined with a creative flexibility but controlled to avoid severing the link with the source. As has been pointed out, that control will be applied on the level of poetic structure derived on an individual basis from the source itself. This mode of intertextuality will be called focused intertextuality.

2.3 The Bakhtinian Bridge

In this section, the theoretical system will be complemented through an engagement with the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin. The choice of Bakhtin is not arbitrary. His theories offer invaluable tools for this study. From all the theories of intertextuality, his is the most abstract and flexible, and thus easy to apply to non-linguistic systems and inter-medium discussions. As Robert Stam points out in

Subversive Pleasures, “The ‘rightness’ of a Bakhtinian approach to film derives, I would suggest, not only from the nature of the field and the nature of the medium but also from the ‘migratory’ cross-disciplinary drift of the Bakhtinian method. As a self-defined ‘liminal’ thinker, Bakhtin moves on the borders, at the junctures and points of intersection of academic disciplines as traditionally defined and institutionally regulated” (Stam 1989, p.16-17). It is also important to note that among the theorists of intertextuality, Bakhtin is the only one who focuses almost exclusively on the novel as a field for his study, believing that it constitutes the best terrain for the exploration of linguistic interactions. He sees the novel as a genre that is “ever questing, ever examining itself and subjecting its established forms to review” (cited in Lodge 1990, p.95). The other theorists of intertextuality tend to focus on poetry (Kristeva, Rifaterre) or on non-literary texts (Barthes). Bakhtin’s choice of the novel makes him better suited to a study of adaptation.

More specifically to this work, Bakhtin’s theory possesses all the intertextual elements that have been deemed productive, and avoids the ones that have been dismissed as hindering the discourse. Specifically, he offers a rigorous discussion of textual interactions, while retaining the authorial agency. He allows for ambiguity and subversion while trying to identify analytical patterns. Bakhtin is not only relevant to the intertextual branch of this thesis. He inhabits a theoretical bridge between the specific notions of fidelity and intertextuality as described earlier. He promotes engagement with literary texts which he undertakes on an abstract level through their poetics, while at the same time exploring intertextual connections and dialogic relations. What follows is an outline of Bakhtinian thought through terms and ideas that will then be applied to this study.

2.3.1 Dialogism

The prevalent concept in Bakhtin’s work is dialogism. It informs and underlies all other aspects of his theory. Bakhtin’s dialogism is more than a specific concept, it is a method that he often proposes

as the alternative to its opposite, monologism (Bakhtin 1984). It cannot be confused with dialogue, as dialogue can be dialogic or monologic, depending on the nature of the interaction. Because it is a method, dialogism can be applied in various ways, depending on the subject it is being applied to. In the context of human interaction, dialogism is the exchange of utterances, verbal structures put forth by specific subjects and demanding a response. In the context of signification, dialogism is the presence of ambiguity, of plural, un-finalised meaning, as opposed to the rigid definitiveness of monologism. In the context of ideas, dialogism is the interaction that produces, unlike dialectics, not a new formation, but a hybrid entity. In the context of textual discourse, dialogism studies the way in which different voices interact within texts but also the way that texts interact with each other. Essentially dialogism is a way of thinking that operates in the void *between* the entities that it examines, making it ideal for the study of any kind of transfer or transformation.

It could be argued that if Bakhtin had been so inclined, he would have been able to incorporate non-linguistic systems in his theory. Although that is not the case, it is not hard to speculate on how Bakhtin's dialogic approach could inform discussions of adaptation. It can inform an examination of the role of the author. It can also study the interaction of the source with other texts, of the adaptation with the source and of the adaptation with other works. Furthermore, it can be used to model the process of the adapter. Because dialogism is based on situated utterances, it can address issues of environmental influence on novel and film and examine them in the context of their time. It can study "the assemblage of factors that inevitably mediate any process of adaptation, the very sites that a sociology of adaptation must investigate in order to be true to the spirit of the cultures which produce and consume those adaptations, not just the original intentions of the writers and filmmakers" (Collins 2011, p.241). This is a reason why *Apocalypse Now* is an apt case study for this thesis: it juxtaposes two works that are crucially linked to their time and culture, that also share creative and thematic affinities.

2.3.2 Authorship

Bakhtin chooses the novel as his field of operation because he considers it the best linguistic formation in which to study language. In the essay “Discourse in the Novel” he writes: “The dialogic orientation of the word among other words ... creates the potential for a distinctive art of prose, which has found its fullest and deepest expression in the novel” (Bakhtin 1982, p.275). He sees it as more flexibly structured than other literary systems like poetry, and able to accommodate the co-existence of multiple interacting voices. Bakhtin uses the term “heteroglossia” to describe the existence of dialogism in spoken language. He terms its representation within the text polyphony. His preference to view all the phenomena that he studies as unstable, dynamic, un-finalised systems is made clear by his definition of the novel as a force that strives to reveal the limits and constraints of the literary system. The logical question that arises, after a decision has been made to see the novel as a web of interacting voices, is how the author is defined and what place he holds in this model. Bakhtin’s type of analysis would not be incompatible with a post-structuralist approach, and could be extended to a denial of the author. But as Stam points out, Bakhtin “questions the notion of the author as a primary and sacrosanct source of the text, while at the same time restoring a kind of dignity and importance to the author as the stager and metteur-en-scene of languages and discourses” (Stam 1989, p.14). Barthes suggests that the author’s agency is irrelevant since meaning does not exist in the work but is created in the reader. Bakhtin goes in a different direction. He gives the author the role of the conductor, the organiser of the voices, their incentive. David Lodge explains in *After Bakhtin*: “Barthes says: because the author does not coincide with the language of the text, he does not exist. Bakhtin says, it is precisely because he does not so coincide that we must posit his existence” (Lodge 1990, p.99).

Bakhtin’s description of the author is very helpful in the context of adaptation, and especially in the

context of this thesis. The recognition of the author as an organising agency is exactly the view that has been suggested here as best suited to accommodate an examination of the transposition of the work. There are only two elements of Bakhtin's thinking that are incompatible with this project. While Bakhtin talks about the biographical author, this thesis will be using the notion of the implied author, the authorial agency as inferred from the text. This does not really contradict Bakhtin's argument, as his concept of the author is also quite abstract. The second point is the author's specific function. A wider definition of that function is necessary, for the concept to be applicable to non-linguistic systems. It could be argued that the author cannot be viewed solely as an organiser of heteroglossia into polyphony without narrowing the scope of the reading in the context of adaptation.

If the adapter is placed in the position of Bakhtin's author, the analytical potential is significant. The adapter perceives all the different voices: the author's, the character's, other works', the environment's and internalises them. Then they are organised into a polyphonic new entity. Thus the product can again be seen as a complex of interacting utterances. Criticism can observe an adapted film in terms of its handling of the potential offered, the choice of voices utilised and their transformation. Another benefit of this approach is that by recognising authorial agency in modernist and post-modernist fiction, a notion that has been disputed by the post-structuralists, a large area of literature immediately becomes theoretically open to adaptation.

2.3.3 Typology of Voices

A closer look at Bakhtin's typology of voices within the literary text as described in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* also offers potential analytical tools. The first two of his categories predate his work. They are representative, objective discourse, the author's voice (diegesis), and represented, objectivised discourse, the character's speech (mimesis). His contribution is the third category,

double-voiced discourse. While the first two are monologic (single voice), this last one is dialogic, it is “discourse with an orientation toward someone else’s discourse” (Bakhtin 1984, p.199), mimesis of an existing discourse. Bakhtin’s introduction of this type of discourse and its subcategories (stylisation, skaz, parody, hidden polemic) makes any analysis of a text more complex.

It would be useful to see how Bakhtin’s categories could be translated into filmic terms and what could be gained by such a translation. The first two, author’s voice and character’s speech, seem straightforward but their distinction in literary texts is not always clear, as in the case of free indirect speech. In film this distinction is complicated further. While character’s speech is easy to define, the author’s voice is not. On the level of language, the distinction remains the same as in literature, the represented speech belongs to the characters and any objective voice-over could be attributed to the author. But the latter is a rare occasion and the authorial agency is mainly present through the image. More so than in literature, authorial voice is hard to establish because image is harder to attribute. It is often unclear who the agency behind the frame is. It could be an objective observer, a commentator or one of the characters. This uncertainty is integral in discussions of narration and point of view. The extra complication presented by Bakhtin’s third category disrupts even the few elements of stable signification that are identifiable. At the same time though, it offers great potential for new interpretations of the texts themselves but also roads for their possible transposition. Double-voiced discourse fits ideally in a medium that can offer a multitude of information simultaneously in the frame but also through its double-track visual/audio nature. The identification of double-voiced elements in the novel offers a key for their transition and also a flexibility in their cinematic interpretation. At the same time, the transfer of non-dialogic literary elements can also be creatively approached through a structure of double-voicedness.

2.3.4 Chronotope

Possibly the most appealing among Bakhtin's concepts to film scholars is the chronotope. The reason suggests itself from an examination of Bakhtin's definition of the term in *Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel* as "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (Bakhtin 1982, p.84). The elements of time and space are concepts that are more literally relevant to film than to literature due to the form and nature of the medium, so an examination of their mechanics seems to constitute a rather easy transfer to film theory. Martin Flanagan (2009) in *Bakhtin and the Movies* suggests that "Time and space, then, are the main constituents of film form, elevating the chronotope to an essential factor in any study of how cinematic texts create narrative effects" (Flanagan 2009, p.57). Flanagan also points out that Bakhtin uses the term to describe three different aspects of the novel's existence: the connection and mechanics of time and space within the novel, the generic conventions that can be identified throughout the history of literature on the basis of treatment of time and space, and finally, the reader's connection with the text through the latter's appropriation of elements of the former's environment. All those aspects of the discourse bear relevance to adaptation.

Robert Stam points out the proximity between the notions of chronotope and genre. He understands the chronotope as a set of temporal-spatial parameters in the service of the representation of a world. "Through the idea of the chronotope, Bakhtin shows how concrete spatio-temporal structures in literature limit narrative possibility, shape characterisation, and mold a discursive simulacrum of life and the world" (Stam 1989, p.11). But the chronotope's function goes beyond the rendering of a world, of an Aristotelian unity of time and space. It offers the possibility for a historical analysis of narrative forms, and this is where genre is addressed. The chronotope allowed Bakhtin to observe patterns, trends and the evolution of literary genres. *Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel* (1981) is appropriately subtitled *Notes Towards a Historical Poetics*. In it, he discusses the

evolution of chronotopic mechanics as a series of literary genres from the ancient Adventure Novel, to the Chivalric Romance, the Picaresque Novel and the Rabelaisian model that he examines as a genre in itself. Literary and filmic genres do not coincide. Correlations can be made but identifications would in most cases be misleading. The differences of chronotopic mechanics between the media, especially related to matters of form, do not allow simplistic transfers. Nevertheless, a chronotopic analysis can constitute a great tool for the examination of a genre or the reading of an individual work. The study of the temporal-spatial poetics of a work, in the context of its generic conventions, would serve ideally in the transposition of the work into a new medium and a new genre. The chronotope essentially can be a vehicle for the most transferable information between the media that also incorporates a contextualisation of that information. Bakhtin does not see the chronotope merely as a setting for the narrative. He suggests that “The chronotopes are the organising centres for the fundamental narrative events of the novel ... to them belongs the meaning that shapes narrative” (Bakhtin 1981, p.250). This suggests that the information gathered from a chronotopic analysis is not only transferable but also potentially part of an essential distillation of the novel.

2.3.5 Carnival

Bakhtin’s most popular notion is that of the carnival. It is another one of Bakhtin’s flexible terms and thus usable in many contexts. Carnival is not a genre and it is not a chronotope. Its literal nature as cultural practice only serves to illuminate the ideas it represents. Bakhtin finds carnivalistic elements in literary genres but the term is more importantly a philosophical approach rather than a specific set of artistic parameters. According to Bakhtin, the most important feature of carnivalisation in literature is the destruction of barriers “between genres, between self-enclosed systems of thought, between various styles, etc.; it destroyed any attempt on the part of genres and styles to isolate themselves or ignore one another; it brought closer what was distant and united

what had been sundered” (Bakhtin 1984, p.135). One could, as in the case of dialogism, extend Bakhtin’s thinking and argue for an application of this way of thinking to the barriers between media. But even without that extension, the environment that Bakhtin is describing seems well suited for any creative and critical artistic endeavour. That is the place that it will take in this thesis. It will be the element of creative chaos on the microscopic level of the proposed system. It will allow intertextual forces to influence the process and will permit the critical subversion of the source. The carnivalistic type of thinking provides a flexible model for textual interactions in the context of adaptation as well as for the fluid restructuring of the source.

These are the most relevant aspects of Bakhtin’s work to this study and the way they will be used here. Bakhtin’s notion of dialogism has informed the principal idea of the thesis, the focus on the space between the source and the adaptation. Bakhtin’s use of situation (cultural/historical contextualisation) will be emulated in order to facilitate the incorporation of environmental parameters into the discussion. Bakhtin’s view of authorship as conducting will be used in two ways. Firstly, to model the implied author’s function and subsequently to describe the adapter’s process. Bakhtin’s typology of voices will be used as a tool in the reading of the texts but also in the discussion of the transposition. The chronotope will also inform the reading of the source as one of the elements of its poetics. Carnivalistic flexibility will be introduced in the process of re-creation under the organising dome of poetics to allow for the necessary departures of inter-medium transposition.

2.4 Methodology

This section will elaborate on the plan for the test of the theory. The aim of this test is to determine if the ideas that have been presented here can advance the discussion on adaptation, whether they can offer productive and original critical approaches, and if they can add to the possibilities of the

practice of adaptation. The test will operate through a specific structure of stages and parameters that will transform the theory presented above into a working application. This testing structure will be based on the theory, and therefore its results will offer some indication regarding its validity. The structure of a test based on this theory could be formulated in a different manner than the one proposed here, in which case it might offer different results. Nevertheless, the specific case studies may offer hints of the possible developments of the discourse.

2.4.1 Adaptation Criticism

In order to determine whether the ideas of this thesis can yield significant results, they will need to be applied to a specific case of adaptation criticism. This application will be planned in such a way as to give insight into the theory itself and its capacity for analysis. The case that will be examined is Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979), based on Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). This adaptation is an example of a transposition that seems to carry the effect of the book, in a very different setting. The initial plan for this test was going to include more than one case study. Options that were considered were *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1981), *The Great Gatsby* (1974) and *Naked Lunch* (1991). Adaptations of the work of Dostoevsky were also considered, most notably Żuławski's *La Femme Publique* (1984) and *L'Amour Braque* (1985). The reason that the other cases were not pursued was that *Apocalypse Now* proved analytically substantial and provided a clear outline of the thesis.

Adaptation criticism has occasionally been maligned for offering little more than a series of dry case studies, with limited analytical scope. Robert B. Ray in his essay "The Field of 'Literature and Film'" (2000) argues that "without the benefit of a presiding poetics, film and literature scholars could only persist in asking about individual movies the same unproductive layman's question (How does the film compare with the book?), getting the same unproductive answer (The book is

better)” (cited in Naremore 2000, p.44). Ray opposes the treatment of adaptation through the view of literary New Criticism, arguing that those methods of isolation of a work become irrelevant in a discussion of cinema. His notion of poetics, which refers to the discipline, not the works themselves, points to the construction of a system that can extract general conclusions about adaptation. That is also what is being attempted in this study: the formulation of a system, a way of thinking, that approaches the general along with the specific. The case studies that will be presented here will not be closed examinations of individual works, but attempts to elaborate the overarching structures of adaptation. In the same way that Bakhtin (1984) presented his theory through the examination of the work of Dostoevsky, and Genette in *Narrative Discourse* (1980) put forth his categories through an account of Marcel Proust’s *Search for Lost Time* (1913-1927), this thesis will venture to propose general ideas through studies of specific works.

Heart of Darkness is a canonical work with significant scholarship, that will provide interpretive pluralism. It is a complex work that lends itself to a wide area of analysis, encompassing discussions about first person narration, narrative ambiguity and post-colonialist discourse. In that sense, it is a reasonable choice as a basis for a discussion of adaptation. The choice to study the connection between the novel and *Apocalypse Now* eventually proved not only fruitful in terms of content but also highly relevant to the discussion of this thesis. This relevance stems from the fact that Coppola’s film problematises the issue of fidelity, an issue that is central to the rationale of this study. This particular adaptation is well suited for the examination of an evolved concept of fidelity. The complex ways in which the film departs from the source text and more importantly, the many ways in which it realigns with it, helps redefine fidelity in a comparative environment. The initial assumption of this thesis is that a model of flexible fidelity can sustain an analysis of an unfaithful adaptation and reveal the less apparent connections between the works. It also needs to be noted here that this thesis does not claim that *Heart of Darkness* is the only possible case study that could

be addressed.

The question that will be addressed in the examination of the adaptation is how and to what extent the film takes advantage of the source's potential. The study will be an attempt to identify the pattern behind the choice and treatment of the elements that have been transferred. The test will also attempt to ascertain whether the novel's poetics are present in some form in the film, and how that transposition is achieved. Allusions to other works will be identified and evaluated in terms of their position in the adaptation. This process will provide the opportunity to see if and how the theory can be used to offer new commentary on existing adaptations. Previous academic criticism of the works in question will be incorporated as a frame of reference, but also as part of the study itself, in the formulation of the poetics of the film.

2.4.2 Adaptation Practice

The study of the practice of adaptation requires a more immediate approach. Estelle Barrett (2007), uses Foucault's essay "What is an Author" (1969) to support a view of practice as research. She tries to "explore how we might move away from art criticism to the notion of a critical discourse of practice-led enquiry that involves viewing the artist as a researcher and the artist/critic as a scholar who comments on the value of the artistic process as the production of knowledge" (Barrett 2007, p.135). Barrett juxtaposes the practice as research process to Foucault's "Author Functions", to demonstrate how the study of the process of creation can be informed by an engagement in the process itself. The test of the fourth chapter of this thesis does not exactly constitute practice as research. A complete work of adaptation is not among the aims of this study. Nevertheless, as will become clear in the outline of the testing process, a level of subjective choice will be introduced. In keeping with the rationale that has been established, the test will be based on a dynamic combination of flexibility and elimination. The section could not be conducted on completely

objective grounds, as that would demand the unrealistic inclusion of every possibility. It could also not be conducted entirely through an examination of a singular creative process, as that would limit the analytical scope of the study in the context that has been outlined. Points of focus and convergence will be established, but not in such a way as to limit the possibilities of theoretical generalisation, or the drawing of conclusions.

The examination of adaptation practice will be carried out through a controlled experiment. Fyodor Dostoevsky's 1864 novel *Notes from Underground* will be discussed in terms of its filmic possibilities. Bakhtin's and others' reading of the author's poetics will be employed in the discussion of the potential of the literary work. The study will be planned through a series of queries: what is the author trying to do? How is he trying to do it? What means is he using to achieve that goal? The answers to those questions will provide the basis for the transposition. This analysis will provide the opportunity to reflect on various scenarios and different interpretations of the basic ideas. Different readings of Dostoevsky's work will be addressed to complement Bakhtin's analysis, like the one provided by Malcolm Jones in *Dostoevsky After Bakhtin* (1990). The next step will be the transposition of this system. Again multiple scenarios will be examined. The third stage will be the fleshing out of the final work through a discussion of possibilities. With the poetic framework in place, this process will be at the same time controlled and flexible in the search of solutions to problems of narrative and style. Through the application of the process, theoretical objections that could be raised will be identified and addressed. Problems that might conceivably arise in the practice of the process as well as limitations of the approach of this thesis will be pointed out.

2.4.3 Methodology Outline

Criticism Stage One: Reading of the Literary Text

The objective of this stage is a comprehensive and multi-angled examination of the text. The source for this stage will be the text itself, informed by various interpretations. Resources will be gathered from available critical texts, in an attempt to create an account of the readings and interpretations that have been offered on it. The end result of this process will be an analysis of the novel's narrative, style, tone, themes, ideology and cultural/historical context.

The case that will be examined through this filter is *Apocalypse Now*, based on Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. It needs to be pointed out at this point that the proposed definition of adaptation in the criticism strand cannot be taken further than the selection of the work. The intentions of the adapters in terms of engagement with the text cannot be known with certainty, nor is it possible to approach the film based on such assumptions. Nevertheless, the choice of the film for this study is based on an initial evaluation of signs of such an engagement.

The readings that will be addressed in this stage will not be limited to a specific system or strategy. This is one of the parameters that cannot remain constant, as that would limit the scope of interpretation. This inclusiveness could be perceived as too chaotic to allow for a substantial analysis, but that is not the case. What will be carried forward from this stage is not the strategy of the reading but the interpretation that it proposes. And while the strategies can be theoretically diverse and contradictory, the interpretations will not necessarily mirror that incompatibility. Thus the transition to the next stage will happen through a set of readings rather than a group of structures. The unifying structure for the examination will be applied in the next stage.

Criticism Stage Two: Poetics of the Literary Text

This stage will attempt to mould the information obtained in the previous one into a poetic system attributable to the implied author. In order to formulate this system, the text will be interrogated through the analysis of the available information acquired in the previous stage. In order to achieve theoretical consistency, this distillation will be modelled into another structure, through further fragmentation of the interrogation of the text into three steps. The first one will be the exploration of what the agency behind the novel, the implied author, is aiming for. The targets here are the general aesthetic aims of the work, its main creative preoccupations. The answer to this question could be related to any of the compositional elements. For example, one work could be aiming primarily to render a narrative, another could be arguing for an ideological position, another could be trying to break boundaries of form. In most cases the answer will probably be plural. The next step is an examination of the methods employed to achieve the aims that have been set. For example, an aim of creating a literary image of a certain age and time could be achieved through a strict regimen of realistic representation. An aim of disassociation could be achieved by the creation of distance between the reader and the text. The final step of this process will be the analysis of the ways in which these methods are implemented in the text. For example, realism could be achieved through detailed descriptions of ordinary life, distance from the text could be achieved through reflexivity. The result will not be a singular system. Many aspects of the reading will be transferred as pairs or even groups of alternatives. The final system will be a pluralist structure that incorporates various, even contradictory readings. This structure will be able to accommodate a conversation of possible links between the works in the following stages.

Bakhtin's concepts will be essential tools in this process of interrogation. The dialogic examinations of relationships within the work are an invaluable analytical tool in the formulation of the poetic system. Bakhtin's typology of literary voices will be employed, as it offers essential categorisations

for the third step of the reading. The chronotope is not only a useful tool for the description of the spatio-temporal relations within the text, but also serves as a bridge for possible transpositions.

This interrogation will extract the necessary information from the available data and will provide the translation of that data into the structure that has been named the poetics of the work. This system is unique to every individual novel. It is the target-oriented organisation of all its elements and functions.

Criticism Stage Three: Reading of the Film

This step is a close examination of the film in question and its surrounding literature, reviews and scholarship. As in step one, this is the information-gathering stage. In the same spirit as before, the film will be outlined in its own context. Academic literature, as well as criticism and reviews, will be consulted at this point. The result should be a collection of analyses and interpretations of the film on every level, narrative, stylistic, thematic, ideological. The reading of a film is a different enterprise than the reading of a novel. But the information that will be carried to the next stage is signification and function, not strategy of interpretation. This is one of the advantages of this way of thinking. It manages to separate, to a degree, the media-specific components from their functions, thus allowing for the juxtaposition of the two works in a common language. That is not to say that the questions of inter-medium transposition are dismissed, they are just put into context and thus made easier to approach.

Criticism Stage Four: Poetics of the Film

As in stage Two, this part of the analysis will sculpt the available information into a concrete system of reference. The abstract nature of the reading strategy allows for its application to different media, but the information gathered will be partly media-specific. This process will again function through

a three-tiered structure, aesthetic aims, methods and implementation. The interrogation of the film will function through the same questions, but the answers will be rooted in the filmic medium. Image composition and texture, colour, editing, performance, sound, will form the basis of the conversation along with narrative, themes and ideology. The signification of every filmic element will be addressed and positioned in the poetic structure of the new work. As in stage two, alternative interpretations will be considered and taken to the next stage.

The abstract nature of the poetic descriptions, that reduce media-specific elements to their functions creates two blueprints of artistic works from different media that are directly comparable. This reduction does not diminish the signification of the works, on the contrary it crystallises it.

Criticism Stage Five: Juxtaposition

Here is where any analytical potential of the system will become apparent. The two works have been brought into common ground, through the creation of a system abstract enough to be able to address both. Now they can be compared on this level and observed in terms of how the new work deals with the potential of its predecessor. There is no suggestion here that this is the way the transposition was achieved, or that this is the way it should have been achieved. The adaptation is not examined based on its compliance to this specific analytical system. What is being attempted through this process, is a sustained analysis of the dialogic relationship between the works. The choices made in the transfer are being examined on a level that encompasses all major aspects of the works. The potential that has materialised is examined along that which did not. This juxtaposition will take place for each level of interrogation, aims, methods and implementation. The divergence between the works is expected to be more pronounced in the lower level, since that is the level most affected by media-specificity. This level will also more often be open to solutions of equivalence as well as to intertextual loans.

The examination of the novel and film on common ground will be accompanied by a return to the film through relevant instances of comparative analysis. This will allow for the identification of connections in the microscopic level of the interaction, as results of the poetic transposition. Secondary influences on the film will also be considered. The new work will be placed in the web of references and allusions that have infused it. It will then be possible to observe how the external elements operate in the context of the work's poetics. This is also the stage where the socio/historical aspect of the transposition will be addressed, where the works are examined as Bakhtinian utterances, situated in their environment. This examination will demonstrate how the new work conforms its source to the new context but also how it interprets the modern environment through the filter of a previous text. This stage is also the one in which creative expression is addressed. The case of *Apocalypse Now* is a good example of a project that developed through multiple creative agencies, as the film developed in stages, each one of which introduced another creator with a new, personal interpretation of the novel.

Practice Stage One: Reading of the Literary Text

This stage will be similar to its equivalent in the criticism strand, and focused on the work of Fyodor Dostoevsky. The testing of the practice chapter will be dealing primarily with *Notes from Underground* (1864), and on a complementary level with *White Nights* (1848). The reason for this dual address stems from Bakhtin's reading of the author's work. His presentation of Dostoevsky's oeuvre demonstrates its consistency as well as a series of constant aesthetic aims. Primary among these concerns is the concept of polyphony, the dramatic rendering of conceptual interactions. This invites the possibility to deal with more than one work. Thus, in this early stage, and in keeping with Bakhtin's reading of Dostoevsky, this thesis will attempt to mirror the author's project. In the same way that Bakhtin sees Dostoevsky as the organiser of interacting voices in his novels, this

thesis will assume a similar function, separating the voices from the two works and organising their interaction in the filmic medium. This will achieve an engagement with the work's poetics while creating a flexible environment, open to many possibilities. It could be argued that such a combination of texts is unnecessary in the context of this test. The basic argument for its implementation is that it provides more potential for the examination. It is suggested here that not only is it consistent with the chosen reading of the work, and therefore a valid choice, but it also provides ground for departures from the source in an intertextual manner. In that sense, the choice mirrors the structure of dialogic fidelity that is discussed in this thesis. It is necessary for the choice of the case study to push the boundaries of adaptation in the aspects that are relevant to the discussion. Only then will it be possible to ascertain its value as an analytical method. The reasoning for the choice of the specific works will be analysed in chapter four.

This project will primarily operate through Bakhtin's reading of the author's work, but not exclusively. Other readings will also be considered and different approaches will be discussed. The reason for the primary focus on Bakhtin is consistency. It would be too chaotic in the context of this thesis to open the discussion of reading to all possible interpretation. Furthermore, what is more important in this section of the test is not a pluralistic interpretive basis, as in the criticism strand, but the discussion of the transfer. In the criticism section, a plurality of interpretations was called for, because it allowed for the identification of links and common patterns between the works. Here, the discussion of possibilities does not have an exploratory objective but a structural one. Bakhtin's *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* will therefore be the guide through this process. In it, Bakhtin goes through most of the author's work, examining each text along the exposition of his own theory. This structure offers the opportunity to structure the engagement with the text through a filter of the transferable elements of Bakhtin's theory.

Practice Stage Two: Poetics of the Literary Text

As in Stage two of the criticism section, the work will be interrogated and distilled into its poetics. The three tiered system will be implemented as before. Bakhtin's reading is amenable to such treatment, as his analysis is also rather abstract and generalising. The aims of Dostoevsky's work, such as his polyphonic project and the representation of heteroglossia will be identified in the context of the novel. Subsequently, the methods he employs, such as first person narration, chronotopic structures and embodied ideas will be addressed. Finally, the implementation of these methods in the text will be analysed in terms of dialogue, tone and style. Bakhtin's reading is arguably more preoccupied with the abstract structures, rather than with analyses of specific passages. This means that the first two tiers will be more pronounced in the poetics. This gap will be filled through input by other scholars.

It needs to be pointed out here, that although Bakhtin's reading will constitute the central part of this study, it is not the only option. A different approach and a different reading could be obtained through another critic. This thesis does not assume a definitive reading or an optimal adaptation. It attempts to examine a possible process through a specific rationale. The main parameter considered in the choice of a specific approach has been the extent to which they appear conducive to the analysis.

Practice Stage Three: Transposition of the Poetics

Dostoevsky's poetic structure, as described in the previous stage, will now be discussed in terms of its possible transposition to the filmic medium. This discussion will involve all three levels of the reading through a series of new questions. The flexibility of the interaction will be amplified from one tier to the next. On the level of aesthetic aims, a certain proximity will be pursued, if not to the aims themselves, at least to the way of thinking. This choice constitutes the fidelity part of this

thesis. What is proposed here is an engagement with the text through its more abstract structures. In the absence of that engagement, the subsequent steps become irrelevant. That is not to say that the structure will be copied as is. Even a subversion of some of its elements will be discussed. This step being very abstract, it will presumably offer the least difficulty in terms of media-specificity.

The second step concerns the methods employed. This tier will possibly encounter methods that are better suited to literary systems, or methods that might not appear transferable at all. The discussion of functions becomes relevant here. This will open the discussion of what methods in the new medium achieve similar functions as the ones identified during the reading of the text. These methods will again be narrative, stylistic or of any other nature. This discussion will be informed by the cultural/historical context of the works; an element that achieves one function in a given context cannot be guaranteed to achieve the same function once that context changes.

The discussion does not just aim to find solutions of transfer, but to find solutions that work in the new medium. The notion of dialogic fidelity proposed here, is not blind adherence to the text but a process of dialogue with it. The last step of this process is that of implementation. It addresses the ways in which the methods translate into the work. This is the most medium-specific step. It presents more difficulties than the previous ones, as well as great freedom of invention and thus many possibilities for discussion. This conversation bleeds into the next stage as it allows for external elements to enter the process. Those elements will prove most useful in cases where media specificity does not allow for organic transposition.

Practice Stage Four: Implementation

In this section, the description of the new work will be completed through a discussion of its implementation. Various ideas will be considered as to how the film can work on the microscopic

level, under the system described above. Here is where intertextuality can creatively inform the process. References, allusions or loans from other works will be allowed to inform the new structure. This is the stage in which the process is allowed to substantially deviate from the letter of the source text. Radical departures will be considered if the case demands it, that will serve as commentary, or that will allow for the incorporation of another discourse, or the revelation of a concept that was obscured in the original. In this stage, carnivalistic creative tendencies will be permitted to thrive through free interaction in the security that the connection with the text has been retained through the poetic structure. This discussion will also be informed by the situation of the works in their cultural environment. This step concludes the process by allowing for external influences to alter the source in those aspects that are not only harder to transfer but also less crucial to the work itself as it has been described through the chosen reading. In these cases the loss of the original information is placed in the context of a system.

2.5 Summary, Outline of the Next Chapter

This chapter has presented a detailed description of this thesis, it has elaborated its theoretical heritage and offered arguments for the choices that define it. The crucial terms of the discourse were analysed and theoretically contextualised. Subsequently they were defined as they will be used in this study. The next chapter will contain the case study of the criticism strand, an examination of Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, based on Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The structure of the chapter will follow the stages presented in the methodology.

Chapter 3:

Adaptation Criticism: *Heart of Darkness* Into *Apocalypse Now*

3.1 Introduction

Chapter two presented and argued for a specific approach in literature to film adaptation, an approach that proposed the analysis of works in terms of their poetics. This chapter will implement the first test of that approach, in the context of adaptation criticism. It will address adaptation as product rather than process, and try to determine whether the new approach can offer an original analysis of a specific case. The aim of this chapter is to ascertain whether the theory of fidelity of poetics, as described in chapter two, will prove fruitful when applied to the case of an existing adaptation. This test will operate through the five stages described in the methodology section of chapter two. Stage one will contain the collection of information regarding the readings of the novel in question. Stage two will be a distillation of the information of stage one into a structure of aims, methods and functions that has been termed the work's poetics. Stage three will contain a collection of the available readings of the film in question. Stage four will distil that information into the poetics of the film, a system that will be structurally similar to that of stage two but will also contain information and strategies that are specific to the medium. Based on the descriptions of both works in terms of aims, methods and functions, stage five will juxtapose the two works on that level.

3.2 Brief Background of the Works and their Critical Reception

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), wrote *Heart of Darkness* ten years after his personal experience in the Congo. The events of his journey affected him physically, but also emotionally and ideologically. It took him ten years to translate that experience into fiction and the resulting novel carries many elements that can be connected to biographical incidents. According to the author, the idea behind the novel was “the criminality of inefficiency and pure selfishness when tackling the civilising work

in Africa” (Conrad 1920). On its initial release in 1899, the novel was not met with critical enthusiasm. E.M Forster called the work too “misty” and later, F.R. Leavis regarded it as lacking clarity, precision and directness, suggesting that “the actual effect is not to magnify but rather to muffle” (Leavis 1950, p.177). The novel’s ambiguity seemed to unsettle critics, with Leavis further pointing out that Conrad “is intent on making a virtue out of not knowing what he means” (Leavis 1950, p.180). Nevertheless, *Heart of Darkness* was eventually re-evaluated and now holds canonical status in world literature. Its narrative structure is now identified as an early modernist device, while accusations of confusion and mystifying ambiguity have turned into praise of organised self-reflexive complexity. As Ian Watt points out, “*Heart of Darkness* embodies more thoroughly than any previous fiction the posture of uncertainty and doubt; one of Marlow’s functions is to represent how much a man cannot know” (Watt 2004, p.174).

There have been few attempts to transfer the novel to film. Notable among them is one that failed to reach the screen, but that is, according to James Naremore, very significant. “Any cinematic adaptation of the novella is likely to be overshadowed by a legendary film that was never made: Orson Welles’s 1939 *Heart of Darkness* ... His version of *Heart of Darkness* would have been an intriguing picture by any measure, of interest not only for its political and aesthetic qualities but also, in secondary ways, for what it suggests about the problem of fidelity in adaptation” (Naremore 2011, p.60-61). The film was going to be set in South America, and Kurtz would be a modern day dictator. Welles, recognising the proximity between the two main characters, planned to play the parts of Marlow as well as Kurtz himself. “Accentuating the ‘doubleness’ of Conrad’s story, Welles nominated himself to play the parts of both Marlow and Kurtz, foregrounding the doppelgänger relationship that the characters share by the end of the novella” (Sherry 2012, p.381). The adaptation was going to be Welles’s first feature film, and the detailed descriptions that were produced reveal a highly experimental work. The whole film would be comprised of a literal point

of view of Marlow. Furthermore, the introduction would feature the director himself, talking to the camera. “The issue of narrative distancing is solved in a very extreme way by Welles, the author-auteur ... places himself into the foreground, and ... addresses the audience directly” (Sherry 2012, p.383). Welles attempts a form of fidelity that is close to what is being described in this thesis. He is trying to emulate the functions of the artistic elements of the novel, by employing cinematic elements that achieve the same effects. Welles’s faithfulness extends to the thematic plain, to the extent that the work is criticised for the same reasons as its predecessor. “Welles’s adaptation completely rejects colonialism, places the action in a Dark Continent of the mind, and tries to become a commentary on fascism; but it doesn’t avoid Conrad’s primitivism ... The film’s treatment of women would have been quite close in spirit to Conrad’s misogyny” (Naremore 2011, p.72). Referring to the novel’s ideological contradictions, Naremore reaches a somewhat pessimistic conclusion about the possibilities of adaptation of the novel. “Any attempt to expurgate, condense, or modernize the narrative is faced with the choice of retaining these contradictions or of becoming some other kind of thing entirely” (Naremore 2011, p.73). This thesis would argue that this is not necessarily the case. An adaptation could potentially engage with the contradictions, address them and attempt to examine them from a modern perspective. That would not make it something else entirely, but actually a creatively dialogic evolution of the source.

Arguably the most interesting adaptation of the novel thus far has been Francis Ford Coppola’s 1979 film *Apocalypse Now*. Some might use the term adaptation in quotations in this case, as there has been significant controversy regarding the connection between the two works. There are those who see no other link between novel and film than a very loose transposition of the narrative. Jeffrey Meyers, reviewing Gene Moore’s *Conrad on Film* offers a general conclusion. “I believe the disastrous attempts to simplify his [Conrad’s] moral complexity, eliminate his irony and psychological penetration, change his tragic conclusions and transform his grim settings into exotic

locales, his espionage into romance, his action into melodrama, his pessimism into cheerfulness have ruined most pictures based on his work” (Meyers 1997, p.481). At first glance, some of those statements can be seen as applicable in the case of *Apocalypse Now*. Other critics have been more kind. Garrett Stewart in his essay entitled “Coppola’s Conrad: The Repetitions of Complicity”, suggests that “Departing from Conrad, Coppola gains access to their common theme at a deep level. The revisionary impulse becomes, as it sounds, a second look, harder, darker ... By the standards of screen borrowings, a surprisingly high percentage of Conrad is there in Coppola, imported but transmuted” (Stewart 1981, p.456). Marsha Kinder in “The Power of Adaptation in *Apocalypse Now*”, claims that “Despite the substantial changes, the film is amazingly true to the story’s core of meaning, its ‘heart of immense darkness’ and to the dream-like suggestiveness cultivated by Conrad’s narrator Charlie Marlow” (Kinder 1980, p.12). Jamie Sherry suggests that “despite the fact that the film contains no direct mention of the novella, ... officially negating its adaptive status, the film is indelibly linked to Conrad’s source text in a culturally more profound way than many adaptations that foreground their adaptive status” (Sherry 2012, p.377). Linda Costanzo Cahir juxtaposes the two works in terms of narrative. “Although superficial details may change, the substance of the tale each tells is timeless, unalterable, and ongoing ... The atemporality of that journey and the compelling need the initiate has to tell and retell his story are assumptions inherent in both Conrad’s novel and Coppola’s film. Although the ‘story’ told by the novel is quite different from the ‘story’ told by the film, their ‘narratives’ are surprisingly similar” (Cahir 2004, p.184). Joy Gould Boyum takes the point further and argues that the film cannot stand conceptually on its own. “Whatever its alterations, however distant it may seem at first glance, *Apocalypse Now* remains not only deeply indebted to Conrad’s tale but not fully comprehensible without reference to it” (Boyum 1985, p.129). This chapter will attempt to illuminate the connections between the works and examine an initial hypothesis that the film does indeed engage with the novel in a profound manner.

The process by which the novel reached the screen is anything but conventional. The original author of the screenplay, John Milius, showed only superficial interest in the novel suggesting that “if it’s based on *Heart of Darkness*, then *Moby Dick* is based on the Book of Job” (cited in Cowie 1998, p.123). He has also mentioned that his desire to adapt the novel was prompted by one of his professors, who talked about the work’s unfilmability and of the failed attempt by Orson Welles. Even a cursory examination of the original script will reveal that the resulting film appears to be the product of a very different approach. Apparently Coppola did constant rewrites, before and during production, and very often referred to the novel. Donald M. Whaley writes: “Coppola kept a paperback copy of the novel in his pocket while directing the film, referred to the novel more often than to the script, and tightened the parallels between the novel and the film beyond those in the original screenplay” (Whaley 2007, p.37). Especially when he discovered problems in the third act, midway through the already troubled production, he revisited the novel for guidance and inspiration. Jamie Sherry suggests that “an adaptive reversal process occurs, as Coppola takes control of the script and attempts to reground the story back towards the source material during filming. ... The influence of the source text on *Apocalypse Now*, rather than becoming progressively *decayed*, actually becomes *amplified* as Coppola reverses the production back towards Conrad” (Sherry 2012, p.377 [original emphasis]). The film’s voice-over, written by Michael Herr, author of the Vietnam chronicle *Dispatches* (1977), was also not part of the original screenplay, and was written after principal photography had ended. Herr also engaged with the novel, with many of the lines clearly referencing or directly quoting the source. The chaotic production and many hours of shot footage resulted in a difficult editing process. The final film is the product of a complex interaction of a great number of processes, all influenced in different ways by the source text.

From this point onward, for purposes of presentational simplification, the agency responsible for the novel will be addressed as Conrad and the agency responsible for the transposition from novel to

film will be addressed as Coppola. The names will not refer strictly to the individuals but to the functions of implied author and adapter as have been described earlier. Historical settings will be addressed when necessary in the discussion of the context of the work, but authorial intent or views will be omitted or presented as hints or guidelines. The film that will constitute the object of this study will not be the 1979 original release of *Apocalypse Now* but the 2001 extended version *Apocalypse Now Redux*. This version retains all the material of the original theatrical release but incorporates a number of scenes that might offer valuable information for this study. The existence of the extra scenes does not hinder the analysis of the original film in any way, since they are clearly identified. Furthermore, their inclusion will offer more material for analysis and potential for comparison. The aim of this study is not to offer value judgement on the film or on different versions of it. The objective is to attempt an original examination of the transposition, and the extra information provided by the extended cut offers more opportunities for the identification of connections in that respect. Whenever the distinction between the two releases becomes important it will be addressed.

3.3 Stage One: Reading of the Novel

As has been described in the previous chapter (2.15.1), the first stage of the examination will consist of a presentation of the readings that have been proposed for the novel. This collection of information will form the necessary base for the analysis of the transposition.

Especially in the case of a novel like *Heart of Darkness*, this presentation of readings can never be exhaustive. Nevertheless, the aim here is not a comprehensive list of interpretations but a diverse sample, taken from a number of schools of criticism. This presentation will address issues of narrative, style, language, themes and ideology. Bakhtin's notion of the author as organiser of discourses is crucial in this stage, as it recognises an overriding agency while at the same time being

abstract enough to allow for an examination of the text itself, rather than assumptions of authorial intent. Like Booth's notion of the implied author, it allows for the inference of an abstract operating system, that remains subjective and can take as many forms as the interpretations offered for the work. The multiplicity of interpretations will present incompatibilities and even contradictions, but it can never be unmanageably chaotic. Patterns will always emerge and the result will be describable as a system of alternatives. As Bakhtin might suggest, a more polyphonic or dialogic work will offer a more polyphonic system of interpretation and the complete poetics of such a work will be described by a tree structure, rather than a linear one.

The events of the novel can be summarised as follows: A seasoned seaman, Marlow, is recounting the story of one of his travels to Africa, along the Congo river, during the colonisation of the area. Employed by a trading company as a skipper, his job was to traverse the river and reach the inner station. He tells of his impressions of the area, the natives and the European practices of commerce, of which he is critical. During his voyage, he learned of the head of the inner station, an agent called Kurtz, whose actions and ideas he found increasingly intriguing. When he reached the inner station, he found that Kurtz had gathered the natives around him and was acting as their god, leading them to violent attacks against other tribes. Kurtz eventually agreed to be taken back. He died on the boat during the journey. Marlow admits that he has never really succeeded in making sense of his experience.

3.3.1 Narrative Structure

The first step towards an account of the novel's readings will be an examination of its narrative structure. This might not necessarily be the case in an examination of another novel. Marlow's story is contained within the framing narrative that takes place on the boat where he tells it. This device places the reader at a distance from Marlow's first person narration. The reader assumes the position

of the framing narrator, not only hearing a story but also observing the person telling it. At the same time, the position of the framing narrative on a river mirrors the setting of the rest of the novel and gives Marlow the opportunity to juxtapose the two locations: “And this also has been one of the dark places of the earth” (p.7). Marlow’s description as an uncharacteristic seaman and his initial comments retain traces of ambiguity and prepare the reader for the telling of Marlow’s “inconclusive experience” (p.9). The suggestion seems to be that this ambiguity will not only be present throughout the work but that it will also be one of its thematic preoccupations. The question remains whether it is Marlow’s story that will remain inconclusive or the novel as a whole, whether this is a work that examines the storytelling process or a work of Bakhtinian unfinalised meaning. The main interpretive problem of the novel is the inability to ascertain with certainty the extent to which Conrad can be identified with Marlow. If one accepts the identification, the novel is indeed inconclusive, if not, the implication is allowed that concrete meaning can be drawn from the examination of Marlow’s telling of the story, a meaning that he does not have access to. There is no academic consensus on this point and most negative criticism of the novel stems from the former assumption, as in the discussion of Conrad’s position towards colonialism or his treatment of women. Chinua Achebe for example believes that Conrad completely identifies with Marlow. “If Conrad’s intention is to draw a cordon sanitaire between himself and the moral and psychological malaise of his narrator his care seems to me totally wasted because he neglects to hint however subtly or tentatively at an alternative frame of reference by which we may judge the actions and opinions of his characters ... Marlow seems to me to enjoy Conrad’s complete confidence” (Achebe 1977, p.5).

It seems the only safe option is to assume the potential but not the certainty of Bakhtinian double-voiced discourse throughout the work. Every statement can be seen either as a monologic articulation of the author through Marlow, or as double voiced discourse, with the author assuming

Marlow's voice to make points different than those of the character. This interpretation would position Marlow's words in the context of what Bakhtin calls parody and hidden polemic (2.10.3). It is not hard to see why *Heart of Darkness* is considered a precursor to modernism. Its narrative is based on a heavily self-reflexive narrator, whose reliability is potentially in question, combining a subjective perspective with a distancing device.

David Thorburn (1974) suggests that the novel is a variation on the adventure tale, with the hero facing trials to reach experience, but with the added questioning of language's ability to render that experience. The novel does indeed fit the general outline of an adventure tale but with a few important distinctions. The hero is not an innocent but an experienced seaman. The preparation for the journey is described in a rather detached manner, and the enterprise is undermined by Marlow's uneasiness. The voyage itself involves more contemplation than action and its goal is never clear. More importantly, the essential conflict of the character is not a physical one and his active participation in the events is limited. The presence of the only other major character, Kurtz, is constantly deferred. The final confrontation is essentially anti-dramatic and the novel, as Fothergill (1989) points out, has four consecutive endings: the confrontation in the jungle, Kurtz's death, the lie to the fiancée and the conclusion of the framing narrative. This appears to be a structure that will not benefit from a reduction to previous narrative models. They can only serve as intertextual references or through an examination of the method of their subversion.

3.3.2 Style/Discourse

The style of the novel is essentially defined by Marlow's language. His voice governs the narrative and his articulation is the only real access the reader has to the story. A powerful element of Marlow's discourse is his irony, often employed to point out the absurdities of the colonising enterprise. In most cases it is directed towards specific characters but never externalised as Marlow

never confronts the people that he critiques. The irony usually makes clear points, but it also throws other issues into question: the reader only has access to the story through Marlow's language and style, and therefore has no solid reference to judge when he is indeed being ironic. Thus, certain comments can be interpreted in entirely contradictory ways. Most important among these is Marlow's notion of the "redeeming idea" (p.10) that justifies the colonising process. The decision of whether to take that statement at face value drastically affects the reader's view of Marlow and of the novel's ideological position. This adds a second level of ambiguity. Is Marlow endorsing colonialism? If so, does the novel endorse Marlow's opinion? James Naremore suggests that it does: "Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is an implicit attack on Rousseau; although it shows the cruelty of Belgian exploitation in the Congo, it approves of a 'good' colonialism that represses Africa's putative savagery and controls the ancient bestiality in the human heart" (Naremore 2011, p.72).

Arguments could also be raised for the opposite view. Charles V. Hawley suggests that Marlow gradually learns that the redeeming idea is a convenient lie. "Marlow is a witness to one society's attempt to impose history, its history, on another. His journey, in a sense, is a journey of discovery – to discover how successful such an imposition can and should be. Not only does Marlow discover the difficulty found in such an imposition, but he learns what happens when history is evacuated (when history, in other words, cannot be constructed and sustained). Marlow discovers all this when he reaches Kurtz's compound" (Hawley 1996, p.110).

Finally, it could be argued that the novel is trying to examine these exact questions in general terms through the fiction, without offering a pronouncement. Bakhtin might suggest that the novel intends for this duality of voices on the structural level, that Marlow's oscillation is transferred to the reader through the inability to distinguish between authorial voice and the character's words, between monologic and dialogic discourse. On the narrative level, three distinct voices can be identified:

Marlow's, Kurtz's and the company's. The shifting dynamics between those three discourses drive the novel. The fact that two of the voices are mediated by the third complicates interpretation, but Marlow's trajectory can be described as his dialogic relation with the other two voices. He starts in opposition with the company discourse. Gradually he realises his proximity with Kurtz's. Finally he dismisses both, according to most interpretations, and selects an informed compromise.

Marlow's discourse is heavily based on binary oppositions, most prominent among them that of light and darkness. Other oppositions employed are savage/civilised, faith/hollowness, restraint/lack of it, idea/idol. Darkness and light are identified with various elements and often with seemingly contradictory results. Marlow's critique of colonising practices, his inner moral conflict and his view of Kurtz, the three strands of his discourse, often point in different directions. Integrated into one voice, they have a disorienting effect that makes any categorical distinctions unclear. For example, in the beginning of the story Marlow seems to link darkness with savagery and light with civilisation, but later on that assumption is questioned, in descriptions of the natives and the company men. This undermining of the conceptual structure culminates with the introduction of Kurtz. One could argue that it is the binary oppositions themselves that Conrad is trying to question.

One argument that supports the notion of a clear design on Conrad's part is his juxtapositions. Through those, Conrad makes points that Marlow does not articulate. Characteristic of this effect is the passage in which Marlow praises the bookkeeping efficiency of a company agent while in the background he can see the grove where the natives are left to die. Conrad offers many of these comparisons whose meaning is not literally pointed out by Marlow but that in his words "seem to throw a kind of light" on the situation.

Another effect that is often employed in the novel is delayed decoding. In many instances Marlow gives a brief, abstract description of an object or event and later presents its true nature. An example of this is Marlow's description of certain ball-shaped objects on sticks, that he first sees from a distance in Kurtz's station. "Near the house half-a-dozen slim posts remained in a row, roughly trimmed, and with their upper ends ornamented with round carved balls" (p.86). Later, the balls are identified as severed heads. "Now I had suddenly a nearer view, and its first result was to make me throw my head back as if before a blow" (p.95). Ian Watt addresses this structure. "One of the devices that he hit on was to present a sense impression and to withhold naming it or explaining its meaning until later; as readers we witness every step by which the gap between the individual perception and its cause is belatedly closed within the consciousness of the protagonist" (Watt 2004, p.175).

This effect reinforces the reader's identification with Marlow but also problematises Marlow's perception of his environment. Watt refers to this strategy to make the point of Conrad's intentional ambiguity. "*Heart of Darkness* is essentially impressionist in one very special and yet general way: it accepts, and indeed in its very form asserts, the bounded and ambiguous nature of individual understanding; and because the understanding sought is of an inward and experiential kind, we can describe the basis of its narrative method as subjective moral impressionism" (Watt 2004, p.174).

This impressionistic discourse invites the reader to fill in the blanks, as does Marlow's insistence on not providing names or labelling events. This is another area of academic debate. Bruce Johnson (1985) suggests that Conrad is more interested in a presentation of events rather than their limited meaning. Florence H. Ridley (1963) claims that Conrad's method works through emotional response and the senses, quoting the author as referring to "an appeal to temperament through the senses" (cited in Ridley 1963, p.44). Hunt Hawkins (1979) in a political context, sees the novel as a

dramatisation of the white's erroneous decoding of the native's culture. Again, there is no final verdict as to whether the effect is meant to immerse the reader in the story or create a distance from it.

Marlow's discourse does not retain the same tone throughout. As the novel progresses, a gradual shift occurs that is evident through a transformation of the language. Up until the beginning of his final voyage to the inner station Marlow maintains an ironic detachment from his environment, offering a rigorous critique of the practices and the people that he meets. That critique is gradually put aside in favour of an introspective examination of Marlow's own morality. He starts to question his own complicity indirectly, through the contemplation of the jungle and his fascination with Kurtz. This drastically affects his language, that becomes much more abstract, symbolic and metaphysical. It also brings about the preponderance of adjectives that Leavis criticised as heavy-handed, unhinged mystification (Leavis 1950). This introspection, reinforced by the fact that Marlow does not mention any interaction with other people on the final voyage, prepares the ground for the introduction of Kurtz who has, by this point, been elevated to Marlow's only hope for answers to his metaphysical questions.

One of the most useful tools that Bakhtin can offer in the context of this analysis is his notion of the chronotope (2.10.4). An account of the spatial and temporal structures of the novel is not only useful in the description of the novel but also in the later stage of the juxtaposition of the two works. An examination of the chronotope of *Heart of Darkness* would initially seem a rather simple affair. Marlow's voyage up the river constitutes a linear, essentially one dimensional, spatial trajectory, through a linear temporal structure. But the subversions of that linearity are revealing. Even though the voyage can be macroscopically traced with a line on a map, the actual movement described is very limited. Most events and interactions in the novel happen in a state of stasis. The beginning

and end of the novel, long parts of the narrative, happen in Europe, and the river voyage itself is mostly examined in episodes of anticipation. The main spatial preoccupation of the novel is not with movement through space but with the juxtaposition between two different spaces, the jungle and the European buildings. Marlow constantly compares the two, describing the pair in terms of spatial arrangement, the stations intruding in the jungle, the jungle surrounding and looming over the stations. The spatial relations are transformed into metaphors for Marlow's political and metaphysical inner conflict. The temporal relations are more overtly complex. Apart from the effect of delayed decoding mentioned earlier, that could be seen as subjectively linear, Marlow often breaks his narration to offer comment or glimpses of later stages of the story. The meeting with Kurtz is hinted at very early on, the lie to the fiancée is mentioned early as well, Kurtz's report is discussed many pages before the point in the story where Marlow actually has access to it. It becomes clear that what is important in temporal terms is not smooth presentation but the creation of associations. In the same sense, the long pauses in the action are not dramatically necessary but are used as plateaus for contemplation and analysis. Furthermore, the temporal structure also contains a regressive element. The voyage up the river is seen by Marlow as a trip back in time. As the boat moves towards the inner station in real time, it is also perceived as moving towards previous stages of human history and evolution.

3.3.3 Themes and Ideology

The narrative structure of the novel and the style of the discourse serve specific thematic and ideological purposes. This may not be the case in all literary works, but here it is arguably safe to assume a hierarchic relationship between thematic aims and structural, narrative and stylistic functions. That does not mean that all the aims of the novel are thematic. It will be argued in the next stage that some will be stylistic or narrative explorations, but they will still be connected to analyses of specific concepts. Conrad's experience of the Congo took place during the reign of

Leopold II, historically accepted as one of the most brutal and corrupt cases of colonialist exploitation. Under the pretence of a civilising mission, Leopold was granted absolute rule over the area. Arbitrary taxation, military presence and what essentially amounted to slave labour, facilitated the maximisation of production of ivory and rubber. Conrad personally witnessed the brutality and hypocrisy of the 'civilising' mission. The novel serves partly as indictment of the practices in the region. What is not entirely clear is whether it is also an indictment of the colonising process in general. The notion of the 'redeeming idea' has already been mentioned, so the question of whether Conrad was hinting through the novel at a non-exploitative, humanistic enterprise does not have an easy answer. Marlow's praise of the principles of work and efficiency seem to imply the possibility of a better implementation of the process. Fothergill terms the viewpoint of the novel semi-colonialist, referring to juxtapositions with the use of a semi-colon that "insists upon a connection without dictating the precise nature of it" (Fothergill 1989, p.57). He cites a passage in the novel, a description of the company accountant: "bent over his books [he] was making correct entries of perfectly correct transactions; and fifty feet below the doorstep I could see the still treetops of the grove of death" (p.28).

The figure of Kurtz, in that context, is also hard to read. The critique of colonising practices is the main preoccupation of the first part of the story, but Kurtz's introduction adds another layer to the discussion. Marlow's gradual fascination with the man seems to suggest Kurtz as an ally in the critique, as a counterpoint to the brutality and hypocrisy. When it is revealed that this is not actually the case, the reader, like Marlow, is left in dramatic as well as ideological confusion. The radical undermining of expectations complicates the ideas that have been formulated up to that point. Further complicating interpretation is Marlow's change of discourse from the political plane to the metaphysical. The shift from the coloniser/colonised to the civilised/savage binary system invites the question of which one is represented by Kurtz. He can be seen as the radical extension of the

colonising process, its logical conclusion. He can also be seen as a meeting of influences, the profit-seeking European with the savage native. It could be said that in the savage environment he found the savagery within him and by extension within western civilisation. He can be seen as a positive force that was corrupted, or as a negative force that self-destructed. Marlow offers value judgement on Kurtz, but it is often contradictory. He admires Kurtz as a “great man” but also ascribes to him the hollowness of the company men. He builds up the man’s importance but suggests that his life was not worth the life of the fallen helmsman. “I can’t forget him, though I am not prepared to affirm the fellow was exactly worth the life we lost in getting to him” (p.83).

Kurtz’s voice is the central point of convergence with Marlow. When Marlow first realises his fascination with the man, what he envisions is a voice. Marlow is seeking answers and meaning above all else, verbal articulations of a truth. Nevertheless, the reader is never offered any examples of Kurtz’s praised eloquence. Marlow also admits that he never received the clear answers that he sought. He goes even further and questions his own ability to adequately interpret his story as well as his audience’s capacity to understand it. When it gets dark on the Nellie, Marlow himself is “no more to us than a voice” (p.43). This critique of language runs through the novel and culminates with Kurtz’s last words. “The horror” might be a verbal distillation of human experience or the rambling of an incoherent madman; it might be the answer that Marlow was looking for or his own projection. It might signify a return to order or an acceptance of chaos. “ ‘The horror!’ about which Kurtz exclaims at his death is that of a world where societal justification, its myth and history, do not exist” (Hawley 1996, p.111). The cry is dramatically situated as the answer that the reader has been led to expect. The definition of that meaning, or the assumption of its non-existence, also a valid choice, is one of the major decisions that define the interpretation of the work.

Conrad’s treatment of the natives is another controversial area. The novel has been criticised for

dealing with the natives only as a group and never giving them a voice. Marlow's discussion of prehistory has clear Darwinian origins. He sees the savage as ancestor, as an earlier stage of human evolution. This view certainly carries a reduction that seems inappropriate today but even so, it should be noted that Marlow never offers negative judgement on the natives. Furthermore, he does not pair his notions of civilised and savage to Europeans and natives respectively. One example is Marlow's description of the boat crew, but the culmination of the discourse is Kurtz himself. In his case Conrad seems to be pointing to the unextinguished savage nature within civilised society.

The portrayal of the black woman at the inner station, assumed to be Kurtz's mistress, forms part of the argument of Conrad's racism and also of his chauvinism. The black woman is never given words, although she can communicate verbally with Kurtz, and her presence is more symbolic than literal. She represents the calling of the darkness but she remains little more than an "apparition", in Marlow's words. The same can be said of Kurtz's fiancée. Although she is given a voice, her role is still passive. Marlow's opinion that women live in a world of their own and that they should not be removed from that world, comically expressed in the early scene that describes Marlow's meeting with his aunt, and dramatically expressed with Marlow's lie at the end, seems to provide grounds for contemporary criticism. Nevertheless, it could be argued that Conrad is commenting on the view through (and over) Marlow. Furthermore, it is important that Marlow is not questioning women's capacity for understanding but advocates with a chivalrous naivete, for the protection of innocence and the preservation of necessary illusions. Ridley's interpretation of the lie makes this point. "If there is irony in the fact that all Marlow has left is the Intended's faith in illusion, that 'her faith remained the only light', it was for Conrad the irony of the universal human condition" (Ridley 1963, p.52).

3.3.4 Multiple Interpretations

The novel allows for a wide range of interpretations even before one considers different schools of literary criticism. Each approach complicates matters by uncovering different layers of the work, but also simplifies by focusing on specific aspects and enforcing a general interpretive structure. The presentation of a selection of specific interpretations will help to expose the description of the work to different ideas. This multiplicity of interpretive voices will offer more opportunity for the identification of connections later on. In stage five it will be possible to see if the interpretation that informs the film is consistent with any of the ones proposed for the novel.

Fothergill, focusing on the critique of language and an analysis of Marlow's storytelling process rather than the story itself, suggests that the novel is a "parable about the process of reading itself" (Fothergill 1989, p.1). He views the novel as an examination of the imperfection of narration but also of the impossibility of concrete interpretation. Rosenfield (1967), opposing the New Criticism notion of separating the work from its context, attempts to link Conrad's work to literary tradition. According to Murfin "for Rosenfield, the general cultural myths underlying all of Conrad's works are those of the Fall from Paradise and of the night-sea voyage, in which a hero journeys to the center of the earth or underneath the sea to encounter the forces of evil and be reborn" (Murfin 1989, p.108).

Frederic Karl (1968), a proponent of psychoanalytic criticism, associates Conrad's darkness with Freud's notion of the unconscious. He views Marlow's story as a need to analyse his nightmare in order to cope with it. Marlow's dream/voyage is wish-fulfilment and Kurtz represents Marlow's own will for power. The meaning of Kurtz's cry is Marlow's projection. Marlow's lie reinforces his own naive illusions and Conrad is commenting through him.

Reader response criticism studies the effect of the work on the reader, rather than attempt to identify meaning in the work itself. Multiple subjective interpretations are not only allowed but expected in this approach. Adena Rosmarin (1989) uses *Heart of Darkness* as an example that invites that approach on a formal as well as on a thematic level. She points out that the readers of the novel are warned of the inconclusiveness of Marlow's story. They are invited to try to make sense of it, to fill in the gaps, but reminded that they will fail. The answers Marlow and the readers were expecting never arrive and Marlow's lie is an acknowledgement of that fact. Rosmarin's essay is more an analysis about how the novel associates with reader-response theory rather than an analysis of the novel through the theory but it still offers a clear ideological frame for the work.

Johanna Smith (1989) offers a feminist critique of the novel, focusing on its language and attempting to uncover the patriarchal conventions embedded in the text. She points out that Marlow's complicity in imperialist ideology is evident in his portrayal of women. She also notes that his irony is targeted at the imperialist elements, not the patriarchal ones, which are considered natural. Women are voiceless non-threatening symbols, excluded from the world of experience. Marlow caricatures his aunt to disguise his own complicity and uses the fiancée to purify his 'redeeming idea'.

Deconstructive criticism sees in the novel the celebration of indeterminacy, contradiction and the limitless interpretive possibilities of the text. A scholar of this school, J. Hillis Miller (1983), describes the novel as an apocalyptic parable, in the sense that it describes the end of times, meaning the end of western civilisation. He also points out that apocalypse has a second meaning of 'unveiling' that he sees as a central theme of the text. Miller refers to Marlow's statement about his story's meaning existing around, rather than inside, a nutshell, and his claim that it is impossible to describe a dream, to argue that the novel is not only inconclusive but also about inconclusiveness.

He sees it as a “revelation of the impossibility of revelation” (Miller 1989, p.215), that it only allows us to see a “likeness” of a meaning that is impossible to articulate. He argues that the novel works through the structure of the apocalyptic genre, with a series of revelations and witnesses (the reader, the listener on the *Nellie*, Marlow, Kurtz), with each unveiling revealing another mystery, and the final unveiling being the end, death, that the witness can no longer describe. Marlow can only witness Kurtz’s revelation indirectly and through a glass darkly.

New historicism, an attempt to reintroduce historical consciousness into literary criticism, re-examines the work in its historical context. Brook Thomas (1989), mentions that the relativism of history is a 19th century notion and suggests that Marlow’s memory of Kurtz is a “counter-memory... that disrupts the narrative of enlightened progress that official European culture tried to tell about its history” (Thomas 1989, p.240). One of the themes of the novel is contact with ‘the other’, another important concept of the time. Thomas claims that the novel questions the Eurocentric perspective through the recognition of non-European cultures, but it eventually reinforces the centrality of European thought by discovering the other within it. The novel sees Europe as using the other to define itself and therefore it retains elements of ideological imperialism. Thomas examines the search for truth as another theme of the novel and reaches the conclusion that Conrad is not optimistic. Truth cannot be represented, so lies become part of the human condition. Humanity must “confront the horror ... but learn to cover it up” (Thomas 1989, p.51).

Another approach to the novel, offered by Owen Knowles (1994), positions Kurtz in the centre of the story and suggests that Conrad engaged with the ideas of Arthur Schopenhauer. Knowles presents Kurtz as a deranged genius, referring to the association of genius and madness in the work of the philosopher. He claims that Kurtz is not only a speaker of Schopenhauer’s ideas but that he is an image of the philosopher himself, his personality as well as his world-view. Knowles makes a

convincing argument, referencing secondary works that Conrad may have been familiar with, and finding common elements with the novel. Although the biographical connection is debatable, the philosophical implications of the link are very apt. Seen this way, the novel is a presentation of Schopenhauerian megalomania, misanthropy and the dismissal of mankind in the character of Kurtz, and a fascination but also a critique of those notions by Marlow. Knowles essentially puts Conrad in the position of an intrigued but also critical disciple of a Schopenhauerian Kurtz, represented in the novel by the characters of the Russian and Marlow respectively.

In this stage the novel has been presented in some detail and analysed through various perspectives. Some of the information obtained here will probably not offer important links in the juxtaposition of the works, but this fact is an unavoidable effect of the methodology. There is no way to know at this point which aspects of the analysis will be fruitful in terms of the comparison, therefore all need to be included at this stage. After the connections have been identified, further analyses of the relevant aspects can be performed.

3.4 Stage Two: Poetics of the Novel

In this stage, the information obtained in stage one will be distilled into a system of aims and methods as described in the methodology section. The aim of this stage is not a singular description of the novel but rather an organised arrangement of its potential. Therefore many elements of this outline may be incompatible and even contradictory. That is not only acceptable but desirable, in order to achieve the widest possible potential for links to the poetics of the film in stage five. This section will form a list of all the aims that have been identified in the first stage, paired with the methods that have been employed to achieve them. The entries in this list will mainly be separated in the following areas of exploration:

1. The critique of colonisation
2. The notions of the savage and the civilised
3. The search for meaning
4. The storytelling process
5. The role of women.

This grouping is used only for presentational purposes. There is no implication of a hierarchical order between different areas. Four out of five areas are thematic. This will not be the case in all literary works. Other novels might have narrative or style as a primary preoccupation but in this case it is supported by the critical literature to assume that narrative structure and style mostly serve the thematic aims. A different implementation of this methodology might question this assumption and structure the poetics on an alternate framework. Bakhtin's view of the author as organiser, combined with his dismissal of stable signification, allows for the construction of a method that deals with issues of form and content on the same level and adjusted to individual works.

A number of combinations of the proposed aims could potentially serve as a blueprint for the work, its poetics as has been defined here, but this stage is not one of synthesis. It is not productive at this point to formulate the complete poetic systems by selecting a final structure of aims. The combinations would be too many and wouldn't offer any new information. The list of their potential components is the desired result. In stage five it will be possible to ascertain which of these aims and methods were utilised in the transposition and how they were addressed and combined.

3.4.1 The Critique of Colonisation

The most immediately recognisable aim of this aspect of the novel is the critique of colonising practices. This is primarily achieved through Marlow's narration as commentary. The character of the detached observer serves that purpose conveniently. Irony is used with the same function. Furthermore, juxtapositions are employed to illuminate the absurdities of the enterprise. Another aim in this context is the critique of western hypocrisy. Marlow's commentary and irony are again employed here, but this time on a more theoretical level. This is a critique of discourse and not of events. It is mostly evident in Marlow's interaction with other people on whom Marlow offers judgement, his aunt and the company men. The framing narrative serves this purpose as well, by offering an initial comparison of the two settings.

More debatable is whether the novel offers a critique of colonisation in general. If Marlow's notion of the redeeming idea is perceived as double-voiced, then that is indeed the case. Furthermore, one could argue that the dismissal of colonialism is suggested through a process of elimination: since current practice is dismissed and Kurtz's approach is presented as an improved extension of the system, the final revelation of Kurtz's failure is proof of the unsustainability of the enterprise itself. If the redeeming idea is taken at face value, it would be associated with Marlow's praise of work and efficiency. The lack of direct questioning of the European presence in the region suggests that a rigorous critique of colonisation in general was not a primary aim of the novel. The answer that the novel explores the question without proposing a final verdict is also valid, and that can also be said about the existence or not of a redeeming idea.

3.4.2 The Notions of the Savage and the Civilised

The recognisable aim here is the problematisation of the definition of the two terms. This is mainly achieved through contradictions in the discourse, through contradictions that Marlow points out in other's discourse, through certain events, but also through contradictions in Marlow's own discourse. The associations with darkness and light also serve to illustrate the point. This happens on the abstract level of Marlow's metaphysical musings, but also on the literal level of the description of the environment. In the beginning of the novel, the distinction seems rather clear, but gradually it becomes more obscure. Abstraction, symbolism and the Darwinian notion of the savage as ancestor are used to undermine clear definitions of savagery and civilisation.

Another aim in this context is the exploration of 'the other'. Marlow's discourse constantly draws comparisons between the Europeans, most of whom are referred to as pilgrims, and the natives. Through those comparisons he questions western morality while trying to make sense of his feeling of proximity with the natives. Again, binary oppositions are questioned. Marlow's reluctance to assign names to places and labels to events also points to a more abstract system of reference, a system in which human nature can be examined without limiting pronouncements. Marlow's gradual change of tone through the novel reinforces the shift from observation to abstract contemplation on human nature and 'the other'.

3.4.3 The Search for Meaning

On a more abstract level, an aim can be identified in the dramatisation of man's struggle to ascribe meaning to his environment and to himself. This is achieved through Marlow's character arc. He begins as a critic and gradually becomes an explorer, as he incrementally discovers the inadequacy of his intellectual capacity. Boundaries start to blur and meaning becomes elusive. The effect is amplified and transferred to the reader through cultivated ambiguity in the descriptions of events

and in the discourse. The references to the inconclusiveness of the story and its obscure resolution(s) reinforce the point. Marlow's reflexivity, introspection and the gaps in his narrative serve as routes into his inner struggle to understand. The deferment of Kurtz who is set up as a source of answers serves to create dramatic suspense in Marlow's trajectory. Kurtz's final pronouncement in that respect, as well as Marlow's lie, can be seen, depending on the interpretive viewpoint as victories or defeats in that trajectory.

If it is accepted that Marlow does not find any viable answer to his questions, or that he reaches the realisation that answers cannot be found, then the novel can be seen as a celebration of indeterminacy. From that viewpoint, ambiguity, contradiction and the dream-like atmosphere that is cultivated throughout the novel, serve to illustrate a point of inconclusiveness. Marlow's uneasiness reinforces the effect and the immersive style of his storytelling transfer it to the reader. Marlow's potential unreliability serves the same function. The framing narrative itself positions the novel in a state of constant double-voiced discourse, that further hinders concrete interpretation.

3.4.4 The Storytelling Process

The examination of the storytelling process is primarily achieved through the use of the framing narrative. The comments from the framing narrator are brief but the distance that it affords from Marlow is significant. Furthermore, Marlow himself reflexively comments on his storytelling capacity. The readers are never allowed to forget that they are reading a story and are repeatedly invited to question the mechanics of its presentation. Ambiguity and obscure meaning are not only present but also pointed out diegetically. As the narrator points out, "we knew we were fated, before the ebb began to run, to hear about one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences" (p.8). Marlow's interruptions and chronological leaps further intensify the effect. Another aim achieved in this context is the questioning of the possibility to render experience through language. Marlow makes

that point explicitly by referring to his inability to understand the experience, his inability to transfer it through his story, and his audience's inability to grasp it. The use of delayed decoding exemplifies this approach by serving in some cases as a tool of immersion and in others as an artifice to facilitate authorial structures of juxtaposition. Marlow's questioning of the reader's potential to achieve comprehension links the two aims by suggesting that the listeners may have greater access to his story than he does because they know him. Thus distance and the observation of the storyteller may indeed succeed where the story itself fails.

On a relative approach, the novel can be seen as an examination of storytelling as a method of therapy and dream analysis. The dreamlike atmosphere of Marlow's narration and of some of the events that he describes is conducive to that point. He explicitly describes his storytelling as an attempt to recount a dream and talks of Kurtz's and his own "choice of nightmares" (p.104). Also the descriptions of his journey and its climax fit descriptions of psychological trauma. His self-reflexive discourse contains elements of the therapeutic process. The process of interpretation is a major theme of the novel and an integral part of Marlow's discourse.

3.4.5 The Role of Women

The main debate here is whether the aim is to explore the role of women or to offer a pronouncement of their exclusion. The truth may lie somewhere in the middle. If the former assumption is followed, the exploration happens as an unacknowledged critique of Marlow's discourse. The evidence to support that position are based on an examination of Marlow as a character of his time. His first attack on women comes while he is in a state of frustration and the second comes in the form of the protection of innocence from danger and corruption. His exclusion of women from his story can also be attributed to natural inhibitions and preconceptions. The main argument against this approach is that whereas other elements of hypocrisy and self-deception are

pointed out, this one is not. Marlow acknowledges to some extent his complicity in the imperialist enterprise, but he never questions his opinion of women. If the latter assumption is followed, the previous argument can be supplemented by the addition of the intense abstraction of female characters, their portrayal as apparitions and symbolic figures. But this effect also takes women out of the realm of literal pronouncements. One could argue that the function of Marlow's exclusion of women is not meant literally by the novel because it is applied to non-literal presences in it. The implied exclusion from the novel is evident but it could be argued that it is not a statement as much as a lack of engagement with the subject.

3.5 Schematic Organisation

The readings of the work that were identified in stage one have been organised into aims and methods. A schematic presentation of the distillation proposed in this stage will help to illustrate the structure that is being put forth.

| Aims | Methods |
|---|---|
| Critique of colonising practices | -Marlow's commentary -Marlow's Irony -Juxtapositions |
| Critique of western hypocrisy | -Marlow's critique of official discourse -Framing narrative |
| Endorsement of colonisation | -The notion of the redeeming idea -Praise of work and efficiency |
| Critique of colonisation | -The notion of the redeeming idea (double-voiced) -The dismissal of Kurtz |
| Problematisation of the definitions of the savage and the civilised | -Contradictions that Marlow points out -Contradictions in Marlow's discourse -Associations with darkness and light -Abstraction, symbolism -Darwinian discourse |

| Aims | Methods |
|---|--|
| Exploration of ‘the other’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Comparisons between Europeans and natives -Questioning of binary oppositions -Absence of names and labels -Discourse of human nature |
| Dramatisation of the quest for meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Marlow’s character arc -Ambiguity, inconclusiveness -Marlow’s reflexivity -Gaps in the narrative -Deference of Kurtz -Kurtz’s cry and Marlow’s lie |
| Celebration of indeterminacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ambiguity, contradiction -Dream-like atmosphere -Marlow’s unreliability |
| Examination of the storytelling process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Framing narrative -Distance from Marlow -Marlow’s examination of the process -Identification of ambiguity -Non-linearity |
| Questioning of the possibility to render experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Marlow’s discourse -Delayed decoding |
| Examination of storytelling as a method of therapy and dream analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Dream-like atmosphere -Marlow’s mention of dreams and nightmares -Focus on interpretation of a traumatic experience |
| Exploration of the role of women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Marlow’s discourse (double-voiced) |
| Argument for the exclusion of women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Absence of fully formed female characters -Marlow’s critique of his aunt -The lie to Kurtz’s fiancée |

3.6 Stage Three: Reading of the Film

This stage will contain a description of the film in terms of narrative, characters, style, image, sound, performance, themes and ideology. It will also present a number of available interpretations of the film. The nature of the information collected on this stage will be different to those of stage one. The two media demand different interpretational strategies and suggest different areas of exploration. Nevertheless, the structure of aims and methods can be retained in the organisation of the information and will make the juxtapositions of stage five possible. This approach will allow for an examination much richer than an account of whether the film remained faithful to the novel through a predetermined pattern of fidelity. It will allow for the identification of a structure individually formulated for this case. It will also allow for an account of intertextual influences in the transposition without sidelining the discussion of the source. Bakhtin's notions of the organisation of voices, double-voiced discourse and the chronotope will be addressed here as in stage one and will also serve as bridges between the two works.

Although *Apocalypse Now* has, in its own right, reached canonical status in film history, it is separated from the novel by eighty years. A brief description of the film's narrative follows. The scenes in brackets are those that were added in the extended cut.

Captain Benjamin Willard, a military assassin during the Vietnam war, receives a mission to travel into Cambodia and terminate the command of Colonel Kurtz, who has, according to military intelligence, gone mad and leads a group of Montagnards who worship him like a god. Willard boards a patrol boat that will take him up the river. Willard reads Kurtz's file on the way. He was an exceptional officer who at a later age decided to join the special forces and return to Vietnam. The boat meets with a helicopter division, led by Colonel Kilgore, in the midst of battle. The boat is carried and dropped further up the river. The boat stops at a supply depot where a USO show is

taking place. [They stop at a run down station, where Willard buys the crew time with the USO girls in exchange for some fuel.] Further up the river, a routine inspection of a boat turns into a massacre. The boat arrives at another outpost in the midst of a completely chaotic battle over a bridge. Further up the river they are attacked by unseen enemies and a crew member dies. [They arrive at a seemingly deserted outpost and find a group of militant Frenchmen who have remained in the region, protecting their plantation]. Further up the river the boat is attacked again and a spear kills the boat captain. When they reach the compound, Willard is captured and restrained. [Willard is visited by Kurtz, who talks to him about the war, pointing out the official hypocrisy.] During a sacrificial ritual of the natives, in which a buffalo is slaughtered, Willard murders Kurtz, who does not resist. Willard departs, taking the remaining crew member with him.

3.6.1 Narrative Structure

The narrative of the film is episodic, a progression through a series of escalating encounters. A three act structure analysis reveals the conventional plot points. The first one is Willard's acceptance of the mission. The second plot point would be the arrival at Kurtz's compound. The midpoint of the film is the boat massacre. What is unconventional from this viewpoint is the disproportionately short length of the first and third acts in conjunction to the second. Furthermore, the constant digressions from the protagonist's action, but also from the main thrust of the plot, complicate a simple structural analysis of the film. There are long scenes, like the helicopter attack, where the film ignores Willard in favour of lengthy portrayals of the absurd situations that he observes. A number of sequences, most prominent among them the one at the French plantation, have no bearing on Willard's mission whatsoever. Furthermore, even when Willard is present, his agency is limited. In most scenes he is little more than an observer. The digressions and the status of the protagonist imply that the structure of the film cannot be understood in conventional three act structure terms. Willard's voice-over, mainly occurring in the intervals of travel, provides a

structural cohesion by offering commentary on the unfolding events, but it also comprises a second narrative strand, Kurtz's story. The narration of Kurtz's trajectory, after the mission briefing, comes in linear increments of voice-over exposition. The fact that his physical appearance is deferred until the third act does not cancel the fact that his story up to that point has been recounted through Willard, his presence felt all along.

Willard's narration, in the past tense, takes place after the events of the film. This is made explicit in the assignment scene where Willard refers to his mission: "and when it was over I'd never want another". This scene is the only one in which the viewer is given information about the main narrative events in a non-linear fashion. The film has received significant criticism for its sprawling, seemingly incoherent structure, with Boyum suggesting that it "disintegrates into dramatic and thematic confusion" (Boyum 1985, p.130). Nevertheless, this thesis will argue that an underlying conceptual current, one that derives from the novel, provides the necessary consistency. The third act is even more problematic in that respect and has also received criticism for its perceived inconclusiveness. Some critics ascribe it to creative confusion, while others, like Frank P. Tomasulo, to political superficiality. "The ambivalence in *Apocalypse Now* is a product of a conflicted and xenophobic culture, not one filmmaker's murky vision" (Tomasulo 1991, p.155). The questions that Kurtz's story have posed are never clearly answered, and Willard's final act is not given definitive justification. Complicating any attempt at a final verdict, Kurtz's discourse is at the same time convincing and contradictory, inspired and atrocious. It can be seen as the ramblings of a madman, especially situated in the context of his blood-soaked compound, but also as the philosophical musings of an enlightened genius.

It has already been pointed out that Bakhtin's chronotope is highly relevant in the context of adaptation. The spatio-temporal mechanics of a film differ from those of a novel but both works

constitute concrete structures of spatial and temporal elements. The chronotope of *Apocalypse Now* functions in different ways in each narrative strand. In the main narrative, a linear progression up the river marks the macroscopic journey. In terms of the rendering of specific scenes the pattern is more complicated. Wide angle lenses often create distorted images, while in other cases they serve to dwarf the characters in the jungle environment. The disjointed editing of certain scenes disorients the viewer. In these cases time is relativised and the impression is given that events occur simultaneously. In the secondary narrative, Willard's contemplation of Kurtz's story in the intervals of the journey, spatial and temporal juxtapositions are the prevalent device, through overlays and close ups that serve to link the stories spatially and create a sense of timelessness. The first scene is a collage of images that includes views from the end of the film, giving the impression that they are Willard's memories, rather than glimpses of the future. The idea that the first scene takes place after the events of the film, had actually been discussed at some point during the editing process. "Willard was in the hotel room, waiting to be debriefed and going back over the experience, rather than in the hotel room waiting for a mission" (E. Coppola 1979, p.265). Finally, the sense of the voyage as a regression into primitive time is present in the film as it was in the novel. This effect is most evident in the scenes preceding the arrival at Kurtz's compound.

3.6.2 Characters

Willard is an unconventional protagonist. He is introduced through a mental breakdown that reveals his self-destructive tendencies as well as his inner struggle. His past and his dark fascination with the jungle make him a non-innocent, unstable character. Willard's trajectory involves limited interaction with his environment. He is mostly a detached observer and cynical commentator of the absurdities around him. His single narrative goal is his mission but he has minimal impact in most scenes leading up to it, except as an incentive for the boat's journey. Nevertheless, the two instances where he does act, the murder of the sampan survivor and the killing of Kurtz, are highlighted as the

two crucial points in the story. These acts signify important shifts in Willard's secondary trajectory, that of his inner struggle. Willard seems simply to follow, rather than drive the main narrative, but his internal discourse offers interpretations of the on-screen events, while tracing his own shifting stance towards his environment and himself. His criticism of the military system creates a sense of kinship with Kurtz, that gradually evolves to admiration. Admiration becomes fascination and kinship becomes identification. The sampan murder is pivotal, because it signals Willard's partial identification with Kurtz.

The mission assignment scene, the equivalent of which was not described in the novel, offers an immediate engagement with Kurtz, amplified through a recording of the man's voice, the voice that was also Marlow's link to him. The actual story of Kurtz, as it will unfold incrementally in the film, is even closer to the novel than Willard's is to Marlow's (that is potentially one reason that Kurtz, unlike Marlow, retains his name through the adaptation). Kurtz is an exceptional man who eventually breaks with the system that created him. Kurtz's dismissal of the establishment is signalled in the novel by his initially indecipherable choice to turn back up the river and not return home. Colonel Kurtz's equally baffling choice to join the special forces at a late age and return to Vietnam is a direct equivalent in the film. The general's mention of Kurtz's "unsound methods" is a direct quote from the novel's company manager. Kurtz's Montagnard army mirrors the novel's native tribes and has been criticised as implausible in the Vietnam context by Kinder (1980). The references to Kurtz's lack of restraint also echo the novel, as does the charge of murder.

Kurtz is by no means a conventional antagonist. He is Willard's target but not his enemy in any typical sense. On the contrary, as the film progresses, he becomes Willard's discursive ally against the military establishment. The meeting that the story is leading to is not one of confrontation but (at least partly) of comradeship. Willard's main conflict in the film is the choice of whether to

embrace or dismiss the teaching of Kurtz. As John Hellman (1982) points out, Marlow's identification with Kurtz makes the story psycho-symbolic. John Milius' first draft of the script actually culminated with Kurtz and Willard fighting the North Vietnamese Army side by side. The final film is more complicated than that. The confrontation between the two men does occur, and the final climactic battle that is missing from the narrative takes place in Willard's psyche. The final act sheds the narrative movement of the first two and foregrounds Willard's inner trajectory. The final pronouncement of that trajectory is open to interpretation, especially if one considers Kurtz's apparent welcoming of death. Willard's last act can be seen as a dismissal of Kurtz's discourse but also as cooperation in the man's design.

Colonel Kilgore, one of the most absurd personalities in the film, is Willard's first encounter with the military system in action, and introduces the first major digression from the main narrative. His fearless and brutal demeanour, his amoral stance and callous attitude, reinforce Willard's detachment from his superiors. Garrett Stewart (1981) further suggests that "The swaggering, psychotic Colonel Kilgore, in the thick of his mad command, serves as a preliminary exposure to evil, anticipating his more profound counterpart in Kurtz" (Stewart 1981, p.460).

The American photographer that greets Willard at Kurtz's compound is the character closest to a character in the novel, Kurtz's Russian disciple. He borrows several of his counterpart's lines, such as "the man has enlarged my mind" (p.78), and serves in the same capacity as an extreme and shallow personification of Willard's fascination with Kurtz. His advice to use the siren to disperse the natives is also a direct allusion to the novel. He is the character from whom Willard, like Marlow, assumes the responsibility as caretaker of Kurtz's memory. The photographer's presence and discourse, along with the traces of brutality in the compound, instigate Willard's disillusionment. The severed heads give the photographer the opportunity to offer a ridiculous

understatement, “sometimes he goes too far”. Willard sees in the man the ugly side of his own fascination with Kurtz.

3.6.3 Style

In terms of image, the film embraces an aesthetic of spectacle. This is evident in the first shot of the film, a treeline incinerated by napalm. In the rest of the film, a number of very large and elaborate set pieces is used to full effect. Eleanor Coppola compares the physical to the conceptual magnitude of the project. “This morning Francis was talking about the Kurtz set being so big that there seemed to be no way to get it all in the frame. The only way to get it was perhaps to come in close and look at specific portions to give a sense of the whole. In a way, that is the same problem he is facing in the script. The ideas of what Kurtz represents are so big that when you try to get a handle of them they are almost undefinable. He has to define the specifics to give a sense of the whole. The production reflects the same thing. It is so big it only seems to make sense in specific ways” (E. Coppola 1979, p.127).

Nevertheless, the spectacle is not put to conventional use. The impressive visuals are presented in order to be undermined. All the battle scenes intertextually evoke the genre of war films with their connotations of heroism, valour, and grandeur, but proceed to subvert the generic conventions. The grandiose rendering of the helicopter attack, with Wagner’s *Ride of the Valkyries* as diegetic soundtrack, is interrupted by shots of the quiet village square where women and children are alerted to the attack by the music. Tomasulo argues that the scene actually glorifies the American war. “The audience is thus cinematically implicated in the exhilarating superiority of the American attack. This aestheticization of violence contributes greatly to the film’s appeal to a twisted patriotism” (Tomasulo 1991, p.149). He offers a monologic reading of the scene, but this study will argue, based on the analysis that juxtaposes the films poetics to those of the novel, that a dialogic reading is more apt in this case. Svenja Fehllhaber

makes this point. “While the apparent glorification of US (technological) warfare is conspicuously reminiscent of conventional Hollywood premediations, its remediation in *Apocalypse Now* evidently never fails to undermine its efficacy to normalize images of military heroism within the nation ... Thrilling combat action coupled with vivid cutting and camera movement such as tracking shots or point of view shots ensure the spectator’s immersion and ‘vicarious enjoyment of the spectacle’ (Chown 134), yet the scene ... never fails to self-consciously subvert this very enjoyment on the content level” (Fehlhaber 2013, p.69). On a similar note of undermined spectacle, the USO show is interrupted by a riot and the impressive night battle at the Do Lung bridge is revealed to be a chaotic and leaderless carnival of meaningless destruction.

On a smaller scale, the image of the film is highly stylised. Coppola’s compositions, supported by Vittorio Storaro’s cinematography, are very painterly. This is not a cinema of immersion but of detached signification. The audience is not meant to feel the horrible realities of war but to intellectually recognise its absurdities. As Miriam Hansen (1980) points out, the film “makes its points with dazzling intensity, but the intensity is visual rather than visceral” (Hansen 1980, p.133). The use of light and shadow reinforces the contradictions with high contrast imagery and source lighting, especially in the night scenes. Coppola often uses extreme close ups when he wants to make metaphoric associations (the close-ups of food during the mission assignment scene), or to suggest Willard’s mental state as he studies Kurtz’s file on the boat. In all the scenes of Willard’s contemplation, long overlays are employed to establish further associations, as well as Willard’s intellectual and emotional position. Characteristically in the first scene, Willard’s mental breakdown is overlaid with shots from the last act, while the ceiling fan is associated through image and sound with a helicopter. The most crucial and recurring association through overlay, is that between Willard and Kurtz that never happens directly but through the image of a pagan statue head from Kurtz’s compound.

As the film progresses, the style becomes gradually more dreamlike. Kilgore's introductory scene, despite its patchwork editing and absurd events, is shot in realistic terms, but the Do Lung bridge scene is shot like an LSD induced nightmare, with fluid shots moving through abstract spaces, muffled sounds, music, slow pace, wide angles and lights going periodically on and off without literal justification. The introduction of mist and smoke also reinforces the dream-like atmosphere as the boat approaches its destination. Like the image, sound serves as amplification and comment on the events depicted and later reinforces the dream-like atmosphere. Wagner's music invites associations to Nietzsche but also to the Third Reich. The Doors' *The End*, evokes the film's apocalyptic theme.

Hansen (1980) points to the various distancing effects through avant-garde elements and suggests that the film is profoundly self-reflexive. In that sense the breaking of the mirror in the first scene "becomes an allegorical gesture of revolt against the imaginary structure of the medium itself" (Hansen 1980, p.123). Willard's looking at the camera in the mission assignment scene is an example of this effect. The very long black out after the sampan massacre scene is another. Coppola's cameo as a reporter who tells the soldiers not to look at the camera, in Kilgore's introductory scene, alerts the audience of the presence of the camera.

The long digressions from the main narrative essentially exclude Willard and place him in the background. While the same is true of Marlow, the fact that he was clearly in control of the telling of the story did not allow for the creation of the same effect. In the film it is much easier to view Willard as little more than a spectator. Even though he is more actively involved in the action, the distance from the audience is often greater. This effect balances the distance offered by the novel's framing narration that is not present in the film. It could be argued that in this case, the different nature of the medium helps to transfer the effect.

In terms of performance, Martin Sheen's Willard is always detached and composed. The three important exceptions are symmetrically in the beginning, the midpoint and the ending of the film. In his introductory scene Willard struggles with the darkness in his past. After the boat massacre he accepts his identification with Kurtz. At the end he struggles against the darkness that has claimed Kurtz. Robert Duvall's Kilgore, in stark comparison, is grandiose and extrovert, at times approaching caricature. He personifies the film's clearest indictment of the military system. Kurtz is the most abstract character of the film. He is portrayed by Marlon Brando with a calm intensity, but reveals very little in terms of character. The information that has been offered before he makes his physical appearance is the only characterisation that reaches the audience. The performance only amplifies the ambiguous nature of the character. Karl French (1998) criticises the performance for not portraying the character's brilliance. "You need an actor of extraordinary presence to embody pure genius and pure evil" (French 1998, p.21). It could be argued that this opinion is based on a rather superficial reading of the novel.

3.6.4 Themes, Ideology

Apocalypse Now has, much like *Heart of Darkness*, received wide criticism for its ambiguity. "Apocalypse Now turned the real-life specificity of U.S. imperialism into an abstract and philosophical cinematic meditation on good and evil, light and dark. In the process, American society was treated to a film that represented not so much Vietnam-era America as America's idealized view of itself post-Vietnam, that is, from the enlightened perspective of a historical hindsight that could sublate contradictions. As such, *Apocalypse Now* might be categorized as both a pro-war movie and an anti-war movie in that the film's cinematic and political ambiguity both conceals and reveals a national ambivalence toward the Vietnam War" (Tomasulo 1991, p.147).

The unclear nature of Kurtz's character makes it hard to identify the film's concluding position. Kurtz's and Willard's praise of the enemy's efficiency and critique of the American practices of war problematise any clear pronouncements about the film's position towards the Vietnam war. Saul Steier (1980) on one extreme, completely identifying Coppola with Kurtz, argues that "the film in fact attempts to recuperate the war, to say that we were wrong, not morally but tactically; that we could and ought to have won it, but we could never bring ourselves to be pagan enough, which made our will weak" (Steier 1980, p.121). This suggestion that the film completely endorses Kurtz's view is rather reductive and not easily supported. It seems to ignore a multitude of elements that undermine such an identification, most importantly the protagonist's dismissal of Kurtz. On the other extreme, one could argue that the structure of the film fits with a reading of Kurtz as a conventional, albeit charismatic, villain.

The truth is that while Kurtz starts as villain, turns into ally and finally moves into a grey area, Willard's character is easier to read. It can be argued that Willard's final pronouncement of Kurtz is not ambiguous, it is clear denouncement. Willard is disappointed in his search for answers as he tells Kurtz that he sees "no method at all". He listens to the man but is eventually not convinced by the rhetoric. Willard's break with the military establishment links him to Kurtz but does not equate him to the man. Willard does not assume Kurtz's position when he has the opportunity to do so. The viewer's only access to the story is Willard. There is not enough distance from him to allow for an examination of his discourse by the film. There are also no hints that the viewer should be cautious of it. Therefore his final pronouncement can be understood as the one implied through the film.

Another debatable issue is the film's political stance towards the Vietnam war in general. The presence of American forces in the region is never questioned, and Willard's critique mainly concerns the practices of war. Coppola admittedly did not want to make a political pronouncement

on the subject. Nevertheless, if Willard's final stance towards Kurtz is accepted as negative, an implicit point is made. Willard's critique of the war throughout the film seemed to suggest that there is a better way to fight it, in the same way that the novel seemed to imply the existence of a humane colonising strategy. Kurtz represented, in Willard's discourse, that better way. When Kurtz's method is revealed to be a regression into savagery, the conclusion, by process of elimination, is that there might not be a good way to fight the war. Furthermore, the film, due to its often abstract nature, allows for the conclusion to be generalised with regard to war in general. Willard, like Marlow, faces the possibility of the inexistence of a 'redeeming idea'. From this perspective, the film is not anti-Vietnam but anti-war. Apart from the explicit discussion in the French plantation ["You Americans are fighting for the biggest nothing in history"], the film strives to transcend its historical setting.

John Hellman (1982) suggests that the film follows the patterns and uses the tropes of the detective genre. He presents Willard as a Philip Marlow, citing the set up of the character and the voice-over that offer clear allusions to the genre. He mentions the mission assignment scene and Willard's following of the clues towards Kurtz as tropes of the detective story. The most interesting point that he makes in this context is the view of the film as a critique of American culture. He suggests that as the detective reveals corruption in his urban environment, so Willard serves a similar function in the setting of the Vietnam conflict. "The river journey drawn from *Heart of Darkness* takes the detective and viewer, not through Vietnam as a separate culture, but through Vietnam as the resisting object of a hallucinatory projection of the American culture" (Hellman 1982, p.431). Through this rationale, the army represents American society and Kurtz represents American idealism, that is eventually also exposed as hollow. The transposed elements of American culture, surfing, music, drugs are explicitly identified by Willard as inefficient elements of a decadent culture, and their incongruous presence in the new environment signifies the imperialist spread of

this culture. Willard's denunciation of Kurtz signifies his own admission of guilt and a critique of American will for power. Kurtz is presented as the "magical quack", the charlatan with a cult, another detective story trope. "Willard as hard-boiled detective finds in Colonel Kurtz the essential lie of his own and his nation's Vietnam venture" (Hellman 1982, p.437).

The main departures from the detective genre, as Hellman points out, are Willard's guilt and complicity, as well as his identification with the criminal. This identification is most pronounced in the sampan massacre scene. Garret Stewart (1981) suggests the scene is a turning point. "The pitch-black hiatus at this turning point opens our eyes with Willard's to the plot's own abyss, a fracture at one level of the story that drops its hero through to a closer bond than ever with Kurtz as an alter ego in calculated ferocity" (Stewart 1981, p.462). Stewart also points out the abundance of religious references in the film: the title as well as most of the military codenames (Operation Archangel, Almighty) have Christian origins. Kilgore, according to Willard, had a "weird light around him", Kurtz's photograph is a silhouette surrounded by light. Later on, the counterpart of these references is pagan images and rituals, with the culmination of the slaughter of the buffalo in the climax of the film. The pagan imagery is as dark as the Christian references are ironic. The problematisation of the concepts of savagery and civilisation is constant throughout the film. Willard's camouflage before the final confrontation is a merging of the two worlds, combining a military method of concealment with pagan ritualistic body colouring. "By an inescapable irony, this mission for his sins becomes Willard's ultimate collusion in brutality as well as his ceremonial cleansing" (Stewart 1981, p.466).

3.7 Stage Four: Poetics of the Film

Here, the information of stage three will be organised in terms of aims and methods, in preparation for comparison with the results of stage two. Some of the readings presented in stage three will be

linked to counterparts in the novel, signifying various levels of engagement. Other elements will signify different sources or original ideas, unconnected to the source. Finally there might be some features that directly or implicitly contradict the original. The identified aims are grouped in areas of exploration and presented along with the methods employed to achieve them. The areas are:

1. Critique of war
2. Critique of US mentality
3. Savagery and civilisation
4. The filmmaking process
5. The role of women

3.7.1 Critique of War

The film's apparent aim in this context is a critique of war practices in the Vietnam conflict. This critique is offered through Willard's commentary and the absurd nature of the events portrayed. There is no interpretive controversy on this point, but any assumption on a more general pronouncement of the film is more problematic. If one wanted to argue that the film attempts to criticise the existence of the Vietnam war, the only relatively strong evidence exists in the French plantation sequence that was excised from the original release. If one wanted to argue that the film condones the conflict but not its implementation, they would refer to Willard's and Kurtz's discourse. The argument that the film does not try to comment directly on Vietnam but make wider points about war can be based on its incrementally abstract nature, its image associations and

juxtapositions through overlays and decontextualised close-ups, and the utilisation of religious imagery and terminology. The title alone suggests themes that transcend the specific historical context. The use of spectacle carries the implication of the superficial appeal of war and the physical intoxication that it provokes. The abrupt undermining of the spectacle, as in the cut from the helicopter attack to the children on the ground, serves to reveal the perversity of the initial perception through a stark contrast.

An added aim that can be identified is a historical discussion that associates the modern conflict with colonialism. Kurtz, in an audio recording, calls military command officers Nabobs, alluding to British Colonialism. The French plantation sequence offers a multifaceted discourse on the subject, referencing the French Indochina wars and the French defeat in the Dien Bien Phu battle. The references are not enough to suggest a primary concern of the film but the associations between American imperialism and colonialism are explicitly pointed out.

3.7.2 Critique of US Mentality

Another target of Willard's ironic discourse is US hypocrisy. His morbid humour is mostly employed in attacks against the military establishment's dishonest rationalisations. Robert Duvall's portrayal of Kilgore as a caricature provides an ideal target for Willard's irony. The critique is also noticeable outside Willard's discourse, as in the case of Kilgore's interest for a wounded enemy soldier that evaporates when he finds out that one of the boat crew members is a famous surfer, in one of the film's most self-conscious scenes. Kurtz's 'lessons' to Willard also point out dishonesty and hypocrisy in official discourse.

US culture is ever-present in the film. It is criticised as incongruous and callous in the context of a war, but it is treated with less judgement. The main point made about it through Willard is the

inefficiency and weakness that it allows. Nevertheless, the soldiers are not addressed with the same contempt as the military leadership. Their immature behaviour is portrayed as natural. In that sense, they are almost innocent in their involvement. They are children that reluctantly follow orders and miss their home. A stark comparison of soldiers and leadership can be seen in Kilgore's men, who recognise the absurdity of surfing in a warzone.

US ideology can also be seen as a target and is represented mainly by Kurtz. The American ideals of efficiency and strength are the common ground between Kurtz and Willard. The latter comments extensively on the inefficiency of the war enterprise and admires the enemy's strict discipline. Kurtz also bases his decisions on the same principles, to the point of transcending the system that employs him. Depending on the interpretation it could be argued that the film undermines those ideals by presenting Kurtz as their logical extension and then revealing him as a brutal, regressive megalomaniac, or that the film endorses Kurtz's view by assigning him the status of martyr.

3.7.3 Savagery and Civilisation

The questioning of those terms is constantly present, not through Willard's discourse but through the narrative events. But although savagery is literally depicted in virtually every scene, civilisation is only revealed as an absence, constantly undermined as hypocrisy or mechanistic dehumanisation. The perfectly choreographed helicopter attack is a massacre, the help to the wounded turns into a joke. Kurtz's enlightenment in this context becomes the elimination of civilisation and regression into savagery.

The film also questions morality and guilt. Willard admits in the beginning that his account will be his confession. Recognition of complicity is a major theme that surfaces forcefully in the sampan massacre scene but also at the boat captain's death. Before he dies, he tries to take Willard with him,

blaming him for their predicament. Kurtz is the embodiment of the transcendence of morality, a Nietzschean super-human who resides above this world and its ethics. The discussion of morality is the central part of Willard's inner conflict. The dream-like atmosphere of the later parts of the film signals Willard's introspection as his fascination with Kurtz builds. Sheen's muted performance mirrors that introspection as Kurtz's abstract rendering reinforces his symbolic function.

3.7.4 Examination of The Filmmaking Process

The unconventional narrative and disassociating stylistic elements of the film serve to expose and examine the artifice of the film-making process. The audience is often reminded of the camera, as in the battle that introduces Kilgore's character, where Coppola himself appears as a reporter, asking the troops not to look at the camera. This serves to direct the attention of the audience to the diegetic camera, but also to remind them of the one that observes the action. The Playboy show is another case where the film addresses and comments on the artifice of the spectacle. The audience is treated to the introduction of the elaborate show, that quickly escalates into chaos, when the diegetic audience storms the stage. These devices undermine immersion and emotional response in favour of intellectual engagement. The audience is meant to remain at a distance from the events that are depicted, and to appreciate them rationally, not emotionally. This is a film that primarily wants to be understood, not experienced. It requires analysis, not intuition.

3.7.5 The Role of Women

Both scenes that involve women as speaking characters were removed from the original release. The scene of Willard's 'present' of the USO girls to his crew has a surreally disturbing and tender atmosphere. Roxanne, from the French plantation sequence, offers an interpretation of Willard as a binary personality "the one that kills and the one that loves". Both scenes are difficult to situate in the context of the film. Their absence would make a pronouncement easier: the USO show is an

indictment of objectification and its perverse association with violence. In other scenes women are treated as victims of the war. It could be argued that the film attempts to comment on the representation of women in the action genre and in US culture in general, but the line between commentary through presentation and actual endorsement is rather thin. The two extra scenes complicate the critical reading but do not really alter this fact. Roxanne interacts with Willard in an opium induced state. She serves mainly as the film's sole commentary on him rather than a concrete character (in an earlier draft of the script she was also a victim). The USO girls scene is harder to contextualise and it will be argued in the next stage that an association with the novel can provide an interpretation.

3.8 Schematic Presentation

The information of stage three have been structured into a system of aims and methods. A schematic presentation of this structure will serve as reference and summary for this stage.

| Aims | Methods |
|---|--|
| Critique of war practices | -Willard's commentary -Absurdity of events |
| Critique of the Vietnam war | -Plantation sequence discourse |
| Support of the Vietnam war | -Willard's discourse -Kurtz's discourse |
| Critique of war in general | -Abstraction -Juxtapositions, overlays -Religious imagery and terminology -Undermining of spectacle |
| Association of the war with colonialism | -The French plantation discourse |
| Critique of US hypocrisy | -Willard's ironic discourse -Kilgore's character -Kurtz's lessons |

| Aims | Methods |
|---|---|
| Exploration of US culture | -Pointing out of incongruousness -Willard's critique of inefficiency |
| Critique of US ideology | -Embodiment in Kurtz and dismissal through the revelation of his debasement |
| Questioning of the terms savage and civilised | -Narrative events -Absence of a positive force -Ambiguous characters -Juxtapositions -Gradual regression to primitive practices |
| Exploration of guilt | -Willard's discourse as confession -The boat massacre -Willard's identification with Kurtz -Chief's accusation |
| Exploration of morality | -Kurtz's dismissal of ethical boundaries -Willard's inner conflict |
| Exploration of the filmmaking process | -Disassociation effects -Revealing of the artifice |
| Creation of a sense of complicity | -Undermined spectacle -Identification with Willard as a guilty spectator |
| Critique of the representation of women | -Playboy show -Portrayal of women as victims or enemies |

3.9 Stage Five: Juxtaposition

This stage consists of the juxtaposition of the poetic systems of the two works as described in stages two and four. The comparison will happen in terms of aims and subsequently in terms of methods and functions. The discussion will also examine where the process of the transposition intersects with other texts and how the intertextual elements are integrated into the film. It needs to be pointed out here, that although external texts will be addressed, they do not constitute a main object of analysis for this study. Intertextuality, as it has been defined here, is not focused on inclusion of all

relevant texts but on a recognition of patterns and modes of engagement with the source text. Socio-historical context, on the other hand, is crucial to the understanding of the poetic transposition and therefore will be addressed on a primary level.

Both works have been described according to an abstract system as intentional organisations by a Bakhtinian author. These descriptions allow for a comparison on common analytical ground. The fact that the elements of each organisation are in many cases media specific, allows for a parallel examination of the strategies of inter-medium transposition. The preoccupations of the two works are discussed in pairs of apparent proximity as areas of exploration. Some aims have been identified as common to the two works, like the critique of official hypocrisy, while others can be viewed as closely related, like the political pronouncements in the respective contexts. The aim was to offer a system that probes the two works in search for connections between them without assuming specific strategies of transposition but by identifying the ones that were implemented, as inferred by the works themselves.

3.9.1 Schematic Juxtaposition of the Aims

An initial examination of the two lists of aims offers a schematic account of the dialogue between the two works. As has been demonstrated, the film shares a number of preoccupations with the novel but not always to the same degree, and often with different priorities.

| <i>Heart of Darkness</i> | <i>Apocalypse Now</i> |
|---|---|
| Critique of colonising practices | Critique of war practices |
| Critique of western hypocrisy | Critique of US hypocrisy, ideology |
| Endorsement of colonisation | Support of the Vietnam war |
| Critique of colonisation | Critique of war in general |
| Problematisation of the definitions of the savage and the civilised | Questioning of the terms savage and civilised |

| | |
|---|---|
| Exploration of ‘the other’ | Exploration of US culture |
| Dramatisation of the quest for meaning | Exploration of morality |
| Celebration of indeterminacy | No equivalent |
| Examination of the storytelling process | Exploration of the filmmaking process |
| Questioning of the possibility to render experience | No equivalent |
| Examination of storytelling as a method of therapy and dream analysis | No equivalent |
| Exploration of the role of women | Critique of the representation of women |
| Pronouncement for the exclusion of women | No equivalent |
| No equivalent | Creation of a sense of complicity |
| No equivalent | Exploration of guilt |

This presentation suggests a level of proximity between the two works. Two major differences can also be identified. The film does not engage substantially with issues of storytelling and rendering experience. Nevertheless, Hawley suggests that story construction is a common need for both protagonists. “Marlow continually tells this story either to himself or others in an effort to make sense of it. Coppola suggests that Willard does the same thing ... History staves off insanity and chaos – it organizes and rationalizes events and makes them intelligible” (Hawley 1996, p.117).

The second divergence is that the film introduces issues of guilt and complicity in a way that is not employed in the novel. Those two divergent aspects are consistently identified in the works: Willard is less reflexive than Marlow, more confident in his discourse. He is also more involved in the conflict throughout the film, closer to the darkness that has claimed Kurtz. “Willard, unlike Marlow, is an agent in the making and maintaining of history ... Willard is not just the observer-turned-participant that Marlow is; Willard is a participant from the start” (Hawley 1996, p.113).

3.9.2 Colonialism/Imperialism

Both novel and film have received criticism regarding their political stance by Achebe (3.3.1) and

Tomasulo (3.6.2) respectively. This seems to reinforce an argument of proximity, albeit in a negative sense. If one were to examine both works in terms of their commentary on their respective political settings, they would notice a similar pattern. The novel offers a rigorous critique of colonising practices while the film does the same for the practices of war. Both works become more obscure in terms of a more general discussion. In both cases there have been interpretive arguments for the endorsement and the dismissal of colonialism and imperialism respectively. In both cases the ambiguity stems from the protagonist's ideal of work and efficiency as a substitute to the corrupt establishment, and from the inconclusive pronouncement on Kurtz. Both Marlow and Willard search for a redeeming idea and an agency that will give them the key to explain, or an alternative to, the absurdity that they face. Charles Hawley sees colonialism and imperialism as attempts to enforce one's history on another. "Conrad's novella and Coppola's film critique the necessity for a dominant society to perpetuate, indeed spread, a particular history in order to justify not only its dominance but to rationalize its own existence. For both novelist and film director, the 'horror' that destroys Kurtz is the 'horror' found in the chaos beyond history. Both Conrad and Coppola exhibit discomfort with the deployment of history, but to different degrees they reaffirm history's purpose" (Hawley 1996, p.107).

An important question here is how the historical repositioning of the story affects its poetics. Jeffrey Meyers suggests that the "analogy between Belgian and American imperialism is false because the United States was fighting an ideological war to stop the spread of Communism and did not wish permanently to occupy and exploit the riches of Vietnam" (Meyers 1997, p.478). This statement, while true, cannot be used as critical evidence outside the context of the work's strategy. As has been pointed out, neither work attempts to offer a clear contemporary critique of specific political events. If it is accepted that the two works use their settings to make the same points and achieve similar functions, then the difference of the settings themselves becomes secondary. Clearly war is

very different to profiteering exploitation, but not different enough to sever the connections between the two works on this level, precisely because their preoccupations are more abstract. As Hawley points out “each society legitimized its action through and by the employment of history. Conrad and Coppola explore the nature of this employment in their respective works. Their explorations, however, are not focused on defining the particular histories employed – the history of European colonialism or American militarism – though each work does define such histories. The questions they posit address larger issues of history: why is history important? What are the limits of history? And what happens when history is discarded?” (Hawley 1996, p.108).

Furthermore, the analogy with colonialism cannot be seen as a primary objective of the film. It is explicitly referenced but it is still an allusion, a suggestion for contemplation and not the central preoccupation. The main difference between the works on this ideological context, is that while the novel shifts from a critique of colonising practices to a discussion of human nature in terms of savagery and civilisation, the film builds to a more sustained critique of war in general. A focus on poetics reveals that it would be more accurate to say that both novel and film work through gradual abstraction with similar aims but different ideological priorities.

The French plantation sequence is the most radical digression in the film, not only in terms of narrative but also of plausibility. The impression of time-transcendence is most pronounced here, with a thinly rationalised anachronism serving as a vehicle for a historical account of the region, as well as a presentation of a number of viewpoints on the current geopolitical situation. The references to colonialism become explicit and the Vietnam conflict is discussed in that context. Questions of honour, ownership and patriotism are discussed around the dinner table, in a mansion that belongs to a previous era. Aesthetically, this sequence most resembles a dream, with Willard being blinded by the sunlight throughout the dinner and later indulging in opium smoking.

3.9.3 Hypocrisy and Morality

The attack on official hypocrisy offers one of the film's clearest references to the novel. The General discusses Kurtz's "unsound methods", a preposterous and hypocritical understatement that directly quotes the novel's company manager. In both cases, the irony and its target are apparent and serve the same purpose. But while both works hold the same position towards official discourse and its representatives, they differ in their treatment of the lower levels of the enterprise. In the novel, every employee of the company is either corrupt, brutal, callous or selfish. Most of them are of no interest to Marlow, who ironically labels them pilgrims. The film is more lenient on the soldiers, the narrative counterpart of the novel's pilgrims. Their complicity and callousness is mitigated by their relative lack of choice or conscious malice. The sentimental interlude after the death of one of the crew members, with a tape from his mother on the soundtrack, underlines their innocence and reinforces their distinction from the military system that brought them to Vietnam.

In a sense the soldiers are more akin to the novel's natives than to its pilgrims. This view is supported by the fact that the boat crew in the film is made up of soldiers, as the crew in the novel was made up of natives. Conrad deals with the natives on the boat on an individual basis, while the company men are addressed as a group. Chief, Willard's boat skipper, shares elements with Marlow's native helmsman, most notably their identical death by spear. There are no complete counterparts between the boat crews but Willard's and Marlow's discourses present a very similar picture of the two groups.

The incongruousness of western cultural elements in the new environment is pointed out in both works. Marlow describes the accountant's perfectly maintained western appearance, and often points out the contrast of the company buildings to the jungle. In the film, American culture is

introduced in a similar, if rather more absurd, manner, as a foreign element in a hostile environment. Both novel and film are structured on their protagonist's search for stable moral ground and in both cases the struggle escalates, and culminates in the figure of Kurtz. Hellman suggests that "the indulgence in death and depravity, of total power, that Willard finds in Colonel Kurtz's display of severed heads, his reading of selected lines from Eliot, and his parable of a Viet Cong atrocity is a devastating illumination of the same hollowness, the darkness, that in *Heart of Darkness* Marlow finds in the figure of Kurtz" (Hellman 1982, p.437). This interpretation presents both works as stories of ethical disillusionment and therefore critiques of western morality. This leads, according to the same approach, to an eventual compromise. "Willard at last sees, like Marlow, that the only possible response to the utter dissolution of his moral assumptions is to preserve innocence and the false ideal." (Hellman 1982, p.438). William L. Benzon makes a similar point, suggesting that both works "have a final incident where a myth is preserved. Marlow lies to the Intended about Kurtz's last words, thus preserving her faith in love and marriage, and perhaps, in a strange way, Marlow's as well, but not ours. Willard does kill Kurtz, thus following the orders of the state, albeit order given in the dark, as it were, and thereby affirming the legitimacy of that state" (Benzon 2013, p.10).

3.9.4 Savagery and Civilisation

In the novel, the distinction between the two terms is arguably a main preoccupation. Conrad asks how one can turn into the other, how one can be erroneously perceived as the other, and how one can exist within the other. The film, partly due to its setting, does not engage with the subject in the same way. Savagery is more difficult to recognise and less incongruous in a war setting. Furthermore, the novel's 'civilising mission' does not have its explicit counterpart in the film. So, while the film contains references to the enemy as savages (colonel Kilgore), it does not reach a more substantial level of analysis. Savagery is portrayed, but not juxtaposed to notions of

civilisation. Nevertheless, the Darwinian discourse of the novel finds its way into the film. The transition from the modern to the old world happens exactly before the boat arrives at Kurtz's compound and is marked by a passing between two pagan statues that stand on opposite shores of the river. The two attacks that precede that passing are essentially one scene repeated twice in different historical settings. The first attack happens with bullets, by enemies obscured by flare smoke. The second happens with arrows in thick fog. The first casualty receives a military funeral, while the second a ritualistic casting into the river by a camouflaged comrade.

Willard is more guilty than Marlow and his connection with Kurtz has a stronger physical, literal side. Willard goes closer to the "edge of existence" (p.102) than Marlow and ends up with a clearer view of the horror at the end. The novel's discussion of light and dark turns to a depiction of darkness, and therefore a more pessimistic account. Willard's hope of a positive conclusion to his quest is much dimmer than Marlow's, as is his chance of finding it. Hawley suggests that "Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* is much more cynical. His conclusion, although similar to Conrad's on the importance of history, is premised on a greater sense of danger" (Hawley 1996, p.112). Boyum goes further than this, to suggest that Willard, in contrast to Marlow, is not in any sense civilised. Her point supports a critical view of the film. "Identifying with the sensible and sane Marlow and seeing the world from his civilized point of view, we share his shock of recognition, perceiving the darkness he uncovers as something uncovered in ourselves. In contrast, since we are alienated from the unbalanced Willard, we remain alienated from his discovery" (Boyum 1985, p.136).

If Willard's complicity is seen not as authorial confusion but as artistic design, it would appear that Coppola is departing from the novel to make a point. The argument that the choice is a departure and not just a difference, can be supported by an examination of the boat captain's death scene. The scene is too close to its equivalent in the novel, the death of the helmsman who also dies by a spear,

to be coincidental, but it has a significant difference. The boat captain tries to take Willard with him, by pulling him towards the spear protruding from his chest. This difference serves to underline Willard's pronounced complicity, in contrast to Marlow's. In that sense, the fact that Willard is harder to identify with, is the film's attempt to expand a discourse that was less pronounced in the novel.

3.9.5 The Search for Meaning and the Problems of Ambiguity

This is another subject on which the novel and the film have received similar criticism. Both have been accused of inconclusiveness and excessive mystification, and both have allowed for wide interpretation. This stems from the common narrative strategy of the works and the restricted view that they allow through their subjective protagonists. Tomasulo finds the lack of clear pronouncements of the film suspect. "It is tantamount to ethical 'fence-sitting' to suggest that the political and combat realities of an illegal and imperialist war can be incorporated into a vague philosophical unity of opposites" (Tomasulo 1991, p.154).

According to Eleanor Coppola, the director, after struggling with the screenplay during production, decided to embrace the ambiguity. "He has been struggling for over a year now, with different drafts of the end, trying to get it right. He said he just realized that there was no simple solution to the script. Just as there was no simple right answer as to why we were in Vietnam. Every time he tried to take the script one direction or the other, he met up with a fundamental contradiction, because the war was a contradiction. A human being contains contradictions. Only if we admit the truth about ourselves, completely, can we find a balance point between the contradictions, the love and the hate, the peace and the violence which exist within us" (E. Coppola 1979, p.130). So although the ambiguity is not addressed in the discourse of the film, it is an intentional part of its poetic structure. Tomasulo finds this approach morally reprehensible. "Although much contemporary film theory

valorizes the idea of the 'open' text, subject to polyvalent readings and interpretations, what is really needed — at least in terms of Vietnam War movies—is a closed text, a film that takes an unambiguous stand on the imperialist involvement and illegal conduct of the Vietnam conflict ... Displacing and abstracting political realities onto the universal and ambiguous realm of myth (as was done in *Apocalypse Now*) rewrites history... A text without a context is a pretext, a pretext for real historical analysis and a pre-text for wars and war movies to come” (Tomasulo 1991, p.157). Cahir, on the other hand, accepts the artist's prerogative to abstraction and finds the common ground between the film and the novel. “Both Willard and Marlow, arguably Kurtz's spiritual sons, undergo the same realization. Both men look full face at the great abomination, at the dark ambiguity of Being. Each confronts moral terror in the form of human conduct pushed beyond decent limits; and each is profoundly altered by the experience” (Cahir 2004, p.193). Jamie Sherry also suggests that the distance from the protagonist is not the result of misjudged characterisation but of intentional emulation of the novel's function. “Coppola's specific use of Sheen as Willard is an attempt to conform to the first-person narrative demands of cinema, whilst also creating what amounts to a 'closed book' protagonist, cut off from us, emotionally distanced, and unpredictable” (Sherry 2012, p.379).

Both novel and film are structured as quests for interpretation with one significant difference. While the film suggests questions of interpretation, the novel questions the quest itself. Whereas Willard never explicitly questions his assumptions, Marlow questions the existence of assumptions altogether. In the film, ambiguity is a dramatic force, as in the case of Willard's view of Kurtz, and an element of the work in the unclear nature of the final pronouncement. In the novel, ambiguity has those two effects but also constitutes an object of the discourse.

The series of confrontations with Kurtz give the audience access to the words that Marlow does not recount, and allow them to judge for themselves whether the great man is enlightened or just mad. Kurtz teaches Willard as he prepares him for the role of his ritual executioner. While Kurtz's discourse does not offer concrete answers, Willard's actions do. He does not embrace the man's

ideas, but he respects him enough to give him the death that he wants. The killing of Kurtz concludes Willard's inner struggle not as a victory but as a compromise, not with a bang but with a whimper. Kurtz reads Eliot's *The Hollow Men*, that carries added significance, referencing also Marlow's description of the company men and Kurtz as hollow, and reminding us that the poem's epigraph was another quotation from the novel "Mistah Kurtz - he dead" (p.100). Kurtz's discourse is radical and even contradictory but entrancing. His extreme dismissal of humanism and morality in favour of power and efficiency cannot be entirely convincing but is definitely arresting. Especially in a first viewing of the film, the gradual establishment of Kurtz as Willard's ally against the system gives the audience enough momentum to at least consider Kurtz's plight. Willard's fascination is transferred to the audience that, like him, cannot easily make the pronouncement that the facts demand. Kurtz's final words, "the horror" is just as open to interpretation as it was in the novel. The final note on his report, "drop the bomb, exterminate them all", is like the other Kurtz's "exterminate all the brutes" (p.72), the logical extension of his methods as they are the logical extension of the system's methods. " '[E]xterminate all the brutes' suggests both that history is powerless and that this is history carried out to its logical conclusion" (Hawley 1996, p.111). Significantly, Willard closes his ears to Kurtz's final words. The fact that Willard, unlike Marlow, kills Kurtz, offers the appropriate conclusion to his story. His heavier guilt and physical association with Kurtz through his past and the boat murder, demands an equally powerful and literal engagement as catharsis.

3.9.6 Examination of the Storytelling Process

As has been argued, the novel consistently examines the storytelling process. Marlow's narration is interspersed with self-reflexive digressions that comment on the rendition, rather than the events, of the story. Marlow as a narrator is always at a distance from the reader and therefore potentially unreliable. The film also works through narration but the distance between Willard and the audience

is less pronounced. There is no framing narrative, only a framing narration that serves similar functions but has a somewhat different effect. Willard, unlike Marlow, never questions his ability to adequately convey his story. Also, whereas in the novel, the words are clearly attributed to Marlow, the film's images do not have the same association to Willard. It is clear that this is his story but the attribution is only explicit in the voice-over. It appears that in the film, the distinction between objective and subjective view is more problematic than in the novel. The film does question storytelling conventions, but it does so without the mediation of Willard. It breaks the narrative illusion, to remind the viewer of the artifice, thus illuminating the process. The examination of the storytelling process is maintained but is not directly addressed as in the novel, that function is transferred to the formal aspect of the work. Again, one could argue that this examination is not a primary thematic preoccupation of the film, but rather a means to achieve the desired distance of the viewer from the story. Furthermore, Willard's telling of Kurtz's story, that runs parallel to the main narrative of the film, serves as another examination of the storytelling process, one that more closely resembles the novel's discursive strategy. The viewer is offered a view of the reconstruction of a story but in this case it is Kurtz's story rather than Marlow's. Significant in that respect is the fact that Kurtz in the film is chronologically present, albeit not seen, from the beginning, whereas in the novel his introduction through hearsay takes place later in Marlow's journey.

3.9.7 The Role of Women

Neither work contains fully formed female characters but it is useful to observe how the presence of the few women that do appear functions in each case. In the novel, Kurtz's European fiancée and his native mistress are presented as apparitions and given mainly symbolic functions. Marlow's aunt is offered as fodder for his ironic commentary and brings about his pronouncement that women need to be left in their own world. In the original release of the film, women have no presence, portrayed either as victims, enemies, or sexual objects. Kurtz's wife never appears and his letters are

addressed to his son. One could further argue that the saving of Lance at the end mirrors the protection of innocence and preservation of illusions of Marlow's lie to Kurtz's fiancée. This serves a similar purpose while eliminating the female character. According to Kim Worthy, the film is as biased as the novel. "Coppola's 1979 film reproduces the male/female hierarchical opposition, along with Conrad's 19th century white self/non-white other hierarchical opposition ... In the long run, Coppola can no more follow his egalitarian impulses to their logical end, to step outside of patriarchal thought, than could Conrad" (Worthy 1996, p.160).

The added scenes of the extended version introduce some more complexity to the matter of female presence. In the scene where Willard buys his crew time with the USO girls, the women have speaking parts and distinct personalities. Even so, the scene is rather surreal and seems rather out of place in the narrative thrust of the film. The interaction between the girls and the soldiers gives an impression of randomness. Whaley suggests that this is consistent with a reading of the novel. "Coppola's use of surrealism, in fact, appears to be his attempt to reproduce the dreamlike qualities of Conrad's book" (Whaley 2007, p.42).

On a different point, it can be argued that this scene is a reference to (and commentary on) the novel. The setup of the scene is essentially a case of prostitution, with the dark implication that it might be involuntary, as both girls seem to be in a sort of trance, not exactly realising their predicament. They both seem to be "in their own world" as Marlow might say. Furthermore, their distinct personalities that seem random and out of place, could be associated with the two female apparitions of the novel. One of the girls is very physical and aggressive, while the other is scared and vulnerable. The former is a reference to Kurtz's mistress while the latter to Kurtz's fiancée. If seen in that light, the scene immediately gains a level of consistency. It makes sense as a comment on female stereotypes, but also as critical comment on the novel itself. Coppola might be creating a

parody of Conrad's detached treatment of women, or simply drawing inspiration for a scene that is meant to remain unstructured, but in any case, the juxtaposition reveals a link between the works. Roxanne, in the French plantation, another rather surreal setting, lives with her family in an improbable world of their own. She shares elements with Kurtz's fiancée but is allowed the capacity to interpret Willard and escape the illusions. This again can be seen as commentary on the novel.

3.10 Engagement with the Novel

The examination of the aims of the two works reveals another aim of the film, an engagement with the novel itself, an assumption supported by the biographical data. Although the original script stripped the novel from most narrative, thematic or ideological connections, they were reintroduced in every subsequent level, thus creating a very unique process of adaptation. Coppola engaged with the novel not only for inspiration but also for assistance when he was struggling with the third act. Michael Herr's voice-over is clearly influenced by Marlow's discourse, incorporating direct quotations. "These references in dispatches suggest the Vietnam story in *Apocalypse Now* that was grafted onto the plot of *Heart of Darkness*" (Whaley 2007, p.43). The engagement is evident in a multitude of allusions and references, and also in elements of the film that, while different from the novel, serve the same function. Most importantly, the engagement is evident in the protagonist's inner trajectory, the main thrust of both works. Both Marlow and Willard start as experienced adventurers, embarking on a mission that turns out to be one of self-discovery. They both start their voyage as observers, critical of the absurd environment around them and of the establishment's corrupt and brutal methods. They both envision a more efficient and moral system and find hope of that system in the person of Kurtz, whose appearance is deferred until very late in the story. Both characters become introspective as the environment around them becomes more dream-like, contemplating issues of morality and savagery. Their fascination with Kurtz increases as they approach their destination. The confrontation with the man is a disappointment, according to most

interpretations, and the search for answers is not successful. They both choose not to follow Kurtz and try to preserve a necessary part of the illusion.

The main difference between the two characters is that Willard is more engaged in terms of his connection with Kurtz. His target is Kurtz from the beginning, he does not take that place gradually as in the novel. Also Willard's dismissal of Kurtz is more overt in the film. Both Willard and Marlow offer their ironic commentary to the general's and the manager's pronouncement of Kurtz's "unsound methods", and they both later claim to see "no method at all", but whereas Marlow mentions his objection to the manager, Willard announces it directly to Kurtz. He verbally confronts the man and eventually kills him. This could be understood as a narrative necessity of the medium. If Kurtz died by illness shortly after Willard reached his compound, as was the case in the novel, the film might be too anti-dramatic for a mainstream release. But the change could also be seen through a less commercial viewpoint, as an attempt to build on Marlow's character, an attempt to make him more involved in the story, more guilty in the beginning, more complicit in the system's corruption and more critical of Kurtz's extremes. As Willard admits near the beginning of the film: "There is no way to tell his story without telling my own. And if his story is a confession, then so is mine".

The argument of Willard's guilt is supported by William L. Benzon's analysis. He places the conceptual centre of the two works in the helmsman's death (in *Heart of Darkness*), and in the sampan massacre (in *Apocalypse Now*). He notes an important difference in the significance of those scenes. "In both narratives there is a line dividing US from THEM. In *Heart of Darkness* that line is between Europe/white people on the one hand and Africa/black people on the other. In *Apocalypse Now* that line is between America and its people of whatever race and Vietnam/Asians. In both narratives the mid-point death occurs to THEM. But the killer is different. In *Heart* the helmsman is killed by another African ... In *Apocalypse* the people in the sampan are killed by

Americans. In this sense, then, there is a deep similarity between the superficial different structural midpoints of these two narratives. But within that similarity – death across the divide – there is a different valence” (Benzon 2013, p.6). Thus, in the novel the natives kill one of their own, while in the film, it is the the Americans who kill the natives, with Willard firing the final shot. If this shift is viewed as commentary on the novel, it can be interpreted as an attempt at a stronger moral judgement.

3.11 A Bakhtinian Analysis

The dialogic relationship between the two works has proven rigorous and complex. The analyses of both novel and film as organisations of an authorial agency, has demonstrated a substantial and multilevelled interaction. The Bakhtinian analysis has revealed links that were not visible through a superficial account of narrative comparison:

1. The common structure of the three prevalent voices (Marlow’s/Willard’s, official discourse and Kurtz’s) operates through a similar pattern in both cases. The hero is opposed to official discourse and gradually recognises an ally in Kurtz’s voice. Eventually, a confrontation between the hero’s and Kurtz’s discourse takes place. This description accurately describes both works and formed a basis for their comparison.
2. The chronotopic mechanics of novel and film also demonstrate similarities. The juxtapositions of the jungle and civilisation, as well as the gradual regression in time, govern the spatio-temporal relations in both works, albeit achieved through different strategies.
3. Marlow’s discourse as potentially double-voiced is not transferred to the film, at least not to the same extent, but is still implicitly present: filmic representation is undermined and therefore

rendered potentially unreliable. The implication that Willard's point of view governs that representation, an implication achieved through his voice-over, positions him in the realm of unreliable narration even though evidence of it does not exist in his discourse. The novel's double-voiced discourse has essentially been split into its components. In the literary text, Marlow's discourse and authorial discourse are merged whereas in the film they are separated into Willard's verbal discourse and the filmmaker's audio/visual authorial agency.

3.12 The Interpretation Suggested by the Film

At this point it is possible to offer an opinion on which interpretation of the novel has been embraced by the film. A revisiting of the novel after the discussion of the transposition seems to offer a sense of greater facility of interpretation. That is not to say that the reading suggested by the film is correct in any definitive sense, but that the common ground between the two works becomes more pronounced than their unconnected elements. The organisation proposed by the adapter on the multiplicity of interpretive voices on the original highlights a specific approach.

The relatively less obscure conclusion of the film has revealed a rather convincing interpretation of the novel as a story of disillusionment. Marlow's fascination with Kurtz is never definitively destroyed, an effect that is reinforced by the fact that Marlow's words clearly command the story. Marlow's entrancement is thus more subjective and harder to question. But the truth is that it is questioned. Marlow does indeed see Kurtz's debasement when he gets close enough, just as he recognises the severed heads for what they are when he approaches them. The effect of delayed decoding operates on a conceptual, as well as a stylistic level. The extra distance from Willard allows for a clearer view of the denunciation that also exists, albeit less pronounced, in the novel. Seen from this light, Marlow's contradictions can be attributed to his change of mind, to the realisation that the exceptional nature of Kurtz only gave him access to a more profound

debasement through his contact with the darkness. A detail from the novel also favors this interpretation. The book that Marlow finds in the abandoned hut on his journey up the river is later identified as belonging to the Russian. Marlow finds unintelligible writing on its margin that he assumes is cipher. He later realises it is Russian. Marlow's excitement at a mystery, a treasure hunt, is exposed as something much more prosaic, a breakdown of communication. In that sense both novel and film are stories of demystification, of delayed decoding.

3.13 Findings Regarding the Transposition

The juxtaposition of the aims of the two works has provided a wide account of the poetic links of the transposition. It has identified the areas in which the film attempts to follow the novel and others in which it pursues new objectives, or offers commentary on the original. The comparison has also shown the difference in degree between specific common preoccupations of the two works, as well as the different strategies that are employed to explore them. This discussion of intentionality of the film in relation to the novel allows for an examination of the adaptation on a basis of flexible fidelity. It does not assume a strategy of faithful adaptation according to specific structures of form and content or narrative and style, but identifies the strategy implemented in this specific case. In a sense, fidelity is redefined according to the individual work, providing a macroscopic picture of the transposition.

The discussion of the poetics of the two works has arguably facilitated an organised account of their interaction. It has been demonstrated that the film follows a similar structure to achieve neighbouring goals, even though it strays from the source in many respects. According to the categorisation based on authorial intent presented in the first chapter, this case of adaptation would be filed under distant allusion. It has been argued here that according to a categorisation based on engagement with the source text it is actually much higher on the scale. Significant overlap has

been observed in the two character's trajectory, even though it takes place through different narrative events. Many of the aims of the novel have been identified in the film, adapted to the new historical setting. Many of the methods and functions of the novel have been transferred. In other cases, different elements in each work have been identified as serving the same functions in the poetic structure. There have also been cases where similar functions serve different purposes, and some that serve purposes that contradict the novel. These differences have been addressed and re-contextualised in the spirit of re-interpretation and commentary on the novel. A number of inconsistencies in the film, evocative of Rifaterre's ungrammaticalities, have been suggested as further links to the novel, as in the case of the Playboy girls scene. Intertextual links have been suggested as generic connections between the two works in apocalyptic texts and detective stories, the adventure genre and the war film. Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Darwin have been recognised as references in both works. Eliot has offered another connection, with his poetry linking Belgian colonialism and the Vietnam conflict through a contemplation of post-war Europe. Further analysis of external textual links could address Homer's *Odyssey*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, *Oedipus*, *Moby Dick* and others, but this type of analysis, albeit interesting in its own right, falls outside the focus of this study, that is based on a more narrow definition of intertextuality.

The findings that the focus on poetics has allowed in this case study are gathered below.

- The narrative of the two works is very different on a microscopic level, but very similar through a macroscopic analysis
- Their spatial chronotopes are closely aligned
- Their temporal chronotopes are somewhat different in narrative terms, but retain the element of regression to the past
- Both works embrace ambiguity to a substantial degree, and both have received criticism for

it. *Apocalypse Now* arguably attempts to limit that ambiguity by selecting one interpretation of the novel.

- Both works deal with issues of contemporary politics through a lens of abstraction.
- Both works sideline issues of race and gender.
- *Apocalypse Now Redux* introduces scenes that complicate the two previous points.
- Coppola's film is darker in its implications, but more optimistic in its conclusion.
- Willard is more complicit than Marlow, whereas his peers are less complicit than Marlow's. In that sense the film extends the discourse of the novel.
- The controversy of the Kilgore attack scene can be addressed by recourse to the novel's poetics, by the association of Coppola's undermined spectacle to Conrad's device of juxtapositions (different methods towards the same objective).
- Both works can be read as attempts to reconcile with trauma.
- The film's ambiguity can be mitigated by recourse to the novel's poetics.
- The distancing effect is a common aim, achieved through different strategies (in the novel through Marlow's reflexivity, in the film through performance and the different nature of Willard's character, that prohibits strong identification).
- The film does not employ a device of delayed decoding, but both works operate through this strategy on a conceptual level, through the incremental presentation of Kurtz.

The wide scope achieved by this analysis is counterbalanced by a possible lack of depth in the discussion of specific aspects of the discourse. The preponderance of information may not allow for

a rigorous exploration of every issue raised. Nevertheless the aim of this study and this test specifically was not to cover every aspect of the works themselves but to offer an organised overview of the transposition. The close examination of every one of those levels is not, and could not be, the object of a single study. The objective here was the revelation of the analytical potential offered by the theory and the merits of the notion of a poetic system as the basis for an examination of the transposition from a literary work to film.

It has been argued that the two works that are examined here have affinities that can be identified through a recourse to their poetic structures. The conclusion of this study agrees with Cahir that “Coppola understood that technique and theme, structure and meaning are inseparable entities. To tell a story differently is to tell a different story. Ultimately it seems, Conrad and Coppola tell the same tale” (Cahir 2004, p.194). The aim of this study is not to find the differences between the stories but to examine how the new story ‘tells’ its predecessor.

Chapter 4:

Adaptation Practice: Uncovering The Filmic Potential of Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the idea of adaptation through poetics was implemented in the analysis of an existing case of literature to film transfer. In this chapter, a similar framework will be used to examine the filmic potential of a literary text, in an attempt to illuminate the process, rather than the product, of adaptation. In order to gauge the intricacies of a process of adaptation, it will be necessary to simulate an actual task of transposition. Therefore, while chapter three focused on an existing film, this section will deal with a theoretical project. This approach is necessary for two reasons. Firstly, the examination of an existing film cannot give reliable insight into the actual process of its creation. It can only offer an analysis of the finished work, with inferences about the process based on a narrative that was imposed after the work was finished. Secondly, even if the process that led to the existing film was adequately known, it could not be expected to coincide with the strategy proposed here, and therefore would be irrelevant to this part of the study. The question posed here is not whether all instances of adaptation practice can be modelled according to the method proposed in this thesis, but whether the theory can bear fruit when actually employed in the process. The only way to evaluate the ideas of this thesis in the context of adaptation practice is to actually engage in the practice. This means performing a controlled experiment, with the researcher in the double role of practitioner and scholar.

This endeavour will involve a series of creative decisions, some of which might be considered arbitrary in the academic context, as there are obviously very few singular answers in any creative

attempt. The main inherent obstacle of this approach is artistic subjectivity. The evaluation of the theory's efficacy cannot be bound on the researcher's creative capacity or on an evaluation of a finished product. The success, or otherwise, of the practice cannot be adequately identified, and it can also not be attributed solely to the system. Therefore, the latter cannot be evaluated based on the former. What is being evaluated then, is not the quality of the result but the merits of the process itself, based on the guidelines suggested by the theory. That is why the experiment will not result in a complete screenplay but in a discussion of an outline, a sketch of a film that can be examined in conjunction with the source text and analysed according to the theoretical framework. The outline of the film then, will be at the same time more and less than a screenplay. It will not take the form of a complete standard-format script, but it will contain information that would not be part of such a script, including stylistic decisions and filmmaking approach. Essentially, it will be a description of aspects of the film as produced by the theory, based on the literary text. The distillation of the text into a system of functions and effects will allow for the translation of its elements, narrative, stylistic or thematic, into their filmic counterparts. Each element will be addressed in terms of its importance and function in the poetics of the novel and the transfer will allow for transformations of the nature of the element as well. For example a stylistic element in the source could achieve the same function in the film through a narrative strategy. Through a practical undertaking, this thesis will examine the concept of dialogic fidelity, in an attempt to evaluate its merit as an analytical tool and organising agency.

4.1.1 Methodology

The stages of the process, as described in chapter two (2.14) are:

1. Reading of the literary text
2. Formulation of its poetics
3. Transposition of the poetic structure
4. Implementation

It is important to note that the first two stages are crucial to the experiment, as they constitute the basis of the thesis. Nevertheless, in contrast to their equivalents of chapter three, they will be less detailed. The rationale for this is that in chapter three it was important to present most of the proposed readings of the literary work, in order to allow for a wide range of connections with the film. It would not be possible to examine the product of adaptation without recourse to its sources. If some sources were missing the links would not be revealed, and the final analysis would be weaker. In the case of adaptation practice, an extensive list of readings would be unnecessary and confusing. Therefore, in this chapter, the route is reversed. The goal is not to link the film to its sources but to create a projection of the source onto the filmic medium, based on a specific reading. Inclusion of all possible readings would be too chaotic for an organised evaluation. As was stated before, the aim is not to find the best option or to list all the possibilities but to evaluate the system based on its capacity to suggest and inform decisions.

4.1.2 The Literary Text

The author whose work will constitute the basis of this experiment is Fyodor Dostoevsky, a “proto-modernist” (Stam 2005, p.193), whose novels offer many challenges to the prospective adapter. Dostoevsky is well suited for this application as he offers ample opportunity to address various issues of adaptation discourse, like point of view, unreliable narration, discursive style, and ideological complexity. The specific work that will be approached in this experiment is *Notes from Underground* (1864), a very unique piece of fiction, that according to Robert Stam “anticipated any number of subsequent modes of thought: Freudianism, existentialism, modernism and even postmodernism” (Stam 2005, p.193). This novel does not offer an immediately obvious filmic approach. It has inspired and influenced many contemporary works but has not been directly adapted often, despite its popularity. Zeki Demirkubuz’s *Zeralti* (2012) was loosely based on the novel, but the most notable attempts at a straight adaptation have been Nicolas Sarquis’s *El Hombre del Subsuelo* (1980), and Gary Walkow’s *Notes from Underground* (1995). The former transfers the story to the thirties and attempts to dramatise the internal monologue of the protagonist. The latter sets the story in a modern environment. The protagonist is creating a video diary, that serves as the equivalent of the underground man’s writing. Both films offer solutions to the main problems of the text but eliminate the discursive parts of the novel and focus on the protagonist’s encounters with others. This study will attempt to see if a recourse to the novel’s poetics can offer solutions that will address the obstacles of the elusive text.

The challenge that needs to be initially addressed here, is the issue of translation. My only access to the original text is through the English translation. That means that certain nuances of the source text will be lost, even before the shift to the new medium. This cannot be avoided, but for the purposes of this thesis it does not constitute a significant compromise. Since the strategy proposed here does not demand a strict adaptation of the work, it is acceptable to use the translation as the

source material. Nevertheless, this involves taking into account the implications of it being a translation, by considering for example socio/cultural references and language use. David Lodge, in *After Bakhtin* (1990), discussing the issue in the context of authorship, suggests that a translation hinders a close reading of the text but does not deny it. Robert Stam, in *Subversive Pleasures* (1989) brings up the subject in a discussion of language in cinema, and proposes Bakhtin's concept of polyglossia, the imperfect coexistence of different languages through translation, to describe the situation. He mentions subtitles as another instance of the same problem. If heteroglossia is accepted as a major element of film adaptation, not only in terms of the language, but also between the different media, the complication of a translated source appears less pronounced. Nevertheless, to gain perspective on this case, two different translations of the text have been used, one by Michael R. Katz (1989) and one by Jessie Coulson (1972). The specific translations were chosen because they are rather different in terms of flow, sentence structure and occasionally, vocabulary. I hope the variety provides a more clear overview of the original. The process of adaptation that is proposed here will not be severely compromised by the language disparity, mainly due to its more abstract nature. Nevertheless, it also needs to be pointed out that in cases of works whose poetics suggest language structure as a primary element of the text, working from a translation could prove more problematic. This would be the case not only because of the inherent imperfection of the translation process, but also because the substantial focus on verbal signification might hinder the discovery of adaptation solutions.

4.1.3 The Reading, Initial Decisions

The next decision is the choice of the reading that will form the basis of the process. That choice, as has been discussed before (2.11) is Michail Bakhtin's analysis of the author's work in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. His study of the author's oeuvre is still widely considered one of the most incisive available accounts. Malcolm Jones suggests that "Bakhtin was undoubtedly the most

brilliant reader of Dostoevsky of our time” (Jones 1990, p.viii). Furthermore, Bakhtin’s discourse is highly compatible with the basic premise of this thesis (2.9). Nevertheless, it has been argued that his viewpoint does not address all aspects of the author’s work (Jones, 1990). Therefore, a complete transposition will require some additional reading, keeping in mind that having made the initial choice of a main interpretive line, the requirement here is not variety of opinion but a single comprehensive picture of the literary text.

It has been established earlier in this thesis that strict fidelity to the word of the text is not an objective of this project. This means that if a creative decision is in keeping with the poetics of the text, it can be allowed to depart from the source in order to achieve the dialogic fidelity that is suggested here. The departure can also be used to create a conversation with the original on that level. According to this rationale, it has been decided to complement the project of the adaptation of *Notes from Underground* with a consideration of another story by the same author, *White Nights* (1848). This pairing is very much in keeping with Bakhtin’s reading of Dostoevsky’s work. (2.11)

His main argument is that the author’s oeuvre can be seen as a singular project, the polyphonic novel. He posits that every character embodies an idea and is cast into the world, almost independent from the author. Bakhtin essentially views Dostoevsky as an organiser of voices and discourses, not only in the context of specific works but throughout his whole oeuvre. An overview of the series of novels that makes up the author’s artistic trajectory reveals a constant interaction of ideas and an evolution that follows his world-view. “A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky’s novels. What unfolds in his works is not a multitude of characters and fates in a single objective world, illuminated by a single authorial consciousness; rather a plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights and each with its own world, combine but are not merged in the unity of the event” (Bakhtin 1984, p.6).

There is another reason for the inclusion of *White Nights*. The two stories offer a vivid and poignant example of Dostoevsky's ideological shift. They are both based on first person confessions of their protagonists, loners and dreamers, at a distance from, and critical of, society. They are distinguished by significant differences that essentially express Dostoevsky's ideological conversion in the years between the writing of the two works. Bakhtin has pointed out that Dostoevsky has the tendency to create two characters in every work as the two opposing stances on the same question. In this case he has offered the counterpart to his first character, the dreamer in *White Nights*, in another work, through another character, the underground man, in *Notes from Underground*. Therefore, the bringing together of the two characters in a dialogic adaptation seems like an appropriate way to embrace the author's method, as described by the chosen reading. The adaptation essentially 'polyphonises' the source, giving the adapter the opportunity to expand the notion of fidelity, by embracing a key aspect of the author's method. At the same time, the introduction of a second character introduces a narrative and discursive flexibility in the new work that will provide solutions to issues of dramatisation.

The distillation of the reading into a poetic structure will take place in similar fashion as in the previous chapter, the main difference being the smaller variety of interpretations discussed. The result will again be a list of aims and methods that map the work's mechanics. The next step will contain the main discussion of alternatives. Each element of the list will be addressed in an attempt to find a solution for its transposition. Not every single element needs to be transferred, and the nature of any one of those elements is subject to alteration. This analysis will offer the opportunity to consider all aspects of the novel and also the general issues regarding adaptation in the light of the proposed theory. During this stage, decisions will be made that will form the outline of the

imagined project.

A similar rationale dictates the next important macroscopic choice for the project. The adaptation will be transferred to a modern setting. Most of the ideas that are expressed in the novel are still highly relevant today. Nevertheless, the narrative setting is firmly situated in the Russian culture of the time. The dilemma of the adapter is not an easy one. The original setting of the story would retain the rendering of the Russian society and culture but a modern setting would ground the ideas in a more relatable and relevant narrative. The work's poetics suggest an answer to the crucial question of what is more important, the rendering of the time and place or the modernisation of the discourse. An examination of the text based on Bakhtin's reading of its poetics, suggests a hierarchy: the philosophical musings of the underground man, although grounded in 19th century Russian society, take precedence over the rendering of the society itself. The protagonist's discourse transcends its specific situation to reach general truths. The underground man offers a rigorous critique of his society and of his contemporary ideology. Bakhtin's reading of Dostoevsky would suggest that the event of the dialogue of the underground man with his environment is more crucial than the depiction of the environment itself. What is primarily represented in Dostoevsky's work is the subjective discourse and not its object. "What is important to Dostoevsky is not how his hero appears in the world but first and foremost how the world appears to his hero, and how the hero appears to himself ... Consequently those elements out of which the hero's image is composed are not features of reality - features of the hero himself or of his everyday surroundings - but rather the *significance* of these features for the *hero himself*, for his self-consciousness" (Bakhtin 1984, p.48 [original emphasis]).

In the context of this thesis, another reason to choose the more complicated route of the temporal shift is the opportunity it offers for analysis. The challenge imposed by this decision will raise

important questions on the subject of adaptation in general, questions that will make the project more useful from an analytical viewpoint. It also needs to be repeated at this point, that this choice is not suggested as the singular solution to the problem. The arguments presented for it here might give that impression but there is no claim that equally convincing arguments cannot be offered in support of a different approach. The case made here is built on the base of a specific reading and understanding of the text. An element of relativism and subjectivity is always present in any discussion of creative endeavours.

4.1.4 A Bakhtinian Approach to Dostoevsky

Robert Bresson's adaptations of Dostoevsky are highly relevant to this project, not only because he has adapted *White Nights*, but also because his approach has been examined from a Bakhtinian perspective. Eva Maria Stadler, discussing Bresson's *A Gentle Woman* (1969) and *Four Nights of a Dreamer* (1971), suggests that the two films "explore techniques that can be seen as filmic applications of what Bakhtin described as Dostoevsky's experiments with narrative polyphony" (Stadler 2003, p.16). This analysis provides an example of another Bakhtinian approach to adaptation, based on the work of the same author. Furthermore, Bresson is relevant here because his work problematises the issue of fidelity. Bazin notices that Bresson is often very faithful to the letter of the text that he adapts, but in service of his own creative agenda. "Bresson's faithfulness to his model is the alibi of liberty in chains. If he is faithful to the text this is because it serves his purpose better than taking useless liberties. Furthermore, this respect for the letter is, in the last analysis, far more than an exquisite embarrassment, it is a dialectical moment in the creation of a style" (Bazin 1967, p.132).

The kind of fidelity with which Bresson approaches Dostoevsky is compatible with this thesis. Stadler claims that "the literary text functions as a point for departure, a source of narrative material

and an impetus to formal experiment. From this perspective, adaptation became for Bresson *a reinterpretation of thematic and structural features of the literary text* – an intersemiotic transfer which involves not only transposition but also imitation, citation and commentary” (Stadler 2003, p.15 [emphasis added]). She presents the filmmaker’s approach as an attempt to transfer the author’s method. “*Une Femme Douce* and *Quatre Nuits d’un Reveur* could, therefore, be studied as experiments in the application of some of the formal, compositional attributes of Dostoevsky’s discourse to the film medium” (Stadler 2003, p.16).

Tony Pipolo observes the strategies of the two artists and argues that “the insight into human psychology that lies behind Dostoevsky’s work is also key to Bresson’s aesthetic, and that Bresson’s reading of Dostoevsky is itself about getting to the core, to that extraordinary volte-face of the soul that can change everything. Dostoevsky’s psychological leaps resemble the formal jolts in Bresson” (Pipolo 2010, p.234). Bert Cardullo examines Bresson’s opaque characters and concludes that “it is art’s job not to make people and the world more intelligible than they are, but instead to re-present their mystery or ineffableness, their integrity or irreducibility” (Cardullo 2012, p.84). Bresson’s method leaves events and characters unexplained, in an attempt to portray the reality of existence. This strategy is compatible to Bakhtin’s reading of Dostoevsky’s unfinalisedness. Nevertheless, Bresson’s version is more pronounced. Dostoevsky searches for the truth, even though he chooses not to take sides. Bresson seems to suggest there is no discernible truth. In that sense, he extends the source’s project to its extreme. Dostoevsky questions definitive answers, Bresson claims there are none to be found.

Sadler further examines Bresson’s aesthetic devices and notices that “through montage and manipulation of voice-over Bresson creates a dialogic relationship between sound and image as well as between sound and sound. These techniques multiply the possibilities of psychological

ambiguity suggested by the form of Dostoevsky's story" (Stadler 2003, p.17). She also points out that "one of the most beautiful and most erotically charged scenes in the film reflects, in formal filmic terms, the 'cross-currents' of contending voices which Bresson so admired in Dostoevsky's work" (Stadler 2003, p.19).

It is fair to say that, based on a Bakhtinian interpretation, the filmmaker's strategy is rather close to what this thesis has termed dialogic fidelity. Bazin offers another way to describe the phenomenon. Discussing *Diary of a Country Priest* (1951), he argues that "its dialectic between fidelity and creation is reducible, in the last analysis, to the dialectic between the cinema and literature. There is no question here of translation, no matter how faithful or intelligent ... It is a question of building a secondary work with the novel as foundation" (Bazin 1967, p.141-2).

This brief bibliographical digression suggests that a discussion of fidelity is still relevant in the context of adaptation, and that a Bakhtinian, dialogic fidelity can be used to examine the adaptive process, without ignoring the creative factor.

4.1.5 Outline of *Notes from Underground*

The novel is the two-part soliloquy of an unnamed man in his forties, who lives in a small house in St Petersburg, in the second half of the 19th century. The first part of the novel is an exposition of the man's situation, but mainly an account of his ideological position, his opinions and critique of society, mixed with a contradictory self examination. Presenting his writing as a form of therapy, he alludes to a memory that brought it about. The telling of the story will comprise the second part of the novel.

Twenty years before, he was in the process of becoming the man he is now, but not yet completely

isolated from society. He was self-conscious and plagued by feelings of inferiority and superiority, alienated from his environment, a practical romantic. He describes his difficult interactions with people, that culminate in his acquaintance with Liza, a prostitute that challenges his world-view. His final denouncement of her, his last chance for meaningful contact with another, signals his complete break from society. He rationalises his behaviour and in a final self reflexive segment he generalises his overall attitude as the logical conclusion and only honest recourse of the modern man.

4.1.6 Outline of *White Nights*

Also written in the first person, but less self-reflexive and much shorter, *White Nights* is the story of another loner of St Petersburg. He is a young man whose main occupation is observing the city and its people. One night he finds a girl crying on the bank of a river. They are drawn to each other for different reasons. He needs human contact and she needs emotional support, believing she has been abandoned by the man she loves. Through the four nights of their interaction, his feelings develop into love, and she briefly reciprocates, but finally leaves him when her lover returns. A letter from her the next morning offers the dreamer her everlasting friendship. His future looks bleak but he does not blame her. She has offered him one moment of happiness.

4.2 Stage One: Reading of the Literary Text

This is the information gathering stage of the process, as described in the methodology section (2.14). It will contain ideas from Bakhtin's complete outline of Dostoevsky's oeuvre and not just from his examinations of the specific texts. It will address the work at hand according to Bakhtin's description of the hero, the idea and the word. Subsequently, further readings will be integrated, to illuminate areas that Bakhtin does not explore or to point out alternatives.

4.2.1 The Hero

Bakhtin, in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, focuses specifically on *Notes from Underground* in the fifth chapter, where he discusses language and its use by the author. He bases the analysis on his notion of meta-linguistics, the consideration of utterances and dialogic, embodied language. Nevertheless, in every section of the book, one can find relevant material for an examination of most of the author's works. In the second chapter for example, where he describes Dostoevsky's heroes, he is implicitly discussing the underground man as much as every other character.

In both works addressed here, the hero is self-reflexive. In Dostoevsky's world this is not just a personality trait. The reflexivity carries the aesthetic structure of the work. The picture that we see of the hero and his world is subjective and often turns on itself. He seeks truth through a type of confession. "What the author visualises is precisely the hero's self-consciousness and the inescapable open-endedness, the vicious circle of that self-consciousness ... Dostoevsky's hero always seeks to destroy that framework of *other people's* words about him that might finalise and deaden him" (Bakhtin 1984, p.51-59 [original emphasis]). The device of first person narration is crucial, but it is not the only element that creates this effect. The discursive orientation of the characters and their apparent independence from an authorial, deterministic structure, creates the heightened sense of subjectivity that is Dostoevsky's trademark. The characters struggle against their definition by the world, even as they try to explain or justify their actions and ideas. The works themselves do not have definitive endings. In the case of *Notes from Underground* this becomes abundantly clear as the ending of the novel is explicitly presented as an arbitrary halt of an ongoing and never-ending discourse by an unidentified editor. "However, the 'notes' of this paradoxalist don't end here. He couldn't resist and kept on writing. But it also seems to us that we might as well stop here." (p.89) No solid conclusion has been reached, even in a novel that is so overtly polemical. No dramatic resolution has taken place even though the events are depicted in

immensely dramatic tone. “The style of internally endless speech ... can be mechanically cut off but cannot be organically completed” (Bakhtin 1984, p.235).

4.2.2 The Idea

In chapter three, Bakhtin discusses the function of ideas in the author’s work. Most of the central characters of Dostoevsky’s novels are proponents of specific ideologies. The narrative interaction of the characters facilitates the intellectual interaction of their ideas. In a sense, Dostoevsky stages artistic representations of ideological debates. But that does not happen solely on a literal level. The characters do engage in long conversations, but the ideological struggle takes place in every aspect of their existence. The characters don’t just express opinions, they embody their ideology, they live by it. Their existence is based on their world-view, which is personal and passionate. In Bakhtin’s view, the idea is the author’s object of artistic representation, and for that representation to be possible the hero needs to be “possessed” by it, while remaining unfinalised and in constant interaction with other characters/ideas. “Only the unfinalised and inexhaustible ‘man in man’ can become a man of the idea, whose image is combined with the image of a fully valid idea. This is the first condition for representing an idea in Dostoevsky” (Bakhtin 1984, p.86).

The idea never appears in monologic form. Even the author’s long monologues are, to an extent, dialogic. In these cases the interaction of ideas is internal, presented through a single character. *Notes from Underground* is an extreme example of this structure. The underground man has very specific ideas and is fairly polemical in their defence. His polemic is not abstractly philosophical but extends to the world around him. “His own thought is developed and structured as *the thought of someone personally insulted by the world order*” (Bakhtin 1984, p.236 [original emphasis]). His discourse about himself is inextricably linked to his discourse about the world. Furthermore, he has built his life on the basis of his view of the world, with great personal sacrifice. It is not easy to decide with certainty whether his ideas are a rationalisation of his life choices or if the choices are

the conscious application of his ideas. Nevertheless, his fervent support of his arguments is paired with an equally detailed presentation of their opposition. He expresses the counter-argument in order to defeat it but the debate is not weakened by this fact. He shows obvious bias but very often uses the other's voice to create a conversation. In the attempt to make his point stronger he considers every possible counterpoint. In essence, even though his tone suggests a finalised opinion, the resulting discourse is more dialogic. Not only does he not succeed in reaching a solid conclusion that would convince others, he even fails to convince himself. Furthermore, it is impossible to see the work as a polemical monologic treatise, as it is put in the mouth of a very negative character and one that is immensely miserable. As readers we feel for the man but never identify with him, mostly due to his extreme temperament but also because of his irrational personal choices. The reader is not meant to side with him, or to be educated by his cautionary tale. They are meant to observe and consider the implications of his thought and action. His accounts are not overtly unreliable but they are definitely contradictory. The reader is kept in constant oscillation between agreement with him and appalled dismissal. He does not create a concrete ideological structure and has certainly not created an appealing lifestyle based on his beliefs. The complex structure of his discourse essentially carries an inconclusive debate. The final work does not preach, regardless of the character's intention. The temptation to see it that way is significant. The protagonist is a skilful writer and Dostoevsky's own opinions, specifically in the critique of Chernyshevsky's 1863 novel *What is to be done?* mentioned in the novel are documented. But the effect at the end of the book is not agreement or disagreement but a complex intellectual stimulation. The reader has born witness to a discussion, albeit in very unconventional form. At the end, they are encouraged to continue the conversation outside the context of the story.

There are those who disagree with Bakhtin's reading of unfinalisedness. S. Lominadze suggests that Dostoevsky did not mean to create ambiguity. "None of Dostoevsky's novels is actually a

polyphonic novel” (Lominadze 2002, p.56). He claims that Dostoevsky’s heroes, like the underground man, are actually objectivised and finalised. The hero does not, as Bakhtin claims, have the final word. Dostoevsky stands above his characters and takes sides. “Bakhtin interprets the concept of the “great dialogue”, of the polyphonic novel, so broadly that it can easily be seen instead as an *avoidance* of dialogue” (Lominadze 2002, p.40). Lominadze raises some valid questions, although he probably exaggerates the imbalance in the author’s work. The application of such a reading in the methodology discussed here would yield a very different, and equally valid, adaptation. This experiment will embrace Bakhtin’s view. This, like many choices in adaptation, are decisions of interpretation that form the final work.

4.2.3 Genre

Bakhtin positions Dostoevsky’s work in the tradition of the adventure novel. Whereas the social genre of his time focused on plot, Dostoevsky focuses on characters. In his work the narrative follows the heroes through a series of situations. As in the adventure novel, the hero is unfinalised, but here he operates in the service of an idea. This is the case in *Notes from Underground*, where the only access to the story is provided through the hero’s internal monologue and the only plot available takes the form of remembered episodes. Bakhtin also suggests the serio-comic genre of antiquity as a predecessor of the author’s work, mainly referencing the dialogic form and comic elements. *Notes from Underground*, although focused on a tortured character, contains segments of real humour and irony. Parody is often employed in argumentative discourse, often targeted at the hero himself. Even the events depicted have a sort of disturbing humour. The Menippean satire is, according to Bakhtin, the early genre that Dostoevsky perfected through the introduction of polyphony. The comic element, the interrogation of ideas, the extreme situations and abnormal psychic states, the eccentricity and engagement with current discourse are all recognisable elements in Dostoevsky’s work and *Notes from Underground* in particular. Bakhtin also identifies certain

elements of the author's work in carnival tradition, such as ambivalent parody, reduced laughter, extreme, unstable situations and the proximity of opposites. "In all his novels, however, we find a trace of that ambivalent laughter, absorbed by Dostoevsky together with the generic tradition of carnivalization, performing its work of artistically organising and illuminating the world." (Bakhtin 1984, p.165).

4.2.4 Chronotope

The chronotopic structure of Dostoevsky's work is also unique. His novels take place in a heightened realism, at the same time grounded in reality and transcending it. A literal account of the events in *Notes from Underground* would appear ridiculous; only through the filter of the hero's consciousness does their substance become apparent and convincing. The fact that the hero does not actually live in a basement but in a house, aboveground, is an intimation of the metaphoric nature of the discourse.

Dostoevsky's stories do not progress in a temporal manner, they are configurations in space. The characters do not evolve, they interact, forced into narrative situations. They do not learn; all the information is available to everyone from the beginning. "Dostoevsky's work contains no evolution of thought, not even within the boundaries of the consciousness of individual heroes (with very rare exceptions). Semantic material is always given to the hero's consciousness all at once and in its entirety, and given not as individual thoughts and propositions but as the semantic orientations of whole human beings, as voices; it remains only to make a choice among them" (Bakhtin 1984, p.239). The action takes place in literal as well as metaphorical thresholds and in moments of crisis. In *Notes from Underground*, the hero presents snapshots of events that define his character in support of his arguments, and also in justification or accusation of himself. The differences between him and his younger self are not differences in kind but in degree. At the end he has not changed, he

has just become a more extreme version of what he was. He describes the story from his past as the last time that he could have taken a different path, but also implies that it was inevitable that it would not happen. The possibility of change is dismissed. In the same sense that in the ideological arena the hero is never proven right or wrong, in the narrative arena the hero does not succeed or fail in a dramatic goal, he just exists in constant struggle. His central dramatic need is to achieve a level of release through a written expression of his frustration.

Gary Saul Morson argues that Dostoevsky's chronotope is actually thematic. "Utopianism and socialism violate what might be called the "process paradox", the strange, chronotopic truth that the temporality in which we get something is essential to its value and ultimately to all value" (Morson 2010, p.105). He suggests that Dostoevsky is making a case for the examination of experience, rather than rules. "Dostoevsky's heroes learn the inadequacy of theory to real people" (Morson 2010, p.99). In Morson's view, Bakhtin and Dostoevsky diverge in an important aspect. "Bakhtin and Dostoevsky agreed that, so long as we remain human, life requires open time. Bakhtin arrived at this conclusion by way of ethics ... Dostoevsky held much the same ethical views, but he also advanced a psychological argument. Not just ethical choice, but all psychological experience depends on open time (Morson 2010, p.109). This is a useful distinction, that can inform the adaptive process without contradiction. The main interpretive system can benefit from such nuances and facilitate a more complex adaptation.

4.2.5 The Word

One of Bakhtin's contributions in the study of literature is the examination of what he termed double-voiced discourse, utterances that are expressions of their source through another's speech. "In Dostoevsky the stylistic significance of the other person's word is enormous ... The orientation of one person to another person's word and consciousness is, in essence, the basic theme of

Dostoevsky's work" (Bakhtin 1984, p.204-207). In *Notes from Underground* this dialogic category of discourse appears as hidden dialogue. Every sentence of the underground man's account anticipates another's response. In many cases he even assumes the other's voice overtly to express the arguments of his opposition. The radically dialogic form of his discourse is interspersed with sudden breaks and changes. A constant struggle takes place between his claim to independence of the other's opinion and his undermining of that independence by the frantic attempt to convince them. His ironic hostility is directed towards himself as much as it is directed toward his audience. "The destruction of one's own image in another's eyes ... as an ultimate desperate effort to free oneself from the power of the other's consciousness ... is the orientation of the Underground man's entire confession" (Bakhtin 1984 p.232). This vicious cycle has no escape, it can only continue in perpetual oscillation. Dialogue in Dostoevsky is not a means, it is the end. Man is revealed only in the interaction, internal or external with another.

The underground man's self-condemnation is not entirely honest. He really hopes that the other will disagree with him. But in case that does not happen (and in this case it cannot), he leaves himself a way out, what Bakhtin calls loophole discourse, "the retention for oneself of the possibility to alter the final, ultimate sense of one's word" (Bakhtin 1984, p.233). At some point he tells of his dreams of success as if mocking them but immediately suggests that they are not altogether unfounded, in case the other agreed that they are ridiculous. "Self-condemnation and self-vindication, divided between two voices – I condemn myself, another vindicates me – but anticipated by a single voice, create in the voice interruptions and an internal duality" (Bakhtin 1984, p.234).

4.2.6 Supplementary Readings

This section will attempt to complement Bakhtin's reading with a number of alternate interpretations of the text. This will result in a more complete poetic structure, one that will be

better equipped to carry the transposition. The analysis will not be exhaustive but it will shed some light on areas that Bakhtin may have left unexplored. Furthermore, it will give this study the opportunity to address issues of interpretive compatibility. Some analyses will be complementary while others will be contradictory. Lastly some interpretation may clash with the method employed in this thesis and are therefore not suitable for this type of approach.

In *Dostoevsky After Bakhtin* (1990) Malcolm Jones suggests certain aspects of Bakhtin's reading of Dostoevsky that he finds lacking. His main objections to Bakhtin's analysis are his insistence on binary oppositions, for example his dichotomy between dialogic and monologic discourse, and his incomplete examination of the characters' psychology and the emotional aspect of their interactions. Jones's main contribution is the address of the latter issue. He suggests that Bakhtin neglected to point out that the hero's governing ideas are not only intellectually infused but also emotionally, and that their fragile psychic states can be seen as the origin, but also the result, of their discourse and interactions. It is impossible to view the underground man or the dreamer as stable, functioning personalities. They are both severely maladjusted and in a constant state of emotional turmoil. Their dramatically unsuccessful interactions with others are not solely the result of intellectual conflict. The extreme psychological strain that they experience is inextricably linked to their analytical faculties. In another circular structure, the emotional discomfort necessitates the rationalisation through the ideological framework. That in turn blocks the interactions even further, intensifying the discomfort. In the dinner scene in *Notes from Underground*, the hero tries to battle his feelings of insecurity by intellectually diminishing the other's stature and subsequently imagining offences to his person. This is externalised through aggression and ends with his complete dismissal by the group, significantly intensifying his emotional unease.

The conflict between rationality and emotion is central to the novel. It is one of the main

philosophical preoccupations of the hero but it is also the most crucial obstacle to his chance at a balanced existence. His resort to books for answers and his literary manner of speaking, commented on by Liza with detrimental effect, contradicts his claim of the dismissal of deterministic systems. He asserts there are no answers while trying hard to find them. He refutes the notion of human beings as inherently rational based on his experience and brings examples from his life, but in his stories he is clearly trying to enforce reason on his situation, thus defeating the purpose of the story. His examples are not of a person who is irrational but of one who is irrational by being excessively rational.

Jones also examines the recurring device of characters driving other characters mad, the destabilising effect of one character's discourse over another (Jones 1990, chapter 4). This is evident in the underground man's interaction with his servant but more importantly in his relationship with Liza. He consciously and maliciously manipulates her, trying to assert his superiority and control over the girl through emotional attacks. When this strategy succeeds, he finds different reasons to feel inferior and goes back on the offensive. While superficially his struggle seems to be about a search for the truth, emotionally it is about coming to terms with the feelings of deficiency of an extreme introvert. So, in Jones's analysis, the psychological framework of the novel is as important, if not more so, as the ideological discourse that forms the basis of Bakhtin's reading. In that sense, Jones's ideas can be used to inform the project of this study without significant clash with the main interpretive line. His account of the emotional aspect of the characters and their interaction can prove useful in the formulation of the new work without compromising or contradicting the part of the poetic structure that derives from Bakhtin.

Countless scholars have examined Dostoevsky's work and addressed other aspects or offered different views. Only a few will be mentioned here. Nikolai K. Mikhailovsky examines the author's

interest in “the phenomena of cruelty, tyranny and tormenting” (Mikhailovsky 1978, p.135). He discusses the irrational torment of Liza by the underground man and suggests that Dostoevsky tends to pair situations of torment with seemingly unconnected feelings like love. Mikhailovsky also comments on the difficulty to discern the author’s view of his character. They share certain ideas, like the concept of the pleasure of suffering, but there is no indication of authorial endorsement or condemnation of the underground man himself. This comment on authorial distance is shared by Bakhtin. “As the direct, referential impulse of a character’s words is intensified and their objectification correspondingly decreased, the internal interrelationship between authorial speech and a character’s speech begins to approach the interrelationship between two rejoinders in a dialogue. The perspectival relationship weakens, and they may come to occupy a single plane” (Bakhtin 1984, p.188).

Vasily Rozanov (1972) discusses Dostoevsky’s talent in the pairing of generalisation with a keen examination of the individual. He sees *Notes from Underground* as a series of statements whose validity is implicitly questioned. He also claims that Dostoevsky’s proposed solution to the main question of the underground man, the human inability to adhere to a rational system, is religion. The religious context is indeed tentatively suggested in the novel, but the concept of a final pronouncement contradicts one of Bakhtin’s crucial points, the inconclusive nature of the discourse. This type of interpretive incompatibility reveals the need for a consistent reading strategy. A careful selection of sources is the way to produce a poetic description of the work that can function as a vehicle for the transposition. As has already been mentioned, different sets of choices will produce a multitude of possible poetic descriptions and each one is valid as long as it is complete and free of contradictions.

Lev Shestov (1969) studies the political implications of the novel. He sees it as the work of a man

who does not share the optimism of his compatriots, and who has gone through a significant personal ideological shift. Shestov views the novel as the author's renunciation of his previous idealism, and suggests that Dostoevsky is actually voicing his own arguments through the hero. The novel is the desperate cry of a man who dismisses his former hopes for a better society, as well as the ideals of reason and humanity. This man's only recourse is the search for truth. Although the arguments about Dostoevsky's political intentions are convincing and supported by the text, this reading also presents problems in terms of its application to this project. Much like Rozanov's religious approach, it enforces a specific didactic aim on the text, contradicting Bakhtin's view of authorial neutrality. The polemic nature of the underground man's discourse can be informed by Shestov's analysis but cannot be attributed to the author. Bakhtin's focus on the discourse itself, rather than its object, is therefore more appropriate in the context of this project. While the perceived political intentionality of the source could not be easily mirrored in a modern setting, the nature, structure and philosophical implications of the discourse can be transferred without significant compromise. In this case it is advantageous to the adaptation to view the political statements of the characters as expressions of their own ideology, rather than the author's.

On a different approach regarding the authorial position, Ralph E. Matlaw (1958), opposes the reading of the text as a political statement rather than a work of literature. He suggests that the second part of the work is often ignored as simple illustration of the ideas of the first part. Matlaw prefers to examine the structure of the work and ascertain the function of that structure. The confession of the underground man does not only give information about his views, but also implicitly about his personality. The first part functions as a foreword to the subsequent account of events, but in the second part the ideas that have been expressed are re-examined and re-evaluated. "The interaction of the psychological, social and intellectual create the dramatic tension and structure of the Notes" (Matlaw 1989, p.160). Through this structure, ideas are in constant

interaction with reality. In a similar pattern, various physical objects are infused with symbolic power, with clothes representing social stature and the wall symbolising the dead-end of determinism and rationality. Matlaw's attempt to identify the functional structure of the text is highly compatible with Genette's strategy of template recognition as presented in chapter two (2.7). As has been discussed, Genette's approach to intertextuality is relevant to this study and complements Bakhtin's theoretical structure. The examination of the psychological aspect of the discourse in conjunction to its intellectual content aligns with Jones's viewpoint, while the study of symbolism is also a welcome and appropriate addition to the interpretive strategy.

Robert Louis Jackson (1981), points out the significant affinity between *Notes from Underground* and *House of the Dead* (1861), the semi-autobiographical account of Dostoevsky's years in a Siberian labour camp. The bridge between the very different works is thematic, as they both deal with the suppression of freedom, fatalism, protest against a meaningless universe, and the assertion of individualism. Jackson also addresses the issue of authorial position deciding on a middle ground. "*Notes from underground* is not a lullaby; it is capable of instilling disillusionment, not because Dostoevsky stands with the Underground man – he clearly does not – but because he could not stand at a sufficient distance from him" (Jackson 1989, p.187). Jackson's approach is an attempt to define the author's psychology, but this rationale clashes with a basic concept of this thesis. As has been explained in chapter two (2.6) the definition of poetics proposed here is based on the implication of authorial intentionality. Furthermore, the author considered is not the biographical person but the implied author as inferred by the text. This means that a distinction between intentional and unintentional aspects of the text's creation are irrelevant to this mode of analysis. In this case, to consider the complicated authorial position in the text a result of the author's psychological investment in the ideas presents an unnecessary complication to the formulation of the work's poetics. The project of this thesis requires a consistent description of the text as an

intentional, coherent creation. This does not mean that more personal or obscurely structured works cannot be addressed through this methodology. It is the reading that needs to present a clear image of the works, even if that image has to be removed to a higher level of abstraction than it would for other texts.

Gary Saul Morson (1981) examines Dostoevsky's views of utopia as inferred by *Notes from Underground*. Linking the underground with Plato's cave, Morson suggests that the underground man objects to the possibility and the merit of a utopian perfect organisation. "The psychology of the underground thus refutes the Allegory of the Cave. In a number of chapters, the underground man concludes that 'what is to be done' – he repeats the phrase a number of times – is not to escape from the 'cellar' (as Chernychevsky's heroine dreams) but to remain where 'the sole vocation of every intelligent man is babble, that is, the intentional pouring of water through a sieve' " (Morson 1989, p.190). Morson engages with the underground man's ideology on a specific topic of his discourse. This type of analysis is a necessary addition to Bakhtin's presentation. Bakhtin examines the structure of the work in great detail, but does not engage with its individual components unless they are directly relevant to the aesthetic plan. He describes the function of ideology in the author's work but seldom addresses the ideology itself. For this reason it is important for the adapter to complete Bakhtin's framework by linking its branches to the appropriate external studies.

Richard H. Weisberg (1984) offers another view of the novel as a critique of the protagonist and a parody of confession. The underground man's resentment perverts his perception, and his rationalisations are there to excuse that resentment. To make this point Weisberg mentions the intellectual contradictions but also the inconsistency between the words and the events. "Dostoevsky means us to test the compelling language of the Underground Man's philosophical freedom against the details of his biography" (Weisberg 1989, p.196). Weisberg sees the second part

of the novel as a refutation of the ideas expressed by the protagonist in the first. Weisberg provides a convincing description of the authorial undermining of the underground man. Nevertheless, his account seems to suggest what Bakhtin would term a monologic approach. His use of the concept of resentment, with its connotations to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, is appropriate for the study of *Notes from Underground* but his view of the novel as pure critique could be seen as overstated from the Bakhtinian perspective. Bakhtin would argue that the undermining of the protagonist's discourse is there to balance the strength of his conviction and create a dynamic, unresolved system. The goal is not for the reader to judge the underground man, but to internalise his conflict. Bakhtin sees parody as ambivalent. "Parody here was not, of course, a naked rejection of the parodied object. Everything has its parody, that is, its laughing aspect, for everything is reborn and renewed through death" (Bakhtin 1984, p.127).

In yet another reading, Joseph Frank (1986) sees the novel as a parody and a critique of European intellectual influence in Russia. The underground man is not evil. He is made spiteful and inert by his ideological contradictions. The novel is based on the conflict between acceptance and rejection of scientific determinism. "The underground man agrees ... that all human conduct is nothing but a mechanical product of the laws of nature; but he also knows ... that this theory makes all human behaviour impossible, or at least meaningless" (Frank 1989, p.213). The underground man attacks a system that eliminates personality and welcomes suffering as a component of consciousness. He "oscillates between defiance and despair, both affirming and denying his life and convictions" (Frank 1989, p.222). In the second part of the novel Dostoevsky addresses the sociopolitical context of his time. The dialectic of vanity, the simultaneous superiority and inferiority complexes that hinder human contact, mirrors the dialectic of determinism from part one. Dostoevsky attributes the vanity and self-involvement of the people of his time to European cultural influence. By embracing the culture of egoistic individualism, the man loses the capacity for unmediated simple human

interaction. The underground man's dreams are completely unproductive, as they do not incite any sort of action. They are literary borrowings that crumble under even cursory inspection. The conclusion of the novel is the dismissal of books and western culture. The proposed alternative is the return to real unmediated life and an ideal of unselfish love. Frank's identification of the central ideological conflict in the underground man's discourse as that between scientific determinism and lived experience is persuasive. For the purposes of this project it is another welcome addition to Bakhtin's framework. Nevertheless, the identification of the two ideological perspectives with Europe and Russia respectively is not necessary, especially since it grounds the conflict in a specific socio/historical context. Furthermore, the value judgement that is suggested is again incompatible with Bakhtin's reading of the text.

The immense variety of readings, apparent even from a non-exhaustive examination of the bibliography as has been offered here, demands a very careful process of selection when considering the formulation of a possible adaptation. The final poetic structure that will be presented as the basis for the transposition can be comprised of a combination of various interpretive suggestions. However they will need to be free of contradictions and consistent in terms of aesthetic aims. This selection will take place at the stage of the formulation of the poetic structure.

4.2.7 Reading of *White Nights*

The second story that will be addressed here has not been as extensively studied by academic scholarship as the first but still has elicited various readings. As before, the full extent of these readings will not be addressed here. As it is a supporting text in the experiment the story will mainly be examined in conjunction with *Notes from Underground*, in terms of their common themes, preoccupations, and devices. Bakhtin did not directly address the work in *Problems of Dostoevsky's*

Poetics, but his analysis of the author's oeuvre offers adequate ground for a Bakhtinian reading. This will be presented in conjunction to the reading of *Notes from Underground*, and in support of its poetics. The interpretations of other scholars will be incorporated into this examination, with the aim of creating a coherent combination of readings that will also be compatible with the main text. This approach means that Bakhtin's account of Dostoevsky's hero, as well as his description of the function of ideas and style, will form the common basis for the transposition of both works.

The first striking resemblance between the works is the similarity of their protagonists. Both are unnamed dreamers, in strained relationships with the world around them, maladjusted for modern life and with significant handicaps in human interaction. Both works are presented as first person confessions of self-conscious characters, recounting events from a future perspective. Victor Terras (1964) suggests that "the Dreamer of fifteen years after is none other than the Underground Man-who is, after all, nothing but a disillusioned romantic of forty" (Terras 1964, p.87). Terras is correct in drawing the link between the two characters but may be oversimplifying its nature. Even though the older underground man could be perceived as a negative evolution of the dreamer, the young underground man is significantly different from him. The dreamer's perspective is more positive and he has no capacity for cruelty. He is selfless and retains some hope for the future. Whereas the dreamer can be characterised as melancholic, the underground man can be seen as depressed. The dreamer fears the future while the underground man has given up on it and only has his indignation to sustain him. The significant differences between the characters can be partly attributed to the author's philosophical shift in the years between the publication of the two works. Dostoevsky's reactionary response to the political discourse of his time, partly attributed to his life-changing experience in the labour camp, inform his later work. In the case of the two texts examined here this shift becomes apparent, mainly due to their structural proximity.

The conflict at the centre of *White Nights* seems to be that between imagination and reality. The hero tries to reconcile his internal tendency for imaginative fancy with his physical reality, a struggle that is dramatised in his interaction with Nastenka. According to Gary Rosenshield (1977), the story contains three different points of view on this conflict. The first is the dreamer's own account, that condemns his imaginative nature in favour of a more grounded existence. "He condemns his dreaming as a sin against life, for not only has it failed to sustain him, it has also condemned him to a hopeless and barren future" (Rosenhield 1977, p.172). From this perspective the story can be read "at least from the Dreamer's point of view, as a story about the dangers of imaginative fancy nurtured in isolation"(Rosenhield 1977, p.172). The second viewpoint belongs to the older narrator. Although more subtle than in *Notes from Underground*, the dreamer's older self offers implicit commentary on the unfolding events and his opinion comes in constant contrast to the dreamer's condemnation, essentially suggesting that imagination can transform life into art. From this view the story is "a paean to the creative imagination and its power to sublimate the adversities of everyday life into art" (Rosenhield 1977, p.195). The use of poetic imagery and literary structure of the account support this position as "the narrator transforms himself into the sentimental hero of his own work" (Rosenhield 1977, p.198). Rosenshield points out the constant interaction between the two voices, and suggests a third in the implied author. "The implied author of *White Nights* undercuts the narrator's position in much the same way as the narrator undercuts the Dreamer's - by pushing it to its logical extreme" (Rosenhield 1977, p.199). He argues that Dostoevsky essentially uses the interaction of the two voices to make a compromising point between life and art. A Bakhtinian reading of the device would suggest that the author's objective is not a concrete point, but an examination of the interaction, a posing of the question. In the same sense that *Notes from Underground* does not offer a conclusion on whether a rational system is compatible with lived experience, in *White Nights* no definitive answer is given as to whether art and imagination are compatible with reality.

Thomas Seifrid (1982) examines a crucial stylistic aspect of the work that further reinforces the connection with *Notes from Underground*. He observes the consciously theatrical nature of the discourse and explains its function. *White Nights*, in contrast to *Notes from Underground*, is almost entirely comprised of dialogue. But this verbal interaction between the dreamer and Nastenka is far from realistic. “Peculiar to these mutual confessions, however, is that instead of passages which appear as spontaneous outpourings of the soul, we find an exchange of conventionalised monologues structured in a highly self-conscious way according to literature - an exchange, as it were, of texts” (Seifrid 1982, p.164). The hero’s literary speech is referred to as “bookish”, exactly as in *Notes from Underground*. Furthermore, the structure of the work is consistent with a fictional account through self conscious suggestions of plot points, chapter headings and familiar literary tropes. The work is comprised of realistically set speech, but in an unrealistically literary form, both in style and structure. Seifrid suggests that Dostoevsky is offering a critique of this device through parody but that he essentially recognises its value in application to reality. “The important point is that this expression of what we know, given the narrator-hero’s psychological sufferings over the matter, to be a genuine emotion is made through a set of literary clichés” (Seifrid 1982, p.168). Theatricalisation is parodied but essentially given a higher, albeit more self-conscious, position. Self-revelation can take place even through the clearly artificial tropes of literature and art in general. This heightened realism of self-conscious literary discourse, that employs artificial tropes and undermines them but without dismissing them, is essential to both works and can arguably be used as the key to their joint stylistic description.

4.3 Stage Two : Poetics of the Novel

In this stage, the reading presented above will be organised into the structure of aims and methods that constitutes the poetics of the work. For reasons of presentation, the aims will be categorised

into three groups of interest: philosophical discourse, psychological discourse, and form-related aims. It could be pointed out that whereas in chapter three the poetics of *Heart of Darkness* were broken down into mostly thematic groups, here the categorisation is based on three different aspects of the text, ideology, character study and style. The different treatment of this case is due to the differences between the texts, and also suggested by the chosen reading. As has been discussed in chapter two, one of the possible advantages of the method proposed in this thesis is its flexibility. The abstract nature of the system allows for the engagement with a variety of works, and it adjusts to every one according to its structural hierarchies. A radically experimental work will be discussed primarily in terms of form, whereas a traditionally rendered story will be examined initially in terms of narrative functions. It should also be noted that different readings of the same work could also suggest multiple hierarchies. For example, if one were to adopt Bakhtin's reading of Dostoevsky's work, they would focus primarily on issues of form and ideology, whereas if they chose Jones's reading, they would give equal if not more weight to character psychology. The choice that has been made for this project is a prioritisation of Bakhtin's reading, complemented by Jones and others when necessary, in areas that Bakhtin has not illuminated adequately.

4.3.1 Philosophical Discourse

The initially apparent aim in the underground man's discourse is a radical critique of his society, but his polemic reaches the essential principles of human existence and interaction. The basic question at this point is whether his discourse can also be considered a preoccupation of the novel and therefore part of its poetics, or if it is being employed in the service of a different argument. Bakhtin's reading allows us to assume that, to a large extent, the discourse is a direct project of the implied author. Its object is not interchangeable, but integral to the ideological discourse of the novel itself. Bakhtin would suggest that this discourse constitutes the primary thematic aim of the novel. In order to achieve this aim, the author employs a variety of tools. Bakhtin's embodied ideas

allow for the examination of the issues in the context of human existence through an experiential filter. Comedic devices, irony and parody, are used in argumentative form by the underground man. Double-voiced discourse is used in a similar strategy to undermine and examine contemporary ideas. Furthermore, the underground man's own statements and actions constitute a critique of his world, as he is a representative part of it, its logical conclusion, as he claims near the end. His contradictions and inconsistency mirror those of his environment.

In the course of his confession, the underground man tries to describe himself through categorisations, like the distinction between the man of action and the the conscious man, as well as through his personal interpretations of human nature. In that respect, the most rigorous argumentation is offered in response to Chernychevsky's proposition that all men would be good if they were aware of their interests. The underground man attacks the text and its author directly and offers an expansive refutation, referring to history, but also to his own appreciation of the human condition based on his experience. In this case the critique was so direct that it was considered by critics a transparent account of the author's view. In a similar pattern, one can recognise in the novel a certain questioning of contemporary thought that could be attributed to Dostoevsky. His renunciation of his former ideology is implicit in the critique of a utopian society, as pointed out by Morson. According to the reading, these elements can be seen as aims of the novel, but not outside of its context as a literary work. The strategy employed in this case is the same as in the aim regarding the critique of society.

As Matlaw pointed out, the novel cannot be mistaken for a treatise. The discourse is intentionally offered through the filter of a heavily ambiguous character, with decidedly negative attributes. His discourse, although often convincing, is constantly undermined by extreme suggestions, uncomfortable events, but most importantly by his behaviour and unstable psychological state.

Whereas in *Heart of Darkness* the affinity between narrator and implied author was somewhat questionable, here it is highly ambiguous. “What the author used to do is now done by the hero, who illuminates himself from all possible points of view; the author no longer illuminates the hero’s reality but the hero’s self-consciousness, as a reality of the second order ... *To the all-devouring consciousness of the hero the author can juxtapose only a single objective world - a world of other consciousnesses with rights equal to those of the hero*” (Bakhtin 1984, p.49 [original emphasis]). This suggests another aim of the novel, which is the rendering of a discussion rather than a sermon. The novel, through this constant oscillation, intends to provoke intellectual engagement. It demands a critical reader by not offering clear interpretive ground through an authorial position. The heavily dialogic form of the novel is the main strategy employed in the pursuit of this aim. The unfinished structure of the work reinforces the discursive effect and leaves room for further discussion, but without sacrificing the dramaturgy of the story that operates through escalation towards a dramatic resolution. “We do in fact observe in Dostoevsky’s novels a unique conflict between the internal open-endedness of the characters and dialogue, and the *external* (in most cases compositional and thematic) *completedness* of every individual novel” (Bakhtin 1984, p.39 [original emphasis]). The unreliability of the hero also serves this purpose, not so much in terms of his account of events, as of his interpretation of them. The constant breaks and interruptions of the discourse create the distance necessary to facilitate its critique. The self-reflexiveness of the hero’s account and his loophole discourse undermine a monologic reading, as does the chronotopic structure of the novel, the sense of suspended time that fosters an atmosphere of debate.

The ideas that constitute the underground man’s discourse are objects of examination for the novel. Therefore they can be considered aims of the implied author, not as statements, but as questions and topics for contemplation. The value judgement that the character assigns to each topic is counterbalanced by the reader’s distance from him. The first person narrative is an integral choice

from this perspective, as it allows for objectivity even through a polemical discourse. It serves the examination of each argument from both sides through a single voice. In a sense it is the form of the discourse that is pitted against its content in a struggle of ideas. “The idea is by nature dialogic, and monologue is merely the conventional compositional form of its expression” (Bakhtin 1984, p.88).

4.3.2 Psychological Discourse

The philosophical and political discourse is inextricably linked to the underground man’s person. This is true not only because he is the one articulating it but because throughout his confession he makes the connections to his view of himself and to his personal experience. In a sense, he constitutes the central object of his own study. Through this device the novel undertakes a general examination of human nature. This happens explicitly through the underground man’s discourse, through the criticism of others, and also through his self assessment. However, this is also expressed implicitly through the authorial rendering of his character. As before, it is hard to distinguish which statements, if any, are meant to be taken literally, as definitive pronouncements. The impression of a debate is also present here, and the philosophical discussion is transferred to the personal level. This subject is further complicated by the accounts of the hero’s personal experience. There are three tiers of analysis in the novel, the abstract philosophical discourse about society, the application of that discourse to the level of the individual, and the case study of the personal experience of the underground man himself. Much like a researcher, he offers a proposition, studies its implications and tests its validity on a specific example in order to reach general conclusions. Malcolm Jones describes the futility of his efforts. “Highly conscious Dostoevskian man undoubtedly seeks certainty and Truth, but he finds that all his theories, together with his sense of being a coherent subject, are susceptible to self-deconstruction, though ironically unable to escape the premises they undermine” (Jones 1990, p.65).

Even though the study of contemporary man is centred on a specific personality type, it has a wider scope, as most of the attributes discussed are relevant to everyone. Bakhtin quotes Dostoevsky explaining his aesthetic aims: “With utter realism *to find the man in man* . . . They call me a *psychologist; this is not true*. I am merely a realist *in the higher sense*, that is, I portray all the *depths of the human soul*” (cited by Bakhtin 1984, p.252 [Bakhtin’s emphasis]). Furthermore, the hero discusses different personality types during his examination of his own. The issues discussed are the following:

1. Isolation and social alienation. The underground man is unable to achieve a balanced interaction with his social environment. He often rationalises his complete isolation from it as a conscious choice but his actions, as well as his self-reflexive accusation, suggest that is not the case.
2. Vanity and insecurity. The underground man admittedly suffers from inferiority and superiority complexes at the same time, feeling contempt for everyone he meets while struggling for their attention. He dreams of universal acceptance and immediately admits the implausibility of his dreams, only to take that admission back as well, in an endless cycle of self aggrandising and self pity.
3. The nature of offence and honour. His feelings of offence are the result of his own mental state. His obsession with the subject, aptly demonstrated in the case of the oblivious officer, betrays his own insecurity and self-contempt. A sense of honour is his last bastion of defence against the indifference of the world.
4. Social status. His attempts to assert superiority over his adversaries are often supported by symbols of social stature. He borrows money to buy expensive clothes and pretends to be affluent in

order to impress his classmates. Money is also the symbolic device of conflict in his power struggle with his servant Apollon as well as the means of his final insult towards Liza.

5. Cruelty and control over another. All the events that he recounts are instances of him trying to assert his control over another. His confession is an attempt to control the opinion of the reader. His interactions with the officer, the classmates, Apollon and Liza are escalating conflicts of domination. Interestingly, in most of these interactions the other party is not aware of the nature of the conflict. The underground man is involved in an endless competition where there can only be winners or losers. In the case of Liza, he uses cruelty to achieve a victory and through that to negate the humiliation of the dinner scene. His malicious manipulation of the girl is his only attainable revenge against the world. The fact that he cannot sustain his attack offers a glimmer of hope.

6. Pity. Liza's response to his final attack is rather surprising. She sees through his anger, understands his frustration and forgives him. But by doing so she regains control of their interaction and that is unacceptable. He is exposed and vulnerable and resorts to the final insult that drives her away. Having dismissed her pity, he is now hopeless.

The strategy used in the novel to achieve this examination of the modern man has three strands. The hero's own discourse about others, his struggle for and against a formulation of his own image, and the rendering of his character by the implied author. The aim is thus achieved by, through and over the underground man at the same time. The first strand employs irony and polemic, through his intolerant attack on the world. The second strand is his self-reflexive discourse, his self accusation and the account of the events that illuminate his personality. The third strand utilises distancing devices like breaks and interruptions, his potential unreliability and the literary discourse. Most importantly though, the examination is sustained by the placement of the hero in a very ambiguous

state, neither positive nor negative, neither right nor wrong.

4.3.3 Aims Regarding Form

According to Bakhtin, Dostoevsky was developing his project of the polyphonic novel throughout his work. The theorist describes a constant process of experimentation and evolution, new ideas and breakthroughs with a specific objective. This description is somewhat generalising as a template of a large body of work. Nevertheless, Bakhtin's analysis does offer significant insight into the author's experiments with form and convincing arguments for the consistency of his output. Many aspects of this experimentation are at play in *Notes from Underground*, one of the least conventional works in Dostoevsky's oeuvre.

The artistic representation of ideas is probably the foremost aim that can be recognised based on Bakhtin's reading. It also constitutes the first time Dostoevsky attempted to examine ideological structures in such an explicit way. "The great revolution in *Notes from Underground* is the foregrounding of the ideological dimension ... There is an accompanying leap in the intellectual equipment of the hero which furnishes him with territory where he has good reason to consider himself superior to his associates and in which he can generate new 'texts' to replace the old" (Jones 1990, p.61). The author never repeated the experiment so overtly, often using long monologues with similar characteristics as the one addressed here, but never separated from narrative to this extent. This novel feels like the first organised attempt to explore the concept of embodied ideas that later evolved into an integrated device. The other original aspect of the novel from this respect is the choice to examine conflicting ideas through a single consciousness. The creation of a valid debate in a first person narrative without an external counter-argument is a great literary achievement. Looking at Dostoevsky's later works, one can see the importance of this novel in the evolution of character formulation and discourse, and how it informs his more literally

polyphonic novels. Bakhtin's description of Raskolnikov's initial monologue is evidence of this: "all these future major characters of the novel are already reflected here in Raskolnikov's consciousness, they have entered into a thoroughly dialogised interior monologue, entered with their own 'truths', with their own positions in life, and Raskolnikov has entered into a fundamental and intense interior dialogue with them, a dialogue of ultimate questions and ultimate life decisions" (Bakhtin 1984, p.74).

Another area of experimentation is the dialogic nature of the discourse. This was not the first time that Dostoevsky used reflexive monologues, but it was the first time he used the device to this extent, and with a clear objective: the examination of an ideology and a character type. According to Bakhtin, the project in this novel was to reveal the essence of man in the interaction with another. "And to portray the inner man, as Dostoevsky understood it, was possible only by portraying his communion with another. Only in communion, in the interaction of one person with another, can the 'man in man' be revealed, for others as well as for oneself" (Bakhtin 1984, p.252). The existence of a singular voice does not diminish the fact that every sentence of the underground man's discourse is an interaction. All his comments are about human interactions, factual or theoretical, and even his discourse takes the form of a discussion with an audience. The result is the revelation of one man in a dialogue with his world, that finally leads to a revelation of every man. In this sense, the novel is an experiment in subjectivity. The constant self-reference, the struggle against definition, the loophole discourse, all reinforce his position as a consciousness addressing another.

Dostoevsky also experimented with authorial distance. Every first person narrative complicates the discussion of authorial position, but this one appears to aim deliberately for that complication. Not only is it not clear where the author stands in the discourse, it is not even entirely clear where the protagonist stands. One would struggle to present a fully coherent account of the positions

expressed by the underground man. The experience of the novel gives the impression of a character on auto-pilot, not bound by an authorial presence but not even from an internal logic. This deliberate impression is one of the main achievements of the novel. "Thus the freedom of a character is an aspect of the author's design. A character's discourse is created by the author, but created in such a way that it can develop to the full its inner logic and independence as *someone else's discourse*, the word of the *character himself*. As a result it does not fall out of the author's design, but only out of a monologic authorial field of vision. And the destruction of this field of vision is precisely a part of Dostoevsky's design" (Bakhtin 1985, p.65 [original emphasis]). The author has set up an experiment and is carefully controlling it without revealing himself, ensuring that his stubborn protagonist cannot offer any final pronouncements.

The narrative formulation of the work is also highly unconventional. The story is set in a completely realistic environment, grounded in a specific location, time, and culture, but the events that unfold are far from grounded. The opinions expressed are extreme, all emotions are dramatically felt, and all events take place on a threshold between doom and salvation. There are no supernatural or surreal occurrences, but the tone of the story pushes the limits of realistic narrative.

Bakhtin's identification of carnivalistic elements in *Crime and Punishment* applies to *Notes from Underground* as well: "Everything in this novel - the fates of people, their experiences and ideas - is pushed to its boundaries, everything is prepared, as it were, to pass over into its opposite (but not, of course, in the abstractly dialectical sense), everything is taken to the extreme, to its outermost limit. There is nothing in the novel that could become stabilised, nothing that could justifiably relax within itself, enter the ordinary flow of biographical time and develop in it" (Bakhtin 1984, p.167).

The underground man could not plausibly exist. Few real personalities are this sensitive, this vain, this angry, none combine all of these attributes simultaneously. His complete dysfunctionality in the

world is not plausible, but at the same time it feels authentic. This heightened realism functions like a magnifying glass. Dostoevsky has taken an ordinary character and pushed him to the extreme extension of his personality. The reader may not be able to identify with the underground man, but he is not meant to do so. The character is meant to be observed through intellectual, not emotional stimulation. His plight needs to be absorbing but also examined.

4.3.4 Poetics of *White Nights*

The two novels share a number of thematic and structural preoccupations. *White Nights* is also attempting an examination of contemporary man, albeit through a different personality type. An extensive analysis of this novel would require some repetition and unnecessary exposition, considering that this work will be used in a supportive capacity. Only the issues that are relevant to this project will be examined. This relevance is determined by the proximity of the aims and methods to those of *Notes from Underground*. On the philosophical level, the main subject of debate is the conflict between imagination and reality. On the surface, the correlation between the two works on this level seems limited, but a closer examination reveals an essential connection. Both works are attempting to examine the conflict between interpretive structures and lived experience. In *Notes from Underground* that structure is science and philosophy whereas in *White Nights* it is imagination and, on another level, art. As the underground man is struggling with the concept of a deterministic system that deprives him of his free will, so does the dreamer struggle with the constructs of his imagination that prevent him from engaging in real life interaction. In both cases the hero cannot experience reality, unless it is mediated by an intellectual or literary structure. Both characters live at a distance from their environment because they cannot communicate with it directly. Rosenshield's thesis about the dreamer that "the hero's long addiction to dreaming [has] rendered him permanently incapable of adjusting to the demands, as well as of profiting from the richness, of real life" (Rosenshield 1977, p.193), also applies to the underground man if "dreaming"

is replaced by “analysis”.

In terms of the psychological discourse, apart from the examination of isolation and social inhibition, the main focus of attention is dreams. The hero, much like the underground man, feels comfortable only inside his head. Trapped in his comfort zone, the dreamer draws pleasure from an artistic representation and re-configuration of reality, rather than from the reality itself. His dreams are not hopeful projections of the future, they are replacements of it. He does not pursue the realisation of his dreams, he is content with the dreams themselves. The novel is the story of the encounter that makes him question this state. The almost accidental introduction of the possibility of one of his dreams coming true becomes for him a life-changing revelation. As Bakhtin points out, “in Dostoevsky a person is always depicted on the threshold, or, in other words, in a state of crisis” (Bakhtin 1984, p.92). The dreams now inspire a longing for their realisation, while at the same time hindering it. The basic difference between the underground man and the dreamer is that the former has reached the conclusion that experience is meaningless whereas the latter has not.

The other concept that is examined here is self-sacrifice. The hero repeatedly suppresses his feelings and disregards his own interests in favour of Nastenka's. His devotion to the object of his affection is complete and he accepts even her final cruel rejection without assigning blame. In that sense, the dreamer is the antithesis of the underground man, who dispenses cruelty and rationalises his actions.

In terms of form, *White Nights* is mostly comprised of the dialogue between the dreamer and Nastenka. Nevertheless it is not conventional dialogue, by no means a realistic discussion between two strangers. It is highly structured and literary, intensely dramatic and embellished with poetic images. The dreamer's speeches are very similar in form to the underground man's, with Nastenka

in the position of the unidentified reader. This theatrical discourse mirrors the ideological preoccupation of the novel, the conflict between the artistic rendering of reality and the reality itself. The novel is structured as a parody of the dreamer's artistic filtering but also as a recognition of its significance in understanding experience. In another vicious cycle, dreams, the hero's artistic representation of reality, prevent one from experiencing it but are the only way to understand it, to form a conscious image of it.

4.3.5 Schematic Presentation for *Notes from Underground*

| Aims | Methods |
|---|---|
| Critique of contemporary society | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comedy, parody, irony - Embodied ideas - Double-voiced discourse - UM as a representative example |
| Exploration of human nature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UM's discourse - UM as a test subject - UM as literary construct |
| Critique of Chernychevsky's proposition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UM's discourse - Comedic devices |
| Intellectual engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dialogic form - Reflexivity, loophole discourse - Unfinalised structure - Unreliable narrator - Breaks and interruptions - Chronotopic structure |
| Philosophical examinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free will and scientific determinism - Conscious inertia - Conflict between books and life - Men of action and contemplation - The pleasure of suffering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UM's discourse - Reinterpretation through the narrative - Distanciating devices - First person discourse |

| Aims | Methods |
|---|---|
| - The struggle about definition | |
| Critique of the modern man | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UM's critique of others - UM as his own case study - Generalisation - UM as literary construct |
| Psychological examinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Isolation and social alienation - Vanity and insecurity - Offence and honour - Social status - Cruelty and control - Pity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UM's self-observation - Narrative events - Ambiguous nature of the protagonist |
| Artistic representation of ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embodied ideas - Heavy dialogisation |
| Experimentation with dialogic discourse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflexive monologue - The device of the imaginary audience - Double-voiced discourse - Contradictions |
| Authorial distance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First person narrative - Ambiguity of the UM's discourse - Ambiguity of the UM as a character - Impression of character independence |
| Heightened realism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Realistic setting - Extreme situations - Unrealistic encounters - Unstable emotional states |

4.3.6 Schematic Presentation for *White Nights*

| Aims | Methods |
|---|--|
| Conflict between imagination (art) and reality | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dialogic discourse- Two contrasting points of view |
| Psychological examinations <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Isolation- Social inhibition and inexperience- Self- sacrifice | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Confessional form- Dreamer's discourse- Self-reflexiveness |
| Exploration of the mentality of the dreamer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dreamer's discourse- Narrative events |
| Experimentation with theatrical discourse | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Literary speech- Classic literary structure- Poetic imagery- Character's addressing the device- Parody and support of the device |

4.4 Stage Three: Transposition of the Poetics

In this stage the possibilities of the transposition will be discussed with an aim towards a specific adaptation. This discussion will start from the aims of the literary work and their compatibility with the new medium. They will finally be restated or adjusted to suit the new work. This analysis may also contain subversions or a critique of the aims of the original. The strategy of transposition proposed here does not focus solely on carrying over the structural elements of the text, but on building the new structure with elements that serve the same functions as the original ones.

At the end of this process, a detailed description of the theoretical film will be available. This description, along with the examination of the process that created it, will serve as evidence for the

evaluation of the thesis in the area of adaptation practice. This analysis will take place at the end of this chapter and will be revisited in the final chapter of this thesis, in terms of the general conclusions that can be drawn from the research.

This section will be divided into segments that correspond to the aims that have been identified in the discussion of the poetic structure of the literary text. Each segment will include a consideration of the aim in terms of its specific transposition, but also discussions of issues that arise through this consideration. These digressions will serve to reinforce the theoretical discussion concerning the thesis and address its potential. They will also demonstrate how this type of analysis can offer insight in some of the discussions concerning the practice of adaptation.

4.4.1 Critique of Contemporary Society

This is a general objective, open to different approaches, and one that brings up the issue of contemporary relevance. It is important to note that the discussion of relevance is not directly linked to the choice of a modern setting. The primary goal is not to make the new work relatable to modern audiences, but to ensure that it is, in some way, necessary at this point in time. The important question is what the work has to say in its new incarnation, which of its preoccupations demand consideration of the developments in the years since its first appearance. That would remain the case even if the film was set in the same time period as the novel. Even if the reading suggested that the novel was primarily aiming to offer a picture of its specific time, the question would still need to be asked, why it is important for a modern audience to know that time. In the case of *Notes from Underground*, the setting is clearly specified. The story is situated in 19th century Russian society. The protagonist's living and employment conditions inform the events that he recounts. His behaviour is shaped by the social conduct of his time, his views are informed by, and engage with, contemporary texts. Nevertheless, Bakhtin would argue that while the novel operates in this specific

socio-cultural context, it is not rooted in it, in terms of its poetics. “Only a polyphonist like Dostoevsky can sense in the struggle of opinions and ideologies (of various epochs) an incomplete dialogue on ultimate questions (in the framework of great time)” (Bakhtin 1986, p.151). As explained in 4.2.1, Bakhtin suggests that the main object of representation is not the society, not even the individual in the society, but the individual through his ideas. “The Underground Man not only dissolves in himself all possible fixed features of his person, making them all the object of his own introspection, but in fact he no longer has any such traits at all, no fixed definitions” (Bakhtin 1984, p.51). This suggests that the primary objective of the author is the rendering of the subjective view of time and place, rather than the rendering of the time and place itself. According to Bakhtin’s description of the chronotopic structure of the author’s work, the story operates outside of time, and is therefore transposable to any time. Any choice of drastic departure from the text, as is the case of a temporal shift, involves some compromise. Every route taken eliminates a number of others, but in this case the decision to set the adaptation in a modern environment feels justified by the poetics of the novel. A modern underground man’s struggle with his environment can function in the same way that his original did, and offer the same opportunity for insight into the human condition. The details of the new setting need to be carefully thought through, to allow for that transposed potential to be realised.

The methods employed in the critique do not significantly complicate the transposition process. The use of comedy and satire is a significant aspect of the novel’s tone and needs to be retained. Some of the comical elements are inherent in the images that the underground man describes, and are therefore easier to carry over. The dark humour of a man who exaggerates the pain of his toothache to share his torment, the image of another who tries to bump into an oblivious pedestrian to regain his honour, have the characteristics of physical comedy. Nevertheless, the humour also exists in the verbal discourse, mainly in the protagonist’s extreme statements or attacks. This is one of the

reasons that retaining the personal filter of the hero's consciousness is important. Direct access to his discourse allows for the transfer not only of crucial information, but also for the rendering of the novel's poetic structure. In other cases, adopting the point of view of the original might not be crucial, but here it has been demonstrated that it comprises an integral demand of the poetics.

The second method that was identified as serving this aim, the device of embodied ideas, is connected to the previous point. The device, mainly due to its abstract nature, is easily transferable but demands a level of access to the character's intellectual process. For the strategy to work, observation needs to be accompanied by analysis. A hybrid solution with a flexible personal perspective that allows for external voices could possibly accommodate the transposition. It would allow for the clear articulation of the ideas but also for their examination in the context of the story. The use of the protagonist as a test subject takes place on the level of his own self critique, but also through the image of him that is presented to the reader. The hybrid approach achieves the same result with the difference that the second part of the examination of the protagonist is now more explicitly objective. The analysis of section 4.3 has identified the priorities of the work's poetics. In this case they are the rendering of the subjectivity of the character and the dialogic nature of the discourse. The assignment of primary status to these two aspects of the work provides a filter for the consideration of the transposition.

4.4.2 Exploration of Human Nature

As has been demonstrated, the underground man's attack on his environment evolves into a study of human nature. This discourse aspires to abstract universality and therefore presents less difficulty in its transposition to a contemporary context. What is crucial is an understanding of the discourse itself and its signification both in terms of the hero's account, but also regarding the implicit authorial commentary. This complicates matters in this case, as the distinction is not always clear.

There are two options at this point. The first is to try and separate the two, in order to reach a transparent system of interaction. The other option is to try and carry over the ambiguity. The first choice involves the implication that the original is somehow flawed in its complexity or that the transposition of ambiguity to film is impossible. The first implication is inconsistent with the chosen reading that suggests that the ambiguity is an essential part of the plan. The second option can be approached through consideration of the unique narrative nature of the filmic medium. As Seymour Chatman points out in the chapter of *Coming to Terms* (2010) dealing with point of view, this fusion of narrator and author is more pronounced in film than in literature: “It is important to recognise ... that character’s gaze and narrator’s representation operate on different sides of the story-discourse partition. The character’s perceptual filtration of the objects and events is always additional to the camera’s representations ... The camera’s slant remains in place, even when it is temporarily mediated by the character’s perceptual filter” (Chatman 2010, p.157). From this theoretical perspective, and in accordance with Bakhtin’s reading, a film is possibly just as suited, if not more so, to this type of discourse than a novel. The choice here then, is to try and retain the complexity by suspending all definitive value judgements of the protagonist or his discourse and undermining monologic readings.

The strategy employed in the novel’s discourse is almost scientific in nature, albeit intentionally inconclusive. It involves a proposition, its test and a final generalisation. Also it takes place on three different levels, the hero’s discourse, the narrative events, and the rendering of the hero as a character. In this formulation, the transposition doesn’t seem to clash with the nature of the new medium. The hero’s discourse can be transferred through a series of personal statements. The narrative events can be carried through the hybrid perspective. Finally, the rendering of the character will be somewhat more stable than in the original, at least regarding his external behaviour. Nevertheless, the individual elements of the discourse will not always be comfortable in

the transfer. Some of them will have to move from one level to another. For example some of the arguments of the first part of the novel might be more suited in the context of the hero's interactions, while some of his self-reflection might be implied through the filmic treatment of the events. As has been mentioned earlier, migration of components between narrative, stylistic and thematic planes is acceptable in order to accommodate the original functions through the transposition.

4.4.3 Critique of Contemporary Ideology and Chernychevsky

This introduces a difficult complication, specifically given the choice to transport the film into a modern setting. This is one of those cases where the question of hierarchy becomes important. Again, the selected poetic structure suggests a reasonable solution. The ideological struggle needs to be set in a contemporary context for the underground man's account to stay relevant and urgent, but the target of his attack does not need to be the same. It would not be appropriate for the hero to be addressing an older discourse, as the attack would not be serving the same purpose as in the original. Nevertheless, the ideological content of the attack could be transferred through a similar structure, applied to a different object. The underground man uses Chernychevsky's proposition to make a point about human nature. Bakhtin's reading (4.2.2) allows us to suggest that the choice of the specific thinker is secondary to the idea that is being expressed. This is another instance where it becomes apparent that fidelity to the original is a complicated concept. The central argument of this thesis is that since concrete adherence to the literary text is impossible, and assuming that an engagement with it is desirable, the rational course of action is to allow the text itself to dictate the changes that are made in the course of its transposition. The inference of a poetic structure functions as a tool for answering the questions that arise in that process. Whenever the adaptation demands a compromise, the poetic structure can suggest where that compromise needs to be made in order to sustain the primary elements of the source. The secondary elements, those that serve a purpose but

are replaceable, can then be excised or transformed without compromising the integrity of the work.

It is also important to examine how the idea that is being examined in the novel is relevant today. That is not an easy task, as Chernychevsky's book has a great political and historical significance. It is essentially an artistic formulation of Russian radicalisation of the period leading to the Russian Revolution. It inspired Lenin and was considered a classic in the Soviet period. Even though the underground man does not engage in direct political discourse, he challenges the core message of the book and the implications of his discourse have strong links to the ideological turmoil of his time. The political specificity of the novel is more substantial than that of the narrative, and therefore that aspect of it is harder to transpose. There is no exact current equivalent of the political struggle of the time, and any parallel to current political events would be superficial. The socialist ideals, especially in their radical form, are not in the same state of popularity as in Dostoevsky's time. Russia at the end of the nineteenth century was on the verge of an immense shift. There was excitement and hope for a different future. It could be argued that today, revolutionary ideas of a different society are not in the foreground of popular political discourse. An attempt to conform the political setting of the original to the current political climate would be strained. The different political landscape means that the adaptation would either have to dismiss the political part of the discourse or replace it. The positive side is that in the underground man's discourse, the political commentary functions as a bridge to the examination of human nature. If we accept the priority of the discourse regarding human nature, a possible solution would be a fictional equivalent of Chernychevsky, who would carry a modern political proposition, also fictional but more relevant to the current state of affairs, and would lead to the same discussion of human nature. If the situation was different, and the reading suggested a poetic structure based on the political discourse, the choice to modernise the adaptation would have to be re-evaluated. In this case as well, the poetic structure ranks the aspects of the original and evaluates the choices made in the transposition based

on the hierarchies of the literary text. In every step of the analysis it is possible to find objections to previous choices, demanded by the poetic structure. Even though creative ideas often suggest themselves without structure, they will be interrogated by the methodology and filtered through the poetics of the text. The creative energy is thus channelled through the central framework of the source.

4.4.4 Intellectual Engagement

The next aim that was identified as a poetic component during the reading, is the stimulation of intellectual processes. The novel strives to create a conversation rather than a series of statements, and also to inspire that debate in the reader's consciousness. This effect is an essential part of the poetics of the work and therefore needs to be transferred. This is also one of the more complicated aspects of the work in terms of its transposition, as it is integrally linked to the verbal discourse of the underground man. According to Bakhtin's account, in the author's work "there is only the word as address, the word dialogically contacting another word, a word about a word addressed to a word" (Bakhtin 1984, p.237). The verbal nature of the strategy, as well as that of its examination, is pronounced. The strategy of undermining the underground man's discourse through his personality and his actions can work in a film, but the dialogic nature of the discourse itself is harder to imitate, therefore it will have to be reshaped.

An obvious solution to this, and the closest approximation to the text, would be to structure the whole film as a first person narrative. This would mean having the protagonist offer his discourse directly to the audience. Although this literal approach to the original material seems appropriate, it also feels forced. It is a rather simplistic transfer of a verbal structure into another verbal structure. Even if the complications of sustaining a first person point of view throughout the film were addressed, the result would probably be excessively rooted in language. It is important to remember

that the goal is not a comprehensive transfer of the original, but the smooth transfer to a new medium. This is one instance where the choice of the reading itself comes into question. The theoretical focus of Bakhtin's work on linguistic systems leads to a poetic structure that is more rooted in verbal structures than one would wish. This phenomenon suggests the necessity of supplementary readings, but also for the extension of Bakhtin's methodology in the visual plane. Fortunately, as has been explained earlier, Bakhtin's concept of dialogism is abstract enough to accommodate this type of analogy. The integration of visual elements in his consideration of interactions complicates the issue but does not contradict the core of the argument. Images can be attributed to subjective agencies and addressed to another. They can therefore be considered Bakhtinian utterances and examined in terms of their interaction. If that had not been the case and the chosen reading could not be reconciled with a poetic priority of the source, it would have to be re-examined and possibly combined with another interpretive structure.

A middle ground approach, employed by Walkow in his 1995 adaptation, is to have the protagonist create a video diary. This mixes first person with objective narration and introduces the complication of the filmic image, but it remains a half measure. It essentially creates a filmed version of the verbal discourse, with the nature of the discourse itself unchanged. A more drastic solution of this problem would be to have the protagonist create an actual documentary. This would give the opportunity to transfer the structure of the discourse itself, and not just a recording of it. It would allow the adaptation to engage with the discourse through cinematic language. The suggestion here is not an illustration of the discourse but its translation. The question then is not how one might record a verbal discourse, but how a character with the underground man's intellectual faculties would approach the subjects at hand from a cinematic perspective. Philosophical arguments present significant challenges in filmic representation, but that is an important aspect of the project of adaptation in general. Finally, having the protagonist engage in

the art form of the work itself is an appropriate rendering of the original poetics. The protagonist of the film will be a filmmaker as the protagonist of the novel is a writer. This solution allows the adaptation to engage with the work on a more substantial level and mirror its poetics, not as subservient imitation but as equal aesthetic counterpart. This is the sense in which adaptation can be seen as evolution (Hutcheon, 2013). Bakhtin introduces the concept of “great time”, to describe the timelessness of classic works. “Great works continue to live in the distant future. In the process of their posthumous life they are enriched with new meanings, new significance: it is as though these works outgrow what they were in the epoch of their creation” (Bakhtin 1986, p.5). Part of that continued existence involves a migration into different media, in a type of conceptual incarnation.

4.4.5 Philosophical Examinations

The specific philosophical examinations that have been extracted from the novel as components in its poetic structure come with different degrees of complexity regarding their transfer. Some will be objects of the protagonist’s documentary but others may be more appropriately discussed as parts of his immediate discourse or interaction with others. The exact equivalent of the novel, assuming the use of the documentary device, would be for the film to be entirely comprised of the documentary. That would not be practical for a number of reasons. Most importantly, the events described in the novel are given through a device of remembrance. This makes any coverage of the narrative scenes problematic, since memory can create words but not images. Even if the retrospective format was relinquished, the coverage of narrative scenes would have to be sustained through the constant existence of a camera. This strategy would be too obtrusive and often implausible. It would overstate one of the aspects of the original, the strict personal perspective, to a degree where it would overshadow and undermine the other elements of the work. The poetics of the source suggest that this kind of precise equivalence might not be necessary. As discussed earlier (4.4.1), a hybrid perspective could carry the poetics of the discourse and accommodate the narrative in a fashion that

is more appropriate to the new medium. According to Bakhtin's analysis (4.2.5), the dialogic interaction of voices is the main object of representation. The first person perspective is the form that was chosen to serve this purpose. Therefore, when the adapter is called to make a choice between the two aspects of the source, the hierarchy suggested by this particular reading offers the answer. The strategy of the novel is not severely compromised by the hybridisation of the structure of voices. On the contrary, it offers another level of complexity that can facilitate the contrast of ideas with experience. This means that the hero in the film has an extra plane of existence, external to his psyche, still rendered through his perspective, but allowing for the inclusion of other voices in his discourse, that are not attributable to him. This strategy will divide the new work into two formats, one that retains the completely personal perspective of the hero, and one that fuses that perspective with its environment. The first format can transfer the discourse of the original more accurately, but the second opens the work to a richer integration with the new medium. The dialogisation of the discourse is sustained and complicated by the existence of more than one subjectivity. In a sense, this approach represents a fusion of the device of subjectivity with the concept of polyphony. Bakhtin explains that Dostoevsky implemented this strategy in his subsequent novels, combining several subjectivities into a polyphonic structure. "A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky's novels" (Bakhtin 1984, p.6). It has been argued here that in the context of this project, the combination of the two formats is a strategy that adequately transforms this specific version of the poetics of the work.

The novel's discussion of free will and scientific determinism belongs to the film's documentary segments. It is a central debate of the novel and will inform the other aspects of the work as well. The generalising, abstract statements of the underground man's discourse are better suited to this format, whereas the more personal or emotional issues can be transferred into the hero's normal

discourse. For example the advocacy of conscious inertia and the pleasure of suffering could be parts of that secondary discourse. These parts of the film, apart from carrying the narrative elements of the novel, can also extend the interpretive scope. The emotional aspect of the novel, as described by Jones, can be employed in these sections to provide the necessary answers in issues that Bakhtin's analysis does not cover. Michailovsky's commentary on torment also belongs in this discussion, as well as Weisberg's notion of the critique of the protagonist. Through this widening of the scope the supplementary readings can inform the poetics of the new work in a way that complements the main interpretive line.

The discussion of the conflict between books and life is a more complicated one, as it introduces the issue of the verbal rendering of experience. The first part of the binary cannot remain 'books', as the system that is being addressed is no longer entirely verbal. It could also not be directly translated to 'films', as that would diminish the verbal element. A possible choice is to advance one level of abstraction, and suggest that the conflict takes place between intellectual interpretive systems and experience. This is not a concept that could be discussed directly in the new work, but it offers a certain flexibility in the actual rendering of the question. The practical result is a character who is trying to understand his environment through rational analysis, both verbally and visually, to an extent where that process blocks his direct experience of it. This abstraction is in keeping with the work's poetics, since the essential point of the conflict remains intact. Furthermore, the abstraction is flexible enough to contain not only the underground man's plight, but also the dreamer's. This approach overcomes the verbal focus of the original and also illuminates the deeper affinity of the two works.

The discussion of the hero's struggle with his own definition belongs both in the documentary and in the protagonist's normal discourse. Again, a departure from the original poetics seems necessary.

Parts of the underground man's discourse will be attributed to other characters. This carries the discourse, that was already dialogic, but does not mirror the internal struggle of the protagonist to the same extent. Nevertheless, it feels like a justified compromise. The personal oscillation of the underground man will still be apparent throughout his discourse and underlined through his perspective, but also suggested through the cinematic treatment of his character. As Leitch suggests in his account of the fallacies of adaptation theory, "The pleasures of many non-novelistic media are based to a large extent in the invitation they extend to audiences to infer what characters are thinking on the basis of their speech and behaviour, and that thoughts that are inferred can be just as subtle and profound as thoughts that are presented directly" (Leitch 2003 p.158).

4.4.6 Critique of the Modern Man

The underground man's critique of his contemporaries is more universal than the political implications of his discourse. The specific examples that he uses are situated in his time, but the conclusions that he draws from them, and most importantly his generalisations, are still relevant today. The overall discourse of the novel, including the image of the underground man himself, offers a poignant portrait of the individual in any society. The film's examination of the modern man can operate in a similar fashion as in the novel. This can happen through the protagonist's discourse in the documentary and in his personal interactions, through the rendering of his personality, and through his self-assessment. This last part is more complicated in this case, because the hero's discourse has been separated into first person and semi-objective discourse. To retain the form of a confession, a crucial aspect of the novel's strategy, there are two considerations that need to be addressed. Firstly, the documentary needs to be personal to some degree. It cannot be a detached presentation of ideas and comments, it needs to implicate its maker. The documentary will essentially serve the function of the first section of the novel, and therefore could not be just a foreword. Secondly, part of the hero's self-reference will be transferred to his interaction with

others. This means that his confession will, in some cases, have an actual audience, that can also offer a response. This is one of the reasons that the second work was introduced, in order to carry some of the discourse into a more literal level and avoid the cinematic dryness of a constant verbal monologue. The choice to identify an audience for the underground man's discourse is a departure from the novel but does not compromise the strategy proposed by the poetics. The structure is still retained in the documentary and an extra layer of complexity is added by the interaction. The hero's ideas are now examined through yet another filter.

The psychological level of examination of the modern man is also complicated by the adjusted point of view. The issue of isolation and social alienation is somewhat compromised by the choice to allow for interactions in the hero's discourse. In the novel, the underground man writes after the events that he is describing have transpired. He has passed the point of no return. The only interactions that he recounts have taken place in his younger days. The implication is that the episode with Liza was his last chance for human contact, and having missed that chance, he has lived in complete isolation. According to Bakhtin, the structure of the novel does not suggest evolution, as one might assume. The function of the retrospective format is not to show progress but to make a point, to illuminate a statement. The older underground man's world-view and personality are not significantly different to that of his younger self. The main difference is the older man's lack of hope. His function is to cover the events in the shadow of inevitability. The function of that shadow is to minimise dramatic tension by eliminating the narrative suspense regarding the resolution. As Bakhtin points out "in Dostoevsky's novels, the ordinary pragmatics of the plot play a secondary role and perform special and unusual functions. The ultimate clamps that hold his novelistic world together are a different sort entirely; the fundamental event revealed through his novel does not lend itself to an ordinary pragmatic interpretation at the level of the plot" (Bakhtin 1984, p.7). As has been argued in this thesis, the device can be dismissed if its function is served

through another, or if its elimination doesn't compromise the hierarchy of the poetic structure. In this case, the poetic framework suggests that it is acceptable to combine the two versions of the man and create a present tense narrative, if the resolution is inferred through other means. The more accurate solution then would be a foreshadowing device or a subtle framing narrative, that would suggest the negative dramatic conclusion of the novel. One could go even further and suggest a break from the novel that would allow for a glimmer of hope at the end, actively arguing against the pessimistic conclusions of the original. This project will not take that route in this case, but it will extend another element of the poetics, the concept of indeterminacy. Bakhtin's description of the ideologically unfinalised nature of the author's novels suggests that it might be acceptable to apply this idea to the narrative plane as well. In the original, the undermining of the narrative is employed to direct the focus to the ideological plane. But since it has been decided here to expose the discourse of the novel to external voices, it would be counter-intuitive to predetermine the conclusion of the interaction. The fact that the ideological conflict is not entirely internal any more, essentially facilitates its foregrounding. In that sense, the illumination of the discourse does not necessitate the diminishing of narrative tension. The function of the original poetics in this case is achieved through a previous departure from the source, one that was originally employed in the address of another transpositional issue.

4.4.7 Psychological Examinations

The general aspects of the underground man's discussions, for example his views on offence and honour, can smoothly form part of his discourse. The personal implications are more complicated, as they involve the recounting of events. In those sections, due to the more objective perspective, the narrator's commentary is harder to transfer. So, whereas attributes such as vanity and insecurity can be suggested through the narrative events, others, such as his need for social status are more challenging. In every case, what is missing is the hero's self accusation. It is different to observe a

man who is vain and to observe a man who is observing his vanity. The narrator's commentary is not something that can be eliminated from this particular novel. This issue can be partly addressed through the secondary characters. As explained earlier (4.4.5.), this strategy is in keeping with the work's poetics. The protagonist's self examination will take place in his conversations with others. For example it might make sense to have him recount specific events to them at various points, like narrative cutaways. Another solution would be voice-over. Dressing narrative scenes with the protagonist's commentary would serve a similar purpose. The strategy suggested here is a combined use of these devices, with each one used when most appropriate. The fragmented and inconsistent system of self-referential discourse and external commentary is arguably suited to this particular novel. The episodic framework of the original allows for this type of fragmentation. The structure of a series of narrative events as arguments towards a point is in this way transferred into filmic terms. The dialogic nature of the discourse is expanded, but its focus remains the same.

The discussion of cruelty is important in the novel, and mainly connected with the events involving Liza. The concept of pity also plays a crucial role in the climactic scene of the story. The choice to extend the hero's discourse to his physical environment suggests the importance of a more substantial role for Liza. Since she is no longer just a figure in the hero's discourse, she needs to be structured as an individual character, a concrete external subjectivity. This will offer the opportunity to explore the concepts of cruelty, control, and pity, in the depth that is suggested by the novel, but separated from the hero's consciousness. The character of Liza also offers an ideal link to the second work, *White Nights*. The two female characters, Liza and Nastenka can be combined into one and serve as the connection between the two stories. This is not an arbitrary choice, as the characters serve the exact same function in the two novels. Through their narrative positions as 'damsels in distress' they present a mirror to the protagonists that they use to test and define themselves. Furthermore, the two women present an alternative to the characters in terms of the

central ideological conflict of the works, that between intellect and experience. Liza's valued possession is a letter from a man that loves her but cannot be with her, much like Nastenka's lodger. The different details of their narrative positions are not as important as their function, and in this case their combination can serve both stories, with some adjustments. Taking into account that according to the poetics of the works the narrative details are less important than the ideological discourse that they engender, the narrative manipulation is an acceptable solution to the issue at hand. The introduction of a third consciousness in the ideological arena offers more opportunity for the rendering of the discursive interactions of the novels and also serves to further explore the dramatisation of the major conceptual conflict at their centre.

4.4.8 Artistic Representation of Ideas

A primary aim that was identified in terms of the novel's form was the artistic representation of ideas. This is another aim that will demand the formulation of a somewhat different strategy than the one employed in the novel. While the abstract concept is transferable, the original implementation is rooted in the realm of language. Nevertheless, while the ideas are presented through language, they are examined through characters and events. The strategy of embodied ideas actually proves to be very useful as a key to the transfer. The original operated by integrating the discourse in a narrative that is not bound to the linguistic structure. This device cannot carry all of the discourse, but it offers a vehicle that can sustain it. The suggestion is not to transfer only the narrative events, it is to create a dynamic relationship between the two elements. Parts of the discourse will be placed in the context of the documentary, and others in that of the protagonist's life and interactions. The documentary will, to an extent, contain the discourse of the first part of the novel in cinematic form, and the rest of the film will carry the second part.

There are three issues that need to be addressed regarding this approach. The structure of a heavily

discursive segment, followed by a narrative one would not be as comfortable in the film as it is in the original. The format of uninterrupted discursive analysis would be too cumbersome in the visual medium and would give the impression of statement rather than examination. What would be hardest to achieve in this section would be the rendering of the subjective nature of the discourse. In the original there is a reason why the two sections are separated, instead of a continuous flow of narration and commentary. The reason is to prevent a reading of the commentary as authorial statements. The exposition of the ideas, along with the rendering of the character in the first part of the novel, makes it clear that the discourse belongs to the character and should be evaluated in that context. If the ideological discourse had been integrated into the narrative, they could have been mistaken for authorial pronouncements, especially given their polemical nature. According to Bakhtin, Dostoevsky “transferred the author and the narrator, with all their accumulated points of view and with the descriptions, characterisations, and definitions of the hero provided by them, into the field of vision of the hero himself, thus transforming the finalised and integral reality of the hero into the material of the hero’s own self-consciousness” (Bakhtin 1984, p.49). This simultaneous revelation of character and idea would be much harder to achieve in the documentary section of the film. The second issue is that the two distinct aspects of the new work would not create the required effect if they were kept separate. The documentary segment could not be personal enough to the character, if presented on its own, and the narrative part would not be discursive enough. The third issue is that having eliminated the element of narration by the older underground man, the device of the recourse to memory is no longer necessary.

Another departure from the text can be introduced to address all three points. The two sections will not form two separate sequences but will be intertwined. The first part of the novel will be spread throughout the film, as the documentary sections, in the relevant narrative sequences. This device will be realised in the narrative by establishing the documentary as a work in progress. This is

compatible with the reading of the novel, as it carries the effect of the unfinalised work. It also allows for a direct, almost scientific, examination of the ideas in conjunction with their narrative application. Finally, it exposes the documentary sections to reflexive strategies integrated in the body of the film. This strategy of unfinalised, dialogic discourse mirrors Bakhtin's description of the author's artistic template as presented in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.5. This fragmented, interrupted and contradictory form will serve the same purpose as the first part of the novel, while overcoming the problem of the integration of the hero's personality in it. The function of the separation of the two formats in the original was the subjectification of the discourse. This will be achieved in the new work through the undermining of the documentary segments through the rendering of the protagonist's creation of them, and through the direct proximity to the contradictory narrative events. This is an example of using the strengths of the new medium to achieve the effect of the original. While the nature of the novel favours verbal analysis to reveal the conflict between character and discourse, the film will favour narrative conflict to do the same. Both works employ both strategies, but the different approach that will be taken in the film leans more toward the one that is more comfortable for the medium.

4.4.9 Experimentation with Dialogic Discourse

Artistic experimentation is integrally connected with the signifying system of any art form. Even more so in the case of a concept like dialogic discourse, which is Bakhtin's description of a purely verbal structure. Nevertheless, on a more abstract level, affinities between art forms can still be discovered. Even though Bakhtin did not discuss visual utterances, it is possible to imagine a more general formulation of his ideas, if the basic element of the interactions that he describes is generalised. If instead of verbal utterances one considers all signifying structures, the proposition still shows potential. Robert Stam in *Literature through Film* (2005) and *Subversive Pleasures* (1989) has pointed out that Bakhtinian utterances can potentially encompass non-verbal

communication. The extra complication of the filmic medium is that it allows not only for the interaction of images but also for the interaction between images and words. This does not present an obstacle, but rather potential for richer interaction.

As has been pointed out earlier through Stam (2005) and Flanagan (2009), cinema can achieve dialogic structures on multiple levels, through editing and the co-existence of multiple signifying tracks, verbal, visual and audio, on the same timeline. It has been argued here that experimentation with dialogism is possible in film, and the question that remains is whether it is transposable from a literary work, and therefore relevant to the project of adaptation. The tentative conclusion of this thesis so far is that it is indeed transposable, but also that the different options in the rendering of discourse will suggest certain creative transformations. A literal translation of the verbal discourse into the hybrid medium would be awkward and forced, but a creative reinterpretation and restructuring of the original material could make it flourish in the new environment. If the essential point of each interaction is identified and re-examined in cinematic terms, the transfer could be successful. One of the reasons that the fragmented documentary format feels appropriate in this case is that it allows for multiple direct interactions and comparisons. This way, the new work compensates for the diminished verbal analytical capacity of the new medium through an augmentation of the structure of the work, taking advantage of film's more complex dialogic options. Again, it appears that a flexibility of the boundaries between narrative, style and theme can potentially achieve a smoother, and more complete, transition of the original structure of the work.

The methods employed by the original text to achieve aims related to form often require significant adjustments in order to achieve a similar function in the new medium. Some may even need to be eliminated altogether and replaced by new strategies. In this case, the device of the reflexive monologue has been combined with semi-objective secondary voices. The device of the imaginary

audience now serves only part of the film. Some of the hero's contradictions are suggested through external observation. The necessity of these transformations is not a surprise. It was predictable from the beginning that the only way to address this type of work would be through careful departures that aim to reach the same destination through a different route. In this case, the exploration of dialogic discourse can be achieved through cinematic means, but demands the sacrifice of the closed personal nature of the protagonist's point of view. All the choices that have been suggested here in that respect have been justified according to the hierarchical analysis offered by the poetics of the literary text. It bears repeating that neither the specific poetic structure, nor the choices made to transfer it, are suggested as singular solutions. They are a demonstration of the analytical potential of the ideas of this thesis, in the construction of a rational approach to a practice of adaptation.

4.4.10 Authorial Distance

The issue of authorial distance is also a complicated one in the context of adaptation. As explained in section 4.4.2, Chatman (2010) suggests that in film it is often more difficult to distinguish between the authorial perspective and a character's narration. The more objective nature of the cinematic image does not offer a convenient way to render the novel's strict first person perspective. That makes the task of adapting a novel like *Notes from Underground* more challenging. To imitate the novel's form in that respect, would mean trying to sustain the impression that every element of the film is filtered through the protagonist's perception. The practical and narrative implications of this would make the film a very odd creation. The struggle to attribute the entire creation of the film to the protagonist would significantly strain credibility and limit narrative options. While the device works seamlessly in a novel, in a film it would be an extremely cumbersome and distracting strategy, thus failing to serve its original function. This is a case where a narrow-minded fidelity to the text would work against the transfer of its poetics. But the impression of a personal filter can be

achieved through other means. As Gilberto Perez (2000) points out, in relation to Renoir's 1936 film *A Day in the Country*, identification can be achieved not necessarily directly with the characters, but with an approximation to them, through a potential point of view that could belong to the audience. This form of filmic impressionism through a cinematic "free indirect style" is compatible with Bakhtin's description of the author as concealed organiser. It is not necessary to claim every image as a personal viewpoint or creation of the protagonist, as long as the contact with his discourse and consciousness is sustained. It has been established that the personal nature of the novel's discourse is integral to its structure and needs to be transposed, but a strict first person narrative is not the only way to achieve that effect. The documentary format is the closest approximation of the protagonist's discourse. For the rest of the film, a number of devices such as point of view shots, voice-over and subtitles can introduce his subjectivity and commentary into a scene when necessary. The protagonist's self-reflexiveness can thus be sustained even in objectively filmed sequences. An issue that arises from this mix of formats is inconsistency. Whereas the novel is a long monologue, with unity of form throughout, the film appears to be evolving through this approach into a hybrid, undisciplined work. This seems like a break from the novel's tone but actually it is not. It is just a translation of the linguistic structures of the novel into filmic terms. The effect of ambiguity and disorientation achieved in the novel through a monologue full of dialogic interactions, can be achieved in the film through devices of cinematic conjunction. The decision to alter the perspective of the original is based on the hierarchy of aims suggested by the poetics of the source. According to Bakhtin, the self-reflexive style of the discourse serves the representation of the interaction of ideas, therefore the author's choice to contain all aspects of the discourse in a single consciousness is secondary to the resulting effect. Furthermore, again according to Bakhtin, the function of the self reflexive strategy is the subjectification of the discourse. This does not limit the number of subjective agencies. On the contrary, the interaction of subjectivities is the next stage in the evolution of the author's work. "To portray the inner man, as Dostoevsky understood it, was

possible only by portraying his communion with another. Only in communion, in the interaction of one person with another, can the ‘man in man’ be revealed, for others as well as for oneself’ (Bakhtin 1984, p.252). The use of Bakhtin as the basis for the transposition, and his view of the author’s work as an evolution of a specific project, allows this experiment to employ a strategy that is not employed in the work at hand, in order to facilitate and expand its transposition. This flexibility allows for the consideration of medium specificity, and ensures that the adjustments that will need to be made to accommodate the transposition will have minimal disruptive effect on the poetics of the original.

While the transposition to film complicates the rendering of a personal perspective, it facilitates the introduction of ambiguity. The inherent indeterminacy of the origin of the image constantly puts the veracity of its object in question. If the image could be attributed to the protagonist it could be listed as potentially unreliable, if it could be attributed to the author it could be listed as reliable. When it is impossible to file the image under a recognisable agency, it exists in a semiotic void, demanding its interpretation by the observer. Mohammad Ghaffary, in his essay “A Poetics of Free Indirect Discourse in Narrative Film” (2013), mentions Jean Mitry’s “concept of the ‘semi-subjectivity’ of the cinematic image”, by which he means that the camera is neither totally inside the cinematic setting nor entirely outside it. “Put simply, the camera-eye is, thus, neither purely objective nor purely subjective but semi-subjective — particularly, when its role is foregrounded” (Ghaffary 2013, p.272). In this light it can be argued that the fluid perspective of the filmic medium will serve the purpose of blurring the boundaries between objective and subjective point of view, reinforcing the effect of the original. Furthermore, this phenomenon enhances the impression of the hero’s independence from an author. The device of an objective narrator that is missing from the novel is inherently less pronounced in a film. As explained by Chatman (4.4.2), the narrative devices and authorial commentary are more subtle and transparent in the visual medium, and therefore authorial

manipulation is rendered somewhat more obscure. It can be noted here that Chatman's categorical distinctions of what each medium can achieve are relevant to this project. The point made here is that this type of distinction is only productive after an evaluation of what *needs* to be achieved. The blueprint of the original is the only way to ensure that an adaptation will be something more than a list of positive and negative pronouncements. An application of such a list in the process of adaptation would result in a crippled work that is missing many of its elements. An analysis of the structural importance of each of these elements will determine which ones are indispensable, which ones are secondary, which can be safely replaced and what needs to take their place.

4.4.11 Heightened Realism

The adaptation of the atmosphere of heightened realism that was described in the reading is also complicated by the nature of the different media. The realistic setting of the novel is easy enough to mirror, but the rendering of the transcendent tone of the discourse, and more importantly, of the events, is more complex. The main reason for this is the less contained nature of the filmic image. Some levels of abstraction, like descriptions of locations or faces, are immediately removed in the transposition. Stam makes this point when discussing Gary Walkow's adaptation of the novel. "The overpresent screen image ... is heavily overdetermined with paradigmatic choices and visual details" (Stam 2005, p.206). The unavoidable widening of the angle of information grounds the events in a more detailed description of the environment. "Film narrative possesses a plenitude of visual details, an excessive particularity compared to the verbal version, a plenitude aptly called by certain aestheticians 'over-specification'" (Chatman 1980, p.126). In that sense the cinematic image seems to demand a greater degree of plausibility, and to invite a more critical approach in terms of verisimilitude. The hero's discourse, although literary, feels natural in its written form, but artificial when spoken to a camera. The events of the novel have a dramatically different effect when observed in a literal manner as acts, rather than narration. The extreme states of the characters

become more disturbing and grotesque when visualised.

For these reasons, a directly literal transposition of the novel could never work as anything but a crude recording of the material. To achieve a similar effect to the original, the adaptation would need to employ a strategy that departs from that of the literary source. The suggestion here is not that film cannot achieve the effect of transcendence but that it usually cannot do it by mirroring the strategies of literature. The most helpful example in this case is the issue of the literary style of the protagonist's discourse. The effect forms an important part of the discourse of the novel, whilst being employed in its stylistic formulation. A transposition of this discussion into film could not remain an issue of literary style, exactly because of this implication. Literary style in prose is not directly transposable as literary style in film. The question needs to be translated into the new language. In the novel the issue is raised through the underground man's preoccupation and recourse to previous texts and through the stylisation of his speech. The first part is easier to transfer, as film can be equally referential, possibly by transferring some of the references to the realm of the image. The second part would need to inform not only the protagonist's creative output through the documentary format, but also the rendering of his discourse during the narrative sections. His verbal interactions in those segments will need to be somewhat transformed. At the same time, the visual component of the scenes would operate in conjunction with the events and dialogue to suggest the subjectivity of the character and to emulate the stylisation of his discourse on the level of the image.

This raises two more issues. Firstly, such a strategy demands a dramatic reworking of the original language of the text. This is regrettable, as the structure and nuance of the text is a remarkable achievement. Nevertheless it is unavoidable. An accurate recitation of the material would be pointless, whereas the translation that is suggested here is an attempt to carry the essence of the

piece. The second issue is that transferring elements of the discourse into the image can compromise their connection with the hero's consciousness. This compromise can be mitigated by the subjectification of the image, as discussed earlier. By introducing reminders of the hero's consciousness it is possible to attribute the image to his perspective. At the same time, since it has been decided to introduce two more subjects in the new work, the shift from one to the other will underline the contrast between them and thus reinforce the effect of subjectivity in each one.

4.5 Transposition of the Poetics of *White Nights*

4.5.1 Conflict Between Imagination and Reality

According to the poetics of the work, as presented in sections 4.2.7 and 4.3.4, the main conflict in *White Nights* is the incompatibility between imagination and reality. It has also been demonstrated how that conflict relates to the one in *Notes from Underground* regarding experience and its interpretation. The reason to bring these two works together is this affinity, as well as the proximity of the characters themselves. They are close enough to be considered inhabitants of the same world, but also far enough to create a compelling contrast. Furthermore, the combination of the two stories provides additional narrative opportunities for both, without compromising their poetics. On the contrary, the fusion creates space for material that would otherwise be difficult to transpose to the new medium. The resulting work will be able to retain more of the original ideas, even as it departs from the source in terms of narrative. This strategy introduces a device of Dostoevsky's subsequent work, the polyphonic co-existence of subjective heroes, into this particular project of adaptation. Bakhtin's reading of the author's work allows this exploration to adapt his method, rather than focus on a specific text. For this strategy to work, the two characters would need to be placed in a narrative position that allows them to interact. At the same time, their respective character arcs would advance in parallel and reach their culminations simultaneously at the end. In this vein, it is appropriate to reinforce their narrative proximity by assigning them a similar agenda. The dreamer

then, like the underground man, will be a filmmaker. This not only gives them a narrative connection point, but also allows for a structural analogy between the two characters. The dreamer's representation can be constructed, like the underground man's, as a combination of his personal discourse through filmic output and his interactions with others.

In the novels, the most crucial narrative element of both works is the protagonist's relationships with Liza and Nastenka. The combination of the two women into a single character offers a strong narrative link between the stories. This fusion will facilitate the interaction between the underground man and the dreamer, illuminating each character separately, but will also highlight their affinities and differences through narrative conflict. This device will allow for the transfer of parts of the discourse from the internal realm of their protagonists consciousness into an external, more objective scene. At the same time, the third character, whose sources were not developed substantially in the original texts, offers further opportunity for the widening of the discourse. In the same rationale of Bakhtinian polyphony, Liza's character could be used to develop issues that were not addressed in the novels. In that sense, the character, apart from her narrative function, can be used to express commentary on the source itself. The fact that the female roles in the originals were reduced to sounding boards for the male protagonists could be addressed, through the elevation of the composite character to an equal narrative and discursive status as the underground man and the dreamer. For example, the concept of pity that was externally examined by the underground man can now be embodied in another subjectivity. The assignment of stereotypical roles to female characters in the novels can be addressed and commented on. This is clearly a drastic departure from the source texts, another one that could be described as arbitrary. This is again a matter of the objectives of the specific project. In any instance of adaptation, the aims of the adapter will be different. In this case, the introduction of a subjectivity that is partly external to the literary text and comments on it, is in keeping with the poetics of the work in a wider sense. This study attempts to

push the boundaries of fidelity, in order to test the thesis, it aims to explore the possibilities presented by the proposed system, not suggest 'correct' choices.

This strategy will demand a number of important adjustments to the narrative structure of the two works, but the primary aim here is not to create a new story based on the three characters. The new narrative structure will not take over the new work and form a basis for the free interaction of the original characters. This could also be considered an option, based on Bakhtin's concepts of polyphony and character independence, but here, in order to contain this analysis to results that can be evaluated in conjunction with the source, the characters will not be excised from their texts. This means that the co-existence of the characters will be used mainly as a catalyst that will facilitate the transition of the works between the two media. The character's freedom of movement will be limited by the attempt to transfer the original discourse.

The major new addition to the discourse itself will be the juxtaposition of the two similar but different ideological conflicts. The new area that is being explored is that between the underground man's analysis and the dreamer's imagination. This distinction represents the author's intellectual shift in the years between the two works, as described by Shestov (4.2.6). Another option at this point, might be establishing the dreamer as a younger underground man, as suggested by Terras (1964), but this approach would create structural difficulties, while not allowing for the direct interaction that the combination was introduced to instigate. Although it would retain the narrative framework of the original to a greater degree, it would essentially create a repeated pattern with two similar characters. The result would be two parallel stories, with a tentative link between the two aspects of the central character. Also, the focus of such a strategy would seem to be the evolution of the character, which is inconsistent with Bakhtin's reading that suggests an interaction-based rather than a time-based structure. "In none of Dostoevsky's novels is there any evolution of a unified

spirit; in fact there is no evolution, no growth in general, precisely to the degree that there is none in tragedy” (Bakhtin 1984, p.26).

4.5.2 Psychological Examinations

The concept of alienation and the exploration of the state of isolation from society are the central psychological issues of both works, and the main common attributes of the characters. But the underground man and the dreamer have departed from society for different reasons, and observe it through a somewhat different lens. A further complication is that the underground man speaks from a point of complete futility, while the dreamer still retains hope. The dreamer is more forgiving and less critical of others, with a tendency to blame himself, but without the underground man’s rationalisations or self-aggrandising. Furthermore, the dreamer sacrifices his happiness for Nastenka’s, demonstrating the complete opposite behaviour to that of his counterpart. In this sense the dreamer is closer to Liza’s personality than the underground man’s. This aspect of the dreamer’s personality might suggest another option. Liza could be infused with the dreamer’s character, creating a simpler structure and allowing for more direct conflict between the ideas. This strategy might work on the psychological level. Nevertheless, the poetics of the work, as they have been identified in this study, have not suggested this level as primary in the work’s structure. This choice would shift the narrative balance of the story by prioritising the conflict between the two central characters. The narrative compromise that would be required to sustain the romantic involvement between the underground man and a female dreamer would hinder the transfer of each character’s discourse.

According to the strategy proposed here, the female character would need to be adjusted to a significant degree. Liza and Nastenka have little in common as personalities. The main overlap of the characters is the function they serve in their respective narratives. The other trait that they share

is that neither is fully formed as a character. This makes their combination much easier, as the only elements that are being compromised are narrative details. The composite character could be reduced to its function, because it was little more than a function in the original texts. The stories of the two women, apart from their state as 'damsels in distress', are rather different, with the exception of Liza's letter. Their personalities set them even further apart, with the prostitute Liza being, in a sense, more innocent than the pure Nastenka. While Liza pities the tortured underground man, seeing through his cruelty towards her, Nastenka takes advantage of the dreamer's devotion. The goal of this project will not be solely to create a consistent character from the two, but to choose the attributes that best serve to link the two stories. The female character is thus flexible, but also crucial in the combination of the two works. It could be argued that an intuitive solution is rather conveniently symmetrical. Liza/Nastenka is attracted to the underground man but he rebuffs her, whilst the dreamer is attracted to her but she is waiting for the other. To reconcile the two aspects of the original characters, and to facilitate the creation of a more substantial role, the new girl would need to be less naïve than Liza and less self-serving than Nastenka.

4.5.3 The Mentality of the Dreamer

The underground man and the dreamer have similar problems. They both exist at a distance from society and they both long for human contact but cannot function in social environments. Further hindering their attempts at integration is their advanced, almost pathological, sensitivity. Their main difference is the manifestation of their problem, that has its source in their world-view. While the underground man blocks himself through over-analysis, which he describes as being in a state of constant consciousness, the dreamer is distracted by his dreams, drawn into the world of his imagination. Also, while the underground man expresses contempt for his environment, the dreamer only finds himself at fault, actively seeking an opportunity to escape his loneliness. The key to their co-existence is the realisation that both are addressing the world through a heavy intellectual filter.

It is a different kind of filter for each of them, but it is their common obstacle, their “bookish” nature as they both describe it, that forbids them to enter the realm of lived experience. One could describe them in this context as the philosopher and the artist. Bakhtin points out the incomplete nature of both characters that allows for such abstractions. “Both ‘dreamer-ness’ and ‘underground-ness’ are socio-characterological features of people, but here they also answer to Dostoevsky’s artistic dominant. The consciousness of a dreamer or an underground man-who are not personified, and cannot be personified - is most favourable soil for Dostoevsky’s creative purposes, for it allows him to fuse the artistic dominant of the representation with the real-life and characterological dominant of the represented person” (Bakhtin 1984, p.50). Due to this common nature, the two characters are highly compatible, and their interaction is capable of producing fertile discussions on their individual issues. Their co-existence allows for the illumination of both personalities, by offering external examinations and counterpoints, but also by introducing each of them to an alternative. Their interaction would not only offer ways to carry their discourse, but might also further the individual discourses through dialogic processes.

Another common trait of the two characters is their projections for the future. The element of daydreaming and future prediction is very strong in both works. The underground man is also susceptible to flights of fancy, with recurrent images of his vindication and final appreciation by the world, although he rushes to correct himself whenever he allows those dreams to be expressed by his pen. The dreamer is less ambitious and more realistic when he imagines his ideal future. “The heroes themselves, it turns out, fervently dream of being embodied, they long to attach themselves to one of life’s normal plots. The longing for embodiment by the ‘dreamer’, born of the idea of the ‘underground man’ and the ‘hero of an accidental family’, is one of Dostoevsky’s important themes” (Bakhtin 1984, p.101-102). This element of projection into future narratives, both positive

and negative, can also provide a link between the characters. Somewhat reminiscent of James Thurber's *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (1939), and in the case of *Notes from Underground* almost as comical, this device of interjecting daydream sequences in the course of a narrative is relatively common in film. The use of dated or over-used cinematic devices of this sort could reinforce the artificial nature of the discourse. In this case, that constitutes a valid effect, as the discourse is meant to be undermined according to the poetics. Furthermore, the cliché adds a comic element to the critique of the content of the dream, which is also consistent with the tone of the source. In this issue, one can observe the phenomenon of a direct analogy between the two media, operating in service of the transposition. The setting up of the literary characters' dreams as literary clichés, corresponds to its filmic equivalent. The intertextual undermining that takes place in the original is transferred through a similar device, albeit through a different signifying system.

4.5.4 Experimentation with Theatrical Discourse

Even though *White Nights* is presented through a first person narrator, the bulk of the text consists of dialogue between the dreamer and Nastenka. The theatrical nature of the discourse is an important contribution of the novel to the new work. As discussed earlier, part of the underground man's discourse will be transferred from his internal monologue to an interactive setting. These interactions that don't have a narrative equivalent in the novel could operate through the theatrical strategy of *White Nights*. This type of discourse presents two advantages in terms of the transposition. Firstly, the discourse can be dramatised into dialogue and action, rather than offered as internal monologue. Secondly, the artificial nature of the discourse helps to retain the original effect of heightened realism (4.4.11). Essentially, a cinematic approximation of the style of *Notes from Underground* would be used for the characters' personal discourse, and an approximation of the style of *White Nights* would be used for their interactions in the semi-objective segments. Thus, the ideas, form, and content of both works bleed into each other. This not only allows the elements

of both works to find their space in the new construct, but also employs the elements of one in the service of the other. In this case the style of one work helps transfer the content of the other.

This type of theatrical discourse may be easier to represent in film, but it does not function in exactly the same way in the two media. The reading of a play is a rather different experience to attending its production and both are different to watching a filmed version of it. In certain films that are based on theatre plays, the preponderance of dialogue, and its often literary nature, may betray its origin. But in this case, as with the dream sequences, the artifice of the device works in service of the original functions of the novel. The literary style of the speech and the implausibility of its structure are meant to be underlined, not concealed. Furthermore, long discursive sequences can achieve interesting effects in the visual medium, as demonstrated by the films of Eric Rohmer. David Heinemann, in an essay entitled “The Creative Voice: Free Indirect Speech in the Cinema of Rohmer and Bresson” (2009), suggests that Rohmer re-evaluates the image by addressing it through the context of dialogue. “In revisiting an event already represented on the image track, Rohmer’s characters open up a space between the ‘objective’ photographic presentation of it by the film’s narration, and their own recasting of this event in language. What on the image track may have seemed straightforward and factual, becomes in the retelling complex and ambiguous” (Heinemann 2009, p.2). This interaction between word and image is an appropriate idea in the context of this project, as it offers another possibility for the transfer of the original devices of undermining the characters’ discourse.

The other literary devices that also underline the fictional nature of the story, as are chapter headings, poetic imagery, and literary use of language, can also be used in a similar fashion, adjusted to their cinematic equivalents when appropriate through stylistic devices, like dissolves or elaborate compositions. Here again, it is important to make the distinction between subjective and

objective sequences, as well as between the subjectivities of the three characters. Each of the four types of sequence (the underground man's, the dreamer's, Liza's, and the objective one) could be addressed through a different cinematic treatment. The contrast between a more conventional objective style, a structured, edited concise style for the underground man, a poetic, flowing style for the dreamer, and a more grounded, mobile style for Liza would carry the strategy of the novels and reinforce the discourse through cinematic means. The distancing effects, like characters addressing the artifice, could also work on that level, especially since film is the protagonists' way of expression. The choice to make the two male characters filmmakers facilitates the transfer of their discourse to a significant degree, while allowing for an exploration of the connections between literary and cinematic devices.

4.6 Stage Four: Implementation

Having worked through the poetics of the source and suggested solutions for its transfer, it is now time to revisit the works themselves and address more specific issues. This process will question the suggestions of the previous section, by using them as a filter for the re-examination of the works. The return to the original is important in this stage, not only as a way to demonstrate the results of the previous one, but also as a checking mechanism. This overview may find inconsistencies or conflicts, that would render the choices made in the previous stage problematic. Furthermore, it will build on these choices by adding detail and completing the description of the new work. Here, it will become clear which elements of the original will be included, and how each will function in the film. It is not suggested here that a process of adaptation needs to happen through a linear approach of the source. This strategy is employed in this case, for the purpose of demonstration and the exploration of possibilities. The sections in italics are the descriptions of the original text.

4.6.1 Notes from Underground

Chapter One, Part One

The underground man introduces himself and his ideas. He mentions his work as a civil servant and his internal battle between benevolent and malevolent tendencies. He asserts that the intelligent man must remain characterless, and concludes with a statement of intent: he does not wish to amuse the audience but to talk about himself. This part could work as a self-contained short made by the modern underground man, as it sets the tone of his discourse and establishes his ideology. It also implicitly offers glimpses of his personality, as the personal nature of the piece will reveal some of the filmmaker's psychological attributes. The film could be a low budget observational documentary, following a faceless character with a voice-over by the filmmaker. When the short ends, it becomes obvious that it was a film made by the protagonist. This takes place in a film competition, where the dreamer's film is also presented, serving the same introductory function, but also linking the two characters in a competitive environment. This setting would also offer the opportunity to observe the two characters in a stressful social context.

The decisions made in the previous stage are now applied in the formulation of the narrative of the film. The decisions were that the two protagonists would be filmmakers, and that parts of their discourse would be transferred through their filmic output. The new decisions that are made in this process are that the specific section of the novel will be a self contained film and that the protagonists will be rival filmmakers. Both choices are in keeping with the poetics, as described above, but are also informed by a consideration of their function in the new work. The creative decisions that would have been available if the process started on this stage are limited but they are not eliminated. There is still a lot of flexibility, and even at this stage it would be possible to arrive at a multitude of entirely different results. The rest of this process will operate in similar fashion, through adherence to the transposed poetics, paired with a consideration of the possible effects of

the poetics on the original texts.

Part Two

The rest of chapter one (parts two until eleven), will mainly, but not entirely, be interspersed in the film as parts of the feature documentary that the modern underground man is working on. The segments will engage with various stages of the filmmaking process and positioned in relevant segments of the narrative events as to achieve the most direct relevance to them. They will be treated according to thematic consistency and adjusted into concise statements. The contradictions and interruptions dictated by the nature of the work and its status as work in progress will be present, mirroring the similarly structured internal dialogue of the original. Some of the discourse of this chapter will be transferred into the main body of the film. The documentary segments will function as short inconclusive introductions to each sequence, part of the narrative, but also part of the discourse. Each one will establish a question that will be dramatised in the following narrative section. For example, regarding the discourse of part two, the examination of the pleasure of suffering will form a documentary segment, whereas the discussion of the hero's acute consciousness, as well as his assertions of intellectual superiority, will be transferred to the main body of the film, in the context of his interactions with others.

Part Three

The discussion of the differences between the spontaneous and conscious man will also comprise one documentary segment. The imagery of the conscious man as a mouse is appropriate here and will be retained. This section continues with the spontaneous man's acceptance of the boundaries of reason, symbolised by the imagery of the stone wall, and reaches the personal level through the hero's position on the issue. This part would again be transferred to the relevant narrative scenes of the film. This fragmentation of the original and the separation of the personal and general aspects of

the hero's discourse are two departures that cancel each other out, their combination reaching the same destination as the original. The separation diminishes the personal nature of the hero's discourse, but the fragmentation re-establishes it, by combining it with the relevant narrative node. This effect is reinforced by the incomplete nature of the documentary and its integration into the story.

This type of analysis is only possible because of the preceding discussion of poetics. The choices made here, and the decisions regarding the film's overall consistency, would not be possible without the prior analysis of the hierarchical relationships of the original and the recognition of the functions of its components.

Part Four

The underground man discusses the perverse pleasure of a toothache and the transfer of internal pain to one's environment. He reaches the conclusion that a thinking man cannot have self-respect.

The comically exaggerated imagery of the moaning patient could be combined with the segment regarding the pleasure of suffering. The discussion of self-respect can form the segue into the body of the film. It is crucial that these segments set the question for the following scenes but never offer a priori interpretations or value judgements. The ambiguity of the contextualisation needs to be retained as it has been identified as an integral aspect of the poetics of the work.

Part Five

The underground man discusses the meaninglessness of moral concepts. He addresses remorse, offence and justice, and finds them all insubstantial under intellectual scrutiny. This scrutiny defeats any notion of indignation or righteousness. This discussion will form another documentary segment. The underground man also talks about boredom, that creates a longing for moral

convictions, and intelligence, that defeats any certainty. This contrast could also serve as the bridge from the general to the personal. The final assertion of the underground man that he feels justified in never finishing anything is an appropriate reference to the incomplete nature of his work.

Part Six

The underground man allows himself to wish that he had a label, a defining feature, and subsequently takes that wish back. This is the discussion about definition, that will form another segment of the documentary. Possibilities for the implementation of the documentary segments could include a number of cinematic devices. Voice-over narration could be used to carry part of the verbal discourse of the text. Contrasting images could be used to render certain points of the discourse. Editing would be used to build and advance the conceptual process, through the juxtaposition of a series of images that carry the discursive information. The underground man observes himself and his environment. Sometimes he attempts to position himself in that environment and other times he separates himself from it entirely. This could be mirrored in the documentary segments through an oscillation between images that contain the filmmaker and ones that do not. His voice would encompass the whole structure. The novel's dialogue between the man and his world would therefore be transferred through a dialogue between his voice and his images.

Part Seven

The man attacks Chernychevsky's proposition, that people would do good if they knew their interest. He offers his arguments, concluding that the most valuable human interest is free will. This discussion, that begins the conversation of scientific determinism, would form an important part of the documentary, and would continue in subsequent sections. It would also make sense to explore the making of the film itself in this case, to examine the mechanics of argumentative cinema and introduce the protagonist's consciousness into the process. This particular discourse will also be

transferred to the main story, not only in terms of relevance, but also as an instigator of events. Chernychevsky will be replaced by a fictional modern scholar and the position itself will be adjusted for the new environment, but the philosophical implications of the discussion will remain essentially the same.

Part Eight

The discussion continues with the examination of human nature and its incompatibility with deterministic systems, symbolised by the image of man as nature's piano key. The hero points out the absurd, unpredictable nature of human behaviour and asserts that man would rebel against a predetermined, tidy existence. This will be one of the documentary sections that will be amply illustrated in the course of the film. The absurd behaviour of the protagonist informs every narrative event, as they are informed by the rationalisations of the philosophical background.

Part Nine

This part discusses man's aversion to the attainment of goals. The underground man suggests that every type of finality and certainty equal death. The end of the search is the end of life. This opinion mirrors the character's constant oscillation and suggests that this is the only state in which he can allow himself to exist. As before, this section will be addressed through a documentary segment and related to the narrative through linear proximity and through the character's personality.

Part Ten

This is the most polemical part of the first chapter. The underground man rigorously asserts his free will and his right to disrespect any system that attempts to define him or interpret his behaviour. In this more emotional piece, the underground man's tragic state is most evident. He tries to fight reason with reason, in favour of life, but it is also reason that prevents him from experiencing life.

This part carries the most important connections to the hero's personality and belongs near the culmination of his story. The polemical nature of this part will offer another opportunity to examine the filmmaking process, but this time from a more personal perspective. The emotional turmoil of the protagonist at this point has reached a peak, and his work will reflect that. The trajectory of the documentary sections in the film will follow a pattern, from the more detached statements of the beginning, positioned next to relevant narrative sections, to gradually more personal assertions. As the film progresses, the boundary between discourse and events will blur and finally disappear. An appropriate ending to the film would be a last statement of the protagonist in the context of his documentary, but this time delivered by him in person. He has not resolved his issues but he has managed to expose himself and offer his confession.

This approach of interweaving the discursive and narrative sections of the novel is one of the major departures from the text in terms of form, as discussed in the previous stage (4.4.8). In this re-examination of the text it can be argued that the new structure does not clash with the poetics of the work as they have been described here. The discursive and narrative trajectories can operate in parallel without compromising their original functions.

Part Eleven

This is the most self-referential part of the first chapter. *The underground man undermines everything he has said thus far, and articulates his potential judgement by his audience. He also dismisses the notion of an audience, claiming he is writing for himself. This part segues into the next chapter, the narrative part of the novel, through reference to a memory that instigated the writing of the text.* This strategy cannot be replicated in the film, since the narrative events are no longer at a chronological distance from the articulation of the discourse. Nevertheless, the doubt and self-accusation of the protagonist belong in the film. The counter-argument to the underground

man's assertions has been transferred, to an extent, from his own discourse to the narrative realm. But while the attack can be voiced by another, the doubt needs to be his own. The dichotomising of the dialogic structure of the piece cannot be extended to a complete elimination of his uncertainty. This is why it is important to maintain some elements of the protagonist's perspective, some level of insight into his thought process.

Given the altered structure, this piece also belongs near the end of the film, but before the discourse of part ten. In the two chapter structure, it makes sense for the personal section to link to the narrative events, but in the mixed structure of the film the culmination of the discourse (part ten) needs to coincide with the culmination of the narrative.

Chapter Two, Part One

In this chapter the underground man recounts the memories that created his need to write. He starts by describing his younger self as a solitary, highly self-conscious civil servant, with inferiority and superiority complexes. For the adaptation, the retrospective device has been dismissed, but the character will remain a civil servant, who is also an amateur filmmaker in his spare time. The shift in vantage point does not compromise the discourse or the narrative, and the two are not incompatible as aspects of a single person. The basic difference of the retrospective structure is that the older man has already made the choice to leave the world altogether. This device of foreshadowing could be reintroduced through some type of framing narrative, but that would be incompatible with the structure of the new work in the form that it has started to take. It would clash with the decision to open the discourse to other voices by enforcing a complete narrative filter. This is one of those instances where a choice of priority has to be made. The choice made here is to eliminate the foreshadowing in favour of a pluralism of voices, departing from the original, but in flexible accordance with its poetics.

The original young underground man is isolated from his environment and feels different from everyone around him. He feels a need for human contact but cannot tolerate the people around him. He reads a lot but longs for action. He goes out at night in search of excitement but also ashamed of being seen. He imagines physical confrontations and unsuccessfully attempts to start a fight with an officer at a tavern. The tavern scene will be retained in the context of the setup of the character, but the officer will be separated from it. The officer plays a significant part in the rest of this section, as he becomes the underground man's obsession, triggered by the offence. In the new work the officer will be replaced by the dreamer, and the setting of the offence will be the festival where the men's short films are shown. This adjustment introduces the dreamer early on, through the device that introduces the underground man (a short film), and creates a strong narrative connection between them, while allowing the dreamer to serve the same function as the character he replaces. The offence itself will be trivial and unintended, as in the original. The underground man will imagine that the dreamer snubbed him after he accepted the award of the festival. The dreamer is financially comfortable, to allow for the transfer of the discourse of social status and advantage. The underground man follows him, learns about him, and tries to find a way to hurt him, to restore his honour, while at the same time dreaming of the other's friendship. This dynamic will be exploited beyond the original format. In the novel, the officer leaves the scene when the underground man manages to implement his plan of bumping into him in the park. In the new work, the conflict will be sustained throughout the film. The resolution of the offence will leave the two characters in a complex relationship of camaraderie and animosity. They will find their common ground, but will be kept in constant tension due to their differences. They will also discuss the underground man's work, with the dreamer offering counterarguments. The interaction of the two characters will allow for the transfer of the novel's discourse through a dramatic device that uses the ingredients of the original to the same effect through a different strategy. The resolution of the offence will also need

to change. The underground man needs to regain his sense of superiority over the other, and craves an opportunity to return the snub. This narrative situation could be created in the application for the filmmaking workshop. The underground man will succeed in his application and will consider it a victory over the other, even though the dreamer had not shown any interest in it. The dreamer will eventually also end up in the workshop, further undermining the underground man's victory. This mirrors the situation of the novel and also offers a setting for the subsequent events, while remaining in the context of filmmaking, that allows for the co-existence of narrative and discourse.

This significant readjustment of the narrative of the original is another example of a set of departures from the text that serve its poetics as well as the new context. The loose handling of the plot is in this case justified by the poetics, through Bakhtin's notion that "the Dostoevskian novel is bound up in an organic unity that has nothing to do with the plot" (Bakhtin 1984, p.20). This would not necessarily be the case in other works, or even in other interpretations of this work. It must also be pointed out that this study is attempting to explore possibilities, and in that spirit examines the outer limits of the dialogic fidelity concept.

Part Two

The underground man discusses and questions his unrealistic dreams, offering one of the closest approximations to the dreamer's character. Setting them against each other in this context will strengthen their narrative relationship, and facilitate the examination of the character's interaction on this level. The characters' fantasies could work as separate scenes, whose cinematic rendering would reinforce the contrast between the two men. This part also offers information regarding the routine of the underground man's life, information that can be transferred through the narrative sections of the film.

Part Three

This part is an account of the hero's visit to his old classmates, followed by memories from their school days. The scene of the awkward visit will be retained, but separated from the dinner scene that follows it. The scene will be self-contained and will not involve the dreamer. The dinner scene will be transferred to the setting of the film workshop. The reason for this change is that the classmates scene can serve its function of describing the character, and then the story can return to the filmmaking context, and the other two subjectivities. The classmates scene will offer insight into the character and his social ineptitude, paired with the documentary segment about the distinction between the conscious and the spontaneous man. The school period memories will also be incorporated here, as mental images. The perspective of the protagonist would be retained throughout the scene. In the meantime, the dreamer would be engaged in his own independent narrative with Liza. This structure will develop the characters separately in preparation for their interaction in the next sequence.

Part Four

The workshop sequence, that will also involve the dreamer and Liza, is actually easier to rearrange than one might think, considering the original nature of the scene. *The dinner scene is built on the mechanics of social interaction, and filtered through the underground man's insecurity and obsessions.* The actual setting is not structurally significant, therefore the shift can work smoothly. The introduction of the new characters offers another layer of complexity, and allows for the further integration of the works. The dreamer will be the equivalent of Sverkov in the dinner scene, the character that the underground man despises and envies, for whom he harbours contempt, as well as dreams of friendship and acceptance. The inclusion of Liza at this point opens the discursive field even further, and sets up the narrative events that follow. The workshop environment again allows for the rendering of the discourse, while sustaining the narrative structure. Almost all the elements

of the original structure of the scene are appropriate here, except from the protagonist's drunkenness. The hero feels snubbed, ignored, insulted, he interjects inappropriately, accuses members of the team, and ends up isolated. Liza will serve as an extra dimension in this scene, intensifying the two men's competition, but also presenting the underground man with a possibility of social success. He will not be able to take advantage of it, and the tension will be carried forward. *In the novel the classmates finally leave the tavern to go to a brothel and the underground man stays behind but then decides to follow them.* The workshop group will go out for drinks and he will go after them as well. The brothel would not make sense in this case.

The narrative can be modelled on the original with the necessary adjustments. In terms of the discourse the adjustments are more substantial. Instead of a single consciousness and perspective, there are now three, in an example of Bakhtinian polyphony. In this section the adaptation can experiment with the co-existence and interactions of subjective un-merged consciousnesses, essentially casting the adaptation of the single text into the context of the poetics of its author. In this sense, the experiment is adapting the author, rather than the work.

"Polyphony itself, as the event of interaction between autonomous and internally unfinalised consciousnesses, demands a different artistic conception of time and space" (Bakhtin 1984, p.176). This time and space is ideally recreated in the workshop environment, an instance of the "public square", that Bakhtin describes as the author's setting of discourse and scandal, a place "where people from various positions find themselves in familiar contact with one another" (Bakhtin 1984, p.174).

Part Five

On the way to find them, the original underground man imagines his victory over Zverkov, and the

restoration of his honour. His fancy takes him even further, to stories of imprisonment and vindication after many years. The duel that he imagines is not appropriate in the modern setting, the hero of the film will dream of victory through a less formal physical confrontation. The comically grandiose nature of the dreams is an important feature of the original, and could be portrayed through a digressive sequence. *The original man finds no one at the brothel and stays with Liza.* The modern man will find Liza and the dreamer. This will provide another opportunity for interaction and conflict between the three characters and their discourse. Liza will end up going home with the underground man, leaving the dreamer heartbroken. Parts of the original dinner scene will be transferred here, including the drunkenness. It will be another one of those uncomfortable situations, as in the novel, where the hero is constantly in inner turmoil, and on the verge of doing something completely inappropriate. The girl, who, unlike the novel, has a choice in the matter, will be attracted to the hero's mysterious distance and apparent conviction. His argumentation can be appealing and convincing, and his extreme positions can be engaging. The dreamer, on the other hand, with his artistic temperament, can also be appealing but much less coherent and convincing. Also his more open demeanour makes him vulnerable to criticism, and his obvious devotion to Liza makes him the less intriguing choice. This setting is not part of either work as such, but it carries the two personalities in full, as well as a counterpoint to both of them in Liza.

Part Six & Seven

In the brothel, after they have made love, the original underground man interrogates Liza, and tries to assert his control by subjecting her to a long speech about her grim future. The hero's victory is achieved but undermined by a sense of remorse. Liza's character is relatively passive in this scene. In the new work she needs to be on equal terms with him, in keeping with the adjusted nature of her character. Those two effects can actually reinforce each other. A less passive Liza immediately

undermines the underground man's sense of success and control. The hero's discourse can retain its tone and structure, interspersed with contrasting images of decadence and bliss, but will be counter-balanced by her objections and protest. His victim is less defenceless in the new work, but he eventually manages to depress her. An important aspect of the original in this scene is the question of whether he means any of the things he says. The hero himself suggests that what starts as an exercise in manipulation gradually evokes honest emotion in him, but the distinction is never entirely clear. This effect will be retained. The hero's apparent victory at the end of this sequence thus remains an ambiguous one as well. As discussed in 4.4.10, the less personal perspective afforded by the cinematic image reinforces the effect of ambiguity. It allows for the rendering of a dynamic balance between the character's words and his emotional state, without offering a concrete pronouncement.

In the course of this scene, Liza's character will be developed further, as she opposes him and recounts her story. She will tell a slightly different story to each man, asserting her independence from them, by controlling her image in their eyes. In both novels, the woman represents the hero's chance for a real life. Her modern incarnation is the character that neither of them can be, intelligent but not blocked by it, emotional but not hysterical, a functioning member of society. She is not passive like the original Liza but she does share her pity for the underground man. She is not selfish like Nastenka but she does shy away from the dreamer's overbearing devotion. She asserts her own control, less conscious than the underground man, and less fanciful than the dreamer, but more at peace with herself and the world. The conflict that begins between two characters in untenable positions gains another element, in contrast to both of them, of a more healthy alternative. This structure is in agreement with the poetics of both original works, with the only difference that the healthy alternative is here made more explicit. This is a valid and necessary adjustment, since the new work has strayed from the closed first person format. Nevertheless, Liza cannot be an example

of perfection. This would undermine the strategy of the original discourse by offering a clear solution. Furthermore, it would focus the character's problems on their psychological aspect, whereas the goal is to implicate their ideological struggle. Liza needs to have a weakness of her own, that will make her a real character and facilitate her interaction with the two men. The original devices of the prostitute (Liza) and the abandoned woman (Nastenka) could not work to the same effect in the modern setting. The modern Liza's handicap will be substance abuse. She is a recovering addict, always in danger of a relapse. She did not experiment with substances in order to escape reality, but in order to experience it more fully, by suspending her intellectual faculties, in contrast to the two men. The addiction, and the suggestion of a troubled past, is the reason why she adjusts her story for each man. This not only makes her character more complicated, it also sets her in a vulnerable position where the two men can offer assistance or present obstacles. In this particular scene, the underground man can use that knowledge against her, in order to crush her spirit. The dreamer, on the other hand, wants desperately to be able to help her.

Part Eight

The next day, the original underground man tries to smooth things over with his classmates and writes an apologetic letter. The modern man would use some type of social media platform for his apology. This is not just a functional modernisation, the effect of social media on the behaviour of introverted people is significant and therefore relevant in the context of the underground man's personality. The safe exposure that they offer creates a safer outlet for people with social handicaps. It is the ideal platform for people like the hero, who are insecure and self-centred. The original character's contentment with his letter dissipates as he considers Liza and the possibility of seeing her again. Dreams of life-long romance are corrupted by feelings of insecurity. Under this stress he starts a fight with his servant Apollon. This confrontation comes when the hero starts to fear that his control over Liza is a fiction, and he tries to reassert his will over another. That escalates into a

fight and when Liza does appear, he is in a vulnerable state and very upset. The modern man will attempt to sort things out with his workshop colleagues and the function of Apollon will be once more assumed by the dreamer. This is dictated by the dramatic symmetry of the new work, and serves the same function as before. All the characters that the dreamer has replaced are perceived as intruders in the underground man's territory, threats to his sense of self-worth. Nevertheless, they are not interchangeable. This means that the dreamer cannot be stretched to fit these roles without compromising his integrity as a character. It is important to achieve a balance between adjustments to the character and adjustments to his narrative functions, so that he serves the structure of the story while remaining a consistent and plausible character. The fact that the main characters are established to a great extent in the original works, and can be described in depth even out of the context of their respective narratives, as well as the fact that they have a clear and significant internal conflict, makes this process much easier. Also, the fact that the supporting characters in the novel are not equally developed allows for their 'possession' by the dreamer. The confrontation between the two men, built on their personalities, can carry the narrative function, as well as the discourse, of the scene with Apollon. It will also revolve around their work and Liza.

Part Nine

This is the climactic scene of the original, where the hero admits to having manipulated Liza, and offers a long self-deprecating confession to the silent girl, who has come to ask for his help. His hysterical breakdown turns into another attack on her. Her completely unexpected reaction of embracing him makes him confident and hateful at the same time, and they make love. This scene works perfectly as the culmination of the new work, with the difference of Liza's passivity. As discussed before, Liza is not the naïve prostitute but a healthier, albeit flawed, alternative to the main characters. She will contribute more to the conversation and her pity will not come from pure instinct, but from a real understanding of the other's situation. She is attracted by his potential, he is

not her last resort, and she recognises his struggle, seeing beyond his insults. Her embrace is her final attempt to reach him.

Part Ten

The hero cannot accept her gesture. Her understanding puts him in an inferior position and triggers his arrogance. He cannot overcome his dread of determination by another, and intellectually dismisses the offer for help. He sends her away and rationalises his behaviour as the best course of action for her benefit, making himself the noble victim. The original underground man gave Liza money as a final insult that would drive her away. The modern man will achieve the same result by taking advantage of her weakness and offering narcotics. Like her predecessor, she will not take it and leave. *The novel ends with another personal segment of the hero questioning his decision to write, and a generalisation of his personality to all humankind.* As discussed before, the appropriate ending to the film would be another documentary segment, but one that is more personal than the rest. The hero actually exposes himself this time, and offers his last attack on the world in person. After he has made his point, the film will slowly start to fade out as he is speaking, suggesting the endless nature of his struggle.

4.6.2 White Nights

The second work is used in a supporting capacity and will be treated differently. The narrative structure will not be followed closely, but the character will be transferred faithfully, as he carries the aspects of the work that have been deemed essential by the chosen reading. Therefore, while the main narrative situation of the work, the dreamer's unrequited love for Nastenka, will be transferred, it will be adjusted around the events of the main narrative structure that has been established for the film. The character and his embodied ideas will be extracted from the text and inserted into the story of the underground man. This strategy retains the central aspect of the work,

according to the Bakhtinian poetics, and integrates it into the experiment in Bakhtinian polyphony.

First Night

The dreamer's account starts with a monologue, somewhat similar to that of the underground man, in which he describes himself and his relationship with his environment. He observes the city and its people from a distance and imagines their lives. He constructs poetic images and metaphors for their existence. This section is the only long internal monologue, The rest of the text mainly consists of the dreamer's dialogue with Nastenka. Therefore, this section belongs in an equivalent to the underground man's initial short film. The dreamer's film will win the competition and ignite the other's hostility. Unlike his counterparts dark, pessimistic, argumentative film, the dreamer's work will be positive, romantic and poetically abstract. In this way, both characters have been introduced through their discourse in the novels, translated in cinematic terms.

The dreamer meets Nastenka crying on a bridge and immediately offers his assistance. Liza has just escaped from the rehabilitation centre and is struggling with her choices. This puts her in a position of needing help, and also mirrors Nastenka's situation of confinement at home. He is struggling with his problem of social expression while she is distracted from her problems and thankful for his company. They set another date and part ways. She goes back to the rehabilitation centre. The similar emotional situations of the characters to their originals allows for a rather close rendering of the original discourse.

Second Night

On this night the original characters share their stories. The dreamer does not offer a narrative but a description of a personality type. Nastenka's story is more conventional, and is even given a chapter heading. Parts of the dreamer's discourse will be suggested through narrative events, while

others will be transferred to his interaction with the underground man and Liza. The four nights will not be transferred as four concrete sections but will be adjusted into the new narrative structure. This fragmentation is necessary for the cohesion of the new work, but also appropriate for the adaptation, as it has been decided that the literary style of the men's discourse will be translated into cinematic terms. In that sense, the gradual revelation of the characters through action, discourse and cinematic suggestion operates in similar fashion to its literary counterpart. An important aspect of the literary strategy is that it is underlined and pointed out. This is a crucial element that needs to be retained. This will be done through the discourse itself, but also through stylistic devices, specifically adjusted to each character as discussed before (4.5.4.).

This scene will reveal the two characters further and will advance the narrative of the dreamer's devotion to Liza. He describes his dream-world and his fear of the future. She tells her story, in a separate section, as in the original, a device that will be repeated when she tells a different story to the underground man.

Third Night

On this night, the dreamer and Nastenka wait for her lover but he does not appear. She goes from hopeful to depressed and he feels that he has a chance. The lover narrative is no longer part of the story and this is where Liza's part of the new narrative will intersect with the underground man. The dreamer will manage to get himself into the filmmaking workshop of the main story, and he will bring Liza along. Their discourse will be transferred to the scenes preceding the workshop and the sequence with all three characters at the bar.

Fourth Night

Nastenka is devastated because the man she was waiting for has not responded, and turns to the

dreamer as a last resort. When he does appear, she immediately leaves with him. The modern Liza is not that type of character, but their final meeting will have the same essential structure. This scene would come after her night with the underground man, but before her final visit to him. The three characters will go through their final confrontations in pairs, the dreamer and Liza, the dreamer and the underground man, the underground man and Liza. Each of these three consecutive scenes will be the culmination of their respective interactions. At the end of this first one, Liza will have made her choice and the dreamer will be heartbroken.

Morning

This chapter offers the final pronouncements of the dreamer, that in the new work will be expressed in the subsequent scene with the underground man. This is the scene that is based on the underground man's conflict with Apollon. Finally, the two men part ways without reconciling their differences, or either of them achieving a definitive moral victory. Nevertheless, they have both expressed themselves sincerely, even though they cannot change, and will keep filtering the world through their distorting lenses.

4.7 Outline of the New Work

Both works have been examined according to the structure that was suggested by the poetics. The process has yielded a tentative description of the new work. This involves an approximate plotline, a description of the main characters, and a number of stylistic choices. The reading of the work, based on Bakhtin's analysis and complemented by other scholars, was translated into a poetic structure and then applied to the texts themselves. The process combined structural analysis with creative intuition. The decisions that were made originated from the source, either as poetic necessities or as intellectual inspiration. In both cases these decisions were examined in the context of the poetics, as formulated in this project. In the case of intuitive ideas, the poetic structure serves

in two stages. Firstly, the engagement with the text that leads to the poetics offers fertile ground for the inspiration. Secondly, the final poetic framework functions as a tool for the evaluation of the ideas.

On every stage of the process, the subjective sensibility of the adapter is at work. It affects the choice of the reading, the formulation of the reading into a poetic system, the transposition of that system between the media, and the final rendering of the new work. In that sense, this study is not suggesting a correct method of adaptation, but a rational approach to its process. There is no assumption of singular solutions, but a system of filters and hierarchies, that arguably structures the engagement with the source text in a meaningful manner. The description presented below is the reiteration of the choices made in this specific analysis. It offers a concise image of the new work in the hope that it will help evaluate the method employed in its creation. This image is comprised of plot, character descriptions and choices of form.

4.7.1 Plotline

This is a tentative outline of the narrative, as suggested by the decisions made in the preceding sections. It is not meant to be a full picture of the film. The next stages of the creation of the film would probably demand further adjustments. The poetics of the work could be revisited at that point to answer the questions that will arise, and address problems that have not been foreseen. The plotline is presented as a scene-by-scene outline.

1. The underground man's short film (a statement of intent, personal introduction)
2. The dreamer's short film (a poetic, abstract account of his observations)
3. The film festival, the dreamer wins and unintentionally offends the underground man
4. Documentary segment regarding the conscious and the spontaneous man

5. The underground man visits his old classmates (including backstory segment)
6. The dreamer meets Liza on the street
7. Documentary segment regarding the meaninglessness of moral concepts
8. The underground man is obsessed with the other, makes a plan to return the insult
9. Documentary segment regarding the assertion of free will
10. They eventually meet and interact in a friendly/adversarial manner
11. The competition for the workshop, the underground man wins
12. Documentary segment regarding the struggle with definition
13. Second meeting of the dreamer with Liza, they talk about themselves (Liza's first story). The dreamer manages to get them both into the workshop
14. Documentary segment regarding the attack against deterministic systems and the absurdity of human behaviour
15. The workshop meeting, all three present, the underground man is disruptive
16. Underground man, dreamer and Liza at the bar, she leaves with the former
17. Documentary segment regarding the pleasure of suffering
18. Underground man's and Liza's night together, he interrogates her (Liza's second story) and torments her psychologically
19. The dreamer's final meeting with Liza, he accepts her rejection and still pledges his devotion
20. Documentary segment regarding the aversion to finality
21. Confrontation of the underground man and the dreamer
22. Documentary segment with the underground man's final polemical assertion of free will
23. Final meeting of the underground man and Liza, she offers herself and he sends her away
24. The underground man's final pronouncements (personal documentary segment)

4.7.2 Characters

The two main characters are the element of the originals that the new work has retained to the greatest extent. Even though the narrative structure has been altered, and the discourse has been adjusted to the new format, the two protagonists have been transferred with relative accuracy. This was dictated by the poetics of the works as presented in section 4.3. The characters' personalities, and the ideas that they represent through their discourse and actions, have been identified as the main object of representation in the original works. The descriptions of the two men in the new work are close approximations of their original counterparts. Liza on the other hand, retains certain attributes of her component characters but is not modelled on them. She shares their function but not their personalities. This is also justified by the poetics of the original texts, as both female characters functioned mainly as narrative and discursive catalysts in the men's stories. The modern Liza will thus serve the same purpose in the new work, but also as a link between the two stories. Furthermore, Liza will be elevated to a complete character, a third subjectivity, and receive the same treatment as the two men. This will further facilitate the transfer of the discourse from the literary texts and also open the discursive floor to external ideas. This adjustment is an exercise of what has been termed dialogic fidelity in two ways. It functions as a strategy that allows for the transfer of the poetics, while at the same time questions the original through an address of sociological changes in gender roles.

The Underground Man: The modern underground man has a civil service job that he dislikes, no social life, and an obsession with filmmaking, his only form of expression. He is highly intelligent and rigorously critical of every aspect of the world around him, as well as of himself. He is arrogant and insecure, governed by an overwhelming need to feel superior in any social situation. His self-destructive tendencies are inextricably linked to his intellectual struggle. His ingrained ideas are the cause, but also the justification, of his antisocial behaviour. He approaches others with a mix of

contempt and envy. The only people that manage to achieve more complicated relationships with him are the dreamer and Liza. The dreamer is similar to him in some ways, but he is also the closest he has found to a worthy discursive adversary. Liza offers him a chance to relinquish control through human contact and make a meaningful connection with another. The dreamer manages to temporarily circumvent his intellectual barrier of contempt, and Liza his pathological need for control. In both cases, the experiment fails, as the roots of his dysfunction are too strong.

The Dreamer: The modern dreamer does not have a day job. His financial situation allows him to indulge in his daydreaming. He is also intelligent and educated, but emotionally unstable. He channels his artistic temperament, inspired by his vivid imagination, into film. His distracted nature and sensitive personality hinder his relations with others, who either don't understand him, or feel burdened by his overwhelming attention. Nevertheless, the dreamer fits more easily in a social environment than the underground man, mainly due to his complete lack of vanity. If the underground man is an existentialist, the dreamer is a romantic, equally tormented, but for different reasons. As in the novel, the dreamer is not a hopeless case. His recourse to art is healthier and less disruptive than his counterpart's endless analysis. Their interaction is instigated by the underground man, but the dreamer enters into it with genuine interest, undeterred by the other's aggression, and engaging with him through his own temperament. In his relationship with Liza, the dreamer demonstrates his social inexperience. He immediately offers his unconditional devotion, which is more than she can reciprocate. When she finally extinguishes his hopes, he still wishes for her happiness. His final meeting with the underground man reveals their irreconcilable differences, and also his concern for Liza's well-being. At the end he is alone again, but closer to the possibility of a more balanced existence.

Liza: The modern Liza is a composite character in the structure of the adaptation, but not in terms

of her personality. She is the antithesis of the two men, the counterargument to their discourse. Despite her structurally derivative function as catalyst, she will be a fully formed character, with her own voice. This offers the opportunity to develop some aspects of the originals that are limited due to their closed perspective. Furthermore, this approach presents the possibility for an alternative to the prevalent discourse. The introduction of a third consciousness constitutes another departure from the text, but one that is based on the poetics, albeit in a more flexible sense, and aims to further interrogate the source. In the same structure that allows the male characters to embody their ideas, Liza's character can address issues that are external to the text, but also complementary of it. For example the issue of gender roles in a contemporary context can be developed and integrated into the existing discourse. This changes the dynamic balance of the original relationships, but it can be the basis of a more complex interaction, in the spirit of Bakhtinian polyphony.

Liza is of the same age as the two men, with similar education and intellectual capacity. She is also sensitive but much more comfortable in social situations. She has been gathering experiences, while the others pondered. In her attempt to experience everything, she experimented with substances and developed an addiction. In the rehabilitation centre she comes to terms with her choices, and intellectually understands that she needs to impose some kind of structure in her life, but she often finds the restrictions unbearable. That is when she comes into the story. Her meeting with the dreamer allows both of them to explore their opposites. He is fascinated by her life, and she enjoys his poetic temperament. Her subsequent attraction to the underground man is more connected to her dark side, her self-destructive tendencies, and is fuelled by her own self-doubt. What intrigues her in him is his apparent conviction and façade of intellectual structure. His intermittent lack of control appeals more to her than the dreamer's, because it is closer to her experience of the world. The dreamer's view can appear naïve in its romanticism, while the underground man's, however contradictory or unpleasant, is more pragmatic. At the end of the story, she has acquired another

unpleasant experience, but her empathy has allowed her to understand the other, and as a result, herself. She may not have found solutions to her problems, but she is better equipped to deal with them. She has retained her dignity and successfully battled temptation.

4.7.3 Style

As discussed before, the film will attempt to transfer the dialogic nature of the original in cinematic terms, but without retaining the strict first person point of view. There will be varying degrees of personal discourse, rendered through different devices, and attributed to all three of the main characters. The subjective point of view will be retained, but assigned to each of the characters and implemented on the basis of Bakhtinian utterances: every discursive point will be attributed to a character, and modelled according to the character that it is being addressed to. This strategy will inform the image (composition, colours, texture), that will be personalised for each character, sound (voice-over, music), that will underline or undermine the image accordingly, and editing, that will visualise the juxtapositions of people and ideas. More specifically, the underground man's subjectivity will be visualised through constraining but dynamic compositions, with muted colours and high depth of field. His face will often be obscured or in the shadow. The sound that accompanies his presence will be slightly distorted and without a rhythm. The dreamer's character will be signalled through elaborate but traditionally composed shots, with saturated colours and shallow depth of field. He will usually not appear in the foreground of the compositions, so his features will not be clear. His audio track will be comprised of rhythmic themes. Liza's audiovisual treatment will be the most grounded one, with fluid camera movement throughout, that follows her action smoothly and captures her facial expressions. Her soundscape is realistic, and mainly comprised on diegetic sound. The scenes where the characters are alone will be fairly consistent, but the scenes where they interact will contain shifts from one style to the other. The fragmented structure of the result constitutes an approximation to a filmic representation of the original dialogic

strategy. The multi-track nature of the medium, and its inherent strength in rendering contrast through editing, allow for an opening of the discourse to multiple voices, while retaining the subjectivity of the original.

This audio-visual treatment will also carry the tone of heightened realism. The effect will not stem from the situations or the dialogue, as it did in the novels, but from their cinematic rendering. The reason for this is the difference of the media. The events and the dialogue will be somewhat dramatically paired down, in consideration of the less forgiving nature of cinematic representation in terms of verisimilitude (4.4.11). If that did not happen, the ‘realism’ would be diminished. But a simply grounded version would be missing the ‘heightened’ aspect. This is reintroduced in the style of the film, that will constantly inform, comment on, and elevate the material. This will happen through devices that disrupt the realistic representation of events. According to Bakhtin, the author is objectively describing subjectivities, and therefore the priority is in the comprehension of the characters, rather than identification with them. Dostoevsky’s heightened realism is not just an amplification of reality. It is amplification aimed at the exploration of human nature. An imitation of the strategy in this case would miss its original target, while a different strategy can achieve it. The one suggested in this case transfers the required function from the narrative to the stylistic plane, with the aim of achieving a substantial approximation to the original, within the boundaries of the new medium.

4.7.4 Subsequent Stages of the Adaptation

The actual adaptation of the work has three more stages, the writing of a screenplay, the filming, and the editing. In any of these stages it would probably become necessary to adjust the plan that has been suggested here. Some ideas might be exposed as non-viable, and would have to be dismissed. Others might evolve into different versions of themselves. It might even become

necessary to move back to this stage and re-evaluate certain conceptual aspects. This thesis suggests that every stage of the process of adaptation can be creatively informed by this mode of thinking. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, *Apocalypse Now*, was re-visited in conjunction with *Heart of Darkness* on multiple stages of the process. In a similar fashion, all stages of the film project discussed here can benefit from this type of analysis. The groundwork is set in the planning, and the strategy needs to be established at this stage, but there will always be more questions on the way, questions that can also be addressed by returning to the work's poetics. The method suggested in this thesis has two levels. It demands the rigorous examination of the original and transforms it into a framework for the new work. This framework can then function as an indicative model that will guide creativity and inform decisions. The template can also be used to re-examine a complete screenplay in conjunction with the source text. It is a helpful guide that contains a concise image of the original. In that sense it could be seen as a non-metaphysical definition of the 'spirit of the text'.

4.8 Findings/Conclusions

This concludes the practical case study of the theory. The ideas of this thesis in terms of adaptation practice mainly function as a planning strategy. The resulting description of the proposed new work is an image of a possible implementation of the theory. It is not suggested that the proposed structure offers the best approximation to the source. It is not even suggested that it is the best implementation of the chosen reading. The question of quality is too intricately connected to subjective creative capacity and evaluation to allow for definitive answers on that front. Furthermore, one of the basic attributes of this theory is its flexibility, which works against any mechanistic structure. The suggestion here is that this method can facilitate intelligent discussion on any instance of adaptation. It can form a solid bridge between the two works and address the transfer of the content. It can help to answer the questions that arise in the process of adaptation in a way that includes the original.

It needs to be pointed out that this method is flexible in terms of implementation, but does demand a specific approach. It demands a close and consciously critical analysis of the original. It also demands a willingness to actually adapt the text, rather than reference or allude to it. This method is applicable only in cases when conscious engagement with the source is a priority. Not all practices of adaptation, in the wider definition of the term, will fall in this category, and therefore the method only concerns part of the actual practice of adaptation.

In the course of this case study, a number of critical issues have surfaced. In the reading stage it became evident that a wide variety of sources and interpretations is useful and inspirational. Nevertheless, the over-abundance of information can lead to a crowded or contradictory poetic system. Therefore, it is even more crucial that the chosen reading is consistent and concise, even when it combines a number of sources. An additional point that could be made here is that academic readings are not absolutely necessary in a general application of the theory. The process could function with a completely personal interpretation of the work. The adapter could offer their own reading of the material, and construct the poetic system on that basis. The structuring of the ideas into an abstract system is the crux of the thesis.

Another observation is that the process of transforming the reading into a poetic system suggested ideas for the transposition, even before the third stage of the project. A stage that was anticipated to be more mechanical actually brought about some of the main breakthroughs of the subsequent steps. The schematic representation is useful in terms of record-keeping, but ultimately it was the analysis that led to it that offered the solutions to the issues of transposition. The way of thinking that the method enforces is actually more useful than its organisational clarity. It also became apparent that the structural hierarchy of the process needs to remain flexible. The priorities of the text need to be adhered to, regardless of their nature as thematic, narrative or stylistic elements. This

was anticipated, and mentioned in conjunction to the other case study in this thesis. *Heart of Darkness* functioned through a hierarchy of narrative and style serving the thematic discourse, whereas *Notes from Underground* demonstrated a more horizontal structure of thematic and form-related priorities. The method proposed in this thesis was able to accommodate both works by not enforcing a priori hierarchies but by adjusting to the structure of each text.

The discussion of the transposition of the poetics created a dilemma. It soon became clear that the order of examination of different elements of the poetics would influence the final result. Every examination suggested a solution that became a part of the new work. That solution was, from that point onwards, a prerequisite in the discussion of the next element, and informed its outcome. The possibilities of this element were thus limited by the previous decision. This can greatly amplify the arbitrary aspect of the process, since a different order of address could alter the result. The problem in this case would not be the plurality of ideas, but the lack of control, an important aspect of the process. It became evident that in order to mitigate this phenomenon, every solution would have to be based on the original assumptions of the poetics, and the conflict between different solutions would have to be ignored during the initial consideration. On the other hand, it is also imperative that the solutions are compatible with each other and that their combination can result in a consistent work. This introduces the need for prioritisation. As the work progresses it becomes necessary to consider every solution as a result of the poetic strategy, but also in conjunction to all previous decisions. Whenever the new idea clashes with a previous one, one of them has to be adjusted, or even dismissed completely. The decision can be made by addressing the balance between the priorities of the original and the demands of the new medium. The idea that offers the best fit with the poetics of the original but does not clash with the new form prevails. This type of analysis means that sometimes, a previous solution has to be adjusted and therefore the whole structure has to be re-examined. This is actually relatively easy in practice, mainly due to the

concise nature of the poetic structure. The poetic description of the work is so inherently simple that it is possible to keep all of its elements in mind at all times, and imagine a complete map of their framework. Therefore, every new idea can be instantly placed in the context of the others, and evaluated immediately.

Another observation is that the apparent link to the source provided by the poetic fidelity permitted more drastic departures from the original. Alterations that would appear too drastic in a casual examination of the text are now rationalised through the discussion of functions. This phenomenon entails an element of danger. The subjective choice of reading, and the unpredictable nature of creative input allow for the possibility of a work that is entirely removed from the original in any mind but the adapter's. The identification of functions can be reassuring and flexible, but it may also be a rationalisation after the fact, an argument for the creative decision and not a basis for its origin. It is probably impossible to know exactly to what extent an idea derives from the process or from the imagination, but this information is probably unnecessary. Even if one uses the method to make arguments for the creative choices, the attempt to structure the choices into arguments is a checking mechanism for the new work. Arguably, the interaction of the two processes will produce the best result.

The next page contains a list of the creative choices that were made in the course of this chapter, coupled with the rationale behind them.

| Choice | Rationale |
|--|--|
| Inclusion of <i>White Nights</i> | Bakhtin's reading of polyphony, dramatization of the discourse, compatibility of the characters |
| Modern setting | Bakhtin's reading of timelessness, modern relevance, priority of discourse and character over setting, more analytical potential |
| Hybrid point of view (mix between three first person perspectives and objective discourse) | Dialogic nature of the monologues, necessities of the new medium |
| The heroes are filmmakers | Analogy with the writers of the original medium, the character's discourse is creatively translated from word to image |
| Fusion and development of the female characters | Bakhtinian polyphonisation, link between the works, commentary on the original |
| Parts one and two are intertwined | Demands of the new medium, different approach to the dialogisation of the discourse |
| Use of daydream sequences | Comical undermining of the discourse through cliché, according to the poetics |
| No chronological distance between the two parts | Bakhtin's reading of timelessness, necessity of multiple subjectivities |
| The dreamer assumes the role of the officer and Apollon | Combination of the works through polyphony |
| Liza is an addict | Bakhtinian unfinalisedness, she cannot be a clear, perfect alternative to the men |
| Use of point of view shots, voice-over, subtitles | Rendering of the character's subjectivity |
| Formal inconsistency | Experiment in stylistic polyphony |
| Different stylistic rendering of each character | Contrast between subjectivities |
| Image stylisation | Transposition of verbal stylisation of the originals |
| Devices that underline the artifice of the work (dissolves, chapter headings) | Rendering of the original's overt literariness |
| Highlighting of juxtaposition through editing | Rendering of dialogic nature of the originals |

The discussion of functions also makes the transfer of a classic work into a modern setting much easier. If the functions of the topical and historical parameters can be identified, they can be transformed into their modern equivalents, or transferred to other elements of the new work. If the original is making a point based on the social context of its time, it might be necessary to examine

how that discussion is relevant today, and in some cases it might be revealed that a modernisation is not advisable. A danger that was identified in the process of this case study, was that a modernisation can potentially hijack the process. It demands significant changes and therefore takes over part of the discussion. That presents the danger of reverting from a transposition between media to a transfer between spatio/temporal settings. Furthermore, it enforces an initial distance from the original, that can sever more connections than necessary. It is important to remember that the priority in the transposition is the poetics of the work and that it is always necessary to question all solutions not as superficial equivalences but as functional alternatives.

It probably needs to be pointed out here that the evaluation of this study does not coincide with an evaluation of the imagined film that has been outlined. The quality of the suggested adaptation is a highly unquantifiable measure, and cannot reflect the validity of the method employed to create it. A good result, as well as a bad one, can very well be a reflection of the researcher's creative capacity. Furthermore, a success or failure to implement the method in one case does not endorse or discredit the method altogether. The aim of this case study was not to suggest a perfect example of adaptation based on a deterministic system, but to demonstrate that the proposed method can indeed be productive in the discourse of adaptation practice and that it can reveal fruitful possibilities, when applied to a specific project.

Another reason that doesn't allow for the identification of the work with the method is the fact that the work is incomplete. It is not yet a film, and although it has been described on a conceptual level, it is understood that many more choices need to be made before the final work is finished. As has been explained, many of the decisions will be re-evaluated, through further scrutiny during the actual implementation, a process that will also benefit from the poetic analysis and returns to the source.

In summary, this thesis argues that a focus on poetics, through the strategy that has been termed dialogic fidelity, can be applied to adaptation practice, with the following results:

1. A significant level of proximity with the text based on its poetic structure, that encompasses narrative, style and thematic discourse.
2. A ranking of the original elements, regardless of their nature, creating a hierarchical structure.
3. An address of the medium-specificity problem through the translation of elements into their functions.
4. A circumvention of the form-content barrier through flexibility for the migration of elements among narrative, stylistic and thematic states.
5. The formulation of a concise outline of the literary works, that allows for a clear overview of the transfer, and immediate evaluation of solutions.
6. To function as a question-answering tool in the process of adaptation and as a framework for the evaluation of its result.

This experiment has intentionally operated on the edge of fidelity, examining many types of departure from the source, to demonstrate why and how fidelity discourse can serve a logical, flexible, creative process of adaptation. The attempt of this chapter has not been to show how the creative choices deterministically derive from the source, but to demonstrate how choices can be inspired from the original, based on a system of analysis that operates on the balance between artistic freedom and engagement with the source.

Chapter 5:

Conclusions and Evaluation of the Theory

5.1 Introduction

This last chapter will attempt to summarise the main points of the theory and assess the results of its implementation. The research question, how the focus on poetic structures can inform the examination of the interaction that takes place in a case of literature to film adaptation, will be revisited in order to re-examine the thesis in conjunction with the findings of chapters three and four. The aims and objectives that were set in the beginning will be addressed in order to ascertain the level to which they were achieved and to speculate on possibilities that were not considered. The academic literature on adaptation will be revisited, in order to determine whether the theoretical assessment of the thesis in terms of its application in the obstacles that face adaptation theory is supported by the results of the tests. The main points of the theory will be reiterated, in an attempt to provide a concise description of the core elements, informed by the specific examinations. The definitions of the central concepts of the thesis, adaptation, fidelity, intertextuality and poetics, will be juxtaposed to the conclusions of the two test chapters in order to evaluate their validity and potential.

The contribution of Bakhtin's theory to this study will be appraised in terms of the concepts of his thought that were more useful, and the ideas that were integrated in the theoretical framework. The methodology will be re-examined in order to judge its function in the tests and its validity in conjunction with the theory. At this point it will be possible to offer some conclusions regarding the contribution of this thesis in the field of adaptation studies. Finally, this chapter will present a number of ideas for future research in the spirit of this thesis, and discuss potential for further

development of its ideas.

5.2 Research Question

The question that was put forth at the beginning of this thesis is how the focus on an artistic plan, originating from an interrogation of a literary work, can inform the examination of the interaction that takes place in a case of literature to film adaptation. The concept of poetics was introduced to describe this abstract representation of the work's mechanics. Through the initial research, the distinction between adaptation as process and as product became crucial, and therefore the methodology was formulated in the attempt to examine the question in terms of both aspects.

In terms of the academic discourse, the research has suggested that a theoretical focus on poetics can suggest solutions for many of the conceptual obstacles in the field. Nevertheless, the application of the notion of poetics demands a specific vantage point. This approach makes the assumption that the dialogue between the two works is the central point of the discourse. By defining adaptation as engagement with the source text, this thesis relegates discussions of allusion, reference and quotation to secondary status. In that sense, it does not cover the full theoretical spectrum and therefore cannot address all modes of transposition. By focusing on functions rather than specific elements of the text, this approach cannot account for transpositions that cannot be translated into a transfer of functions.

In terms of adaptation criticism, the conclusions have also been encouraging. It is important to make the clarification that in order for the theory to be applicable in a case of adaptation criticism, it is not necessary for the adapter to have engaged in this type of thinking. If that were the case, the scope of this study would be very limited. The ideas presented here can address any instance of transposition from the specific perspective of text interaction, regardless of the aims or strategies of

the adapter. The connections that can be revealed between the works are not necessarily the result of intentional choices. Furthermore, different interpretations of either work can lead to a different illumination of the dialogue between them. Nevertheless, it is also true that the more detached the product is from the source, the more probable it is that the study of the connections between the works will be fruitless. In that sense, the more narrow scope of the theoretical aspect of the thesis translates into its application on adaptation criticism. The crucial positive aspect from that respect is that even though the theory cannot address superficial interactions, it is specifically equipped to examine the ones that do engage with the original. Because of this, it can see beyond departures from the source and reveal common ground on a conceptual level. The approach of this thesis does not examine the adapter's intentions, or provide a strict comparison of content between the works. It operates through inference and interpretation, in order to illuminate the crucial connections between a literary text and a film.

In terms of adaptation practice, it has been suggested that the methodological structure can reinforce the creative intuitive process, through a meaningful consideration of the source. It is important to note that the system described here does not profess to offer solutions that are not attainable through any other means. The results of the application of this rationale on a case of adaptation practice will not be singular or necessarily optimal. The solutions that will be suggested are approaches that could be arrived at intuitively, or through alternate types of analysis. The claim of this thesis is that it provides an organisational infrastructure that poses questions and informs the evaluation of the hypotheses that will lead to the answers. Furthermore, the methodology ensures that the solutions are rooted in a substantial conceptual understanding of the original, and that they are compatible with each other within the new medium. This approach can help sort through ideas through a filter of a concise interpretation of the original and select a set that can function as a framework for a complete new work.

5.3 Aims and Objectives

The central aim of this study was an attempt to formulate an original viewpoint on literature to film adaptation. The specific approach that has been presented in this thesis does not appear in any of the relevant literature. Reasonably, it shares certain ideas and components with certain areas of academic discourse, that have been discussed in chapter one. Bakhtin's contribution to this project was paramount. His notion of dialogism, his view of authorship, and the concept of the chronotope, were essential tools in the formulation of the theoretical background of this research. Bakhtin's view of the literary work as an utterance attributed to an authorial agency, forms one of the basic theoretical devices of this thesis. "Every utterance in this sense has its author, whom we hear in the very utterance as its creator. Of the real author, as he exists outside the utterance, we can know absolutely nothing at all. And the forms of this real authorship can be very diverse. A given work can be the product of a collective effort, it can be created by the successive efforts of generations, and so forth-but in all cases we hear in it a unified creative will, a definite position, to which it is possible to react dialogically. A dialogic reaction personifies every utterance to which it responds" (Bakhtin 1984, p.184).

All the aforementioned scholarship has informed the content of this thesis, in varying degrees. Nevertheless, it is being argued here that the final conceptual framework has not been expressed before. In that sense, this study can arguably be viewed as an original contribution on the subject of literature to film adaptation.

The first objective of this thesis was to fuse the more productive elements of the existing tendencies in adaptation theory into a coherent analytical tool. Most of the ideas that have been expressed are addressed in the literature review, but the two main aspects of the discourse that were singled out as general tendencies were fidelity and intertextuality. The fusion has been achieved by redefining

both concepts in terms of their more useful features. Fidelity was made more flexible through its transfer to a more abstract level. Intertextuality was made more specific through a reinforcement of its connection to a single source. Essentially, the two concepts were integrated into a complementary system through the notion of poetics, and resulted in the notion of dialogic fidelity.

The subsequent objective was to test the theoretical tool that resulted from the fusion on the analysis of a film adaptation of a literary work. This test was performed on the case of Francis Ford Coppola's film *Apocalypse Now*, based on Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness*. Admittedly, a single case study cannot serve as a comprehensive evaluation of the argument of this thesis. Even though the conclusions from this specific examination appear promising, a much wider application of the ideas would have to take place before it could be described as a valuable analytical tool. In the context of this thesis, it was considered more productive to create a more detailed examination of one case, than multiple examples of superficial analyses.

The final objective of this thesis was the examination of the practical aspect of the theory through the discussion of the possibilities for adaptation of a specific literary work. This test was performed on the novel *Notes from Underground* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. The test suggested that the application of the theory on the practice of adaptation can potentially function as an organisational system and as a channel for creativity.

5.4 Obstacles to a Theory of Adaptation

The discussion of the obstacles that obstruct a theory of adaptation was introduced in the literature review (1.3). After the two tests have been concluded it is appropriate to re-examine some of those obstacles in the light of the new findings.

Specialisation of the Media: The suggestion of this thesis was that a rigid categorisation could be circumvented by reverting to a more abstract system of transfer, one that would be less bound by the medium-specific nature of the works. The discussion of functions did indeed help in that respect. Nevertheless, in the context of restructuring the poetics of the original in the form of a new work, the issue of medium capacity re-enters the discussion, only this time it's not a question of transfer, but of realisation. In terms of the tests, this issue becomes relevant in different ways. When considering the existing adaptation, the categorisation served as a means to infer the adapter's strategy. This was not a priority of the juxtaposition, as its main objective was to study the connections between the works, rather than the process that produced them. In the case of practice on the other hand, it often became necessary to revert to categorical thinking, especially in the stage of the transposition of the poetics. The decisions regarding the choice of strategy that is more appropriate for the implementation of an original function is necessarily informed by a consideration of the nature of the new medium. The thesis facilitates this decision in two ways. Firstly, the fact that it is the function, rather than the original element, that is being transposed, presents a much wider area of possibilities. Secondly, the decision is in this context being made under the pre-established poetic structure. In that sense, the consideration of medium-specialisation is only a secondary parameter in the process and not its defining factor.

The Word/Image Divide: The proposition that words cannot be translated into images was addressed by suggesting a recourse to the functions of the words, that are not bound by the same restrictions. This is a process of triple translation, from the word to its function, from the function in one medium to its equivalent in the other, and from the function in the visual medium to the new specific element. This approach facilitates the transfer by operating on a level of abstraction that is less affected by the nature of the media. Furthermore, its flexibility allows for the suggestion of solutions that might not have appeared through a straightforward analysis of the source. On the

other hand, this flexibility might also be viewed as an undermining factor in the transposition. The fact that the process functions on three consecutive levels introduces potential shifts in the translation. Furthermore, every one of these levels is affected by subjective criteria. The formulation of the poetics is affected by the chosen reading, the transposition of the poetics is affected by the adapter's sensibility and agenda, the implementation is affected by the adapter's creative choices and intertextual influences. The complexity of the longer route and its fluid restrictions may potentially lead to a new work in which the original is unrecognisable. This may indeed be the case, but it is the contention of this thesis that the losses sustained during this process are significantly diminished in comparison to a process of direct transposition. While the latter process will necessarily eliminate elements of the original on grounds of untranslatability or space, the process of poetic transposition will select the crucial elements and carry them over, eliminating only the ones that are not essential and adjusting the ones that are. Taking into account the more open nature of the process to external influences, it could be argued that the process of poetics creates an environment of plurality. Different adapters, based on different readings will create new versions of the source, forming a dialogue with it as well as around it.

The Concept/Percept Discourse: In both media, the fluid nature of the audience's intellectual engagement with the work allows for the interchange between the two states. The introduction of functions further mitigates this issue, by serving the transfer of effects rather than that of information. The case of *Notes from Underground* is again relevant. The significant amount of conceptual discourse, especially in the first part of the novel, showcases the issue. The attempt to translate the entirety of the discourse into percepts would not only be difficult, it would also be counter-intuitive. This is where the hybrid nature of the filmic medium can be employed effectively. The formulation of a dialogic relationship between concepts and precepts can carry the discourse of the original in the context of the new medium. The recognition of the mechanics and the function of

that discourse can inform that formulation in order to achieve the same effect.

The Form/Content Debate: The structuralist claim of the inseparable nature of form and content, as well as the post-structuralist approach of the elimination of authorial agency, as presented in the context of adaptation by Kamilla Elliott, were discussed in chapter one (1.3). “Adaptation lies between the rock of a post-Sausurrean insistence that form does not and cannot separate from content and the hard place of poststructuralism’s debunking of content, of original and local signifieds alike” (Elliott 2003, p.3). In chapter two, Bakhtin’s theory was offered as a potential alternative. His notion of unstable signification defeated the structuralist conceptual impossibility of adaptation, while his description of the author as an organiser of interacting voices offered an efficient model for the process of a dialogic fidelity. The former idea allowed for the elevation of the discussion to the level of functions. The latter was employed as a template for the description of the conceptual agency responsible for the inferred poetic structure of the work. This Bakhtinian framework allowed for the examination of *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* in terms of the dialogic relationship between form and content. The juxtaposition of these dialogues revealed a superficially invisible proximity between the works. The translation of both form and content into collaborative functions creates images of the works that are consistent and comparable. The same was true in the case of adaptation as practice. Form and content are treated as equal aspects of the work, rather than as one entity that contains the other. The flexibility of the argument of this thesis allows not only for the modelling of the interaction between form and content, but also for the migration of functions from one to the other.

High Literature Cannot be Adapted: The argument that a classic work of literature functions perfectly within its form and any attempt to remove it can only detract from it, was addressed by suggesting a view of adaptation not as a transfer, susceptible to comparison and value judgements,

but as dialogue and reinterpretation. It has been argued that it is significantly more productive to examine adaptation as evolution, reincarnation and commentary. This approach was useful in both of the tests of this thesis. In the case of *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*, any comparison of quality between the two works would be irrelevant. On the contrary, an examination of how the film engaged with the source text and how it revisited similar premises in a different context is significantly more fertile. From this perspective adaptation is not a case of the transfer of content from one form to another, it is a process of translating the form/content relationship to another signifying system. A basic model of transfer would dismiss *Apocalypse Now* as a very poor rendering of the original. The model of poetic translation revealed a substantial system of connections and outlined significant conceptual affinities. In the case of *Notes from Underground*, the structure of the original would render any attempt at direct transfer highly problematic. The result of such a transfer would indeed be inferior to the original, a poor imitation of its source. The approach outlined in this thesis tackles the transposition as a dialogue between the literary text and the new medium, through the agency of an adapter and in the context of a socio/historical setting. In this test, the process resulted in suggestions on a new work that might potentially inform the conversation on the original.

The Interiority/Exteriority Argument: The main point of this argument is that film does not have the capacity to transfer large sections of verbal discourse. This is partly accurate, but not catastrophic in the context of adaptation. Film employs its own strategies for implying subjectivity, while parts of the verbal discourse can be potentially transferred to the visual plane. In the case of *Apocalypse Now* this issue was addressed through voice-over and a point of view that was very close to the protagonist. The result never leaves any doubt that the story is experienced and conveyed through a personal perspective. There is no easy way to argue that the film did not manage to portray the interior intellectual discourse of the novel's character.

In the case of *Notes from Underground*, this issue was also crucial. The discourse was more conceptual than descriptive, and highly self-reflexive. No amount of voice-over narration would address this problem adequately. More radical solutions were necessary. The methodology of dialogic fidelity led to the formulation of a strategy that transformed the verbal discourse into a hybrid system of a verbal/visual dialogue. Departing from the specific structure of the source, the new construct managed to retain a bigger part of it than it would be able to do otherwise. The examination of the literary text revealed two important demands, the rendering of the personal perspective and the presentation of the discourse. A consideration of the poetic structure of the text revealed that those two aspects do not necessarily need to coincide. This allowed for the personal perspective to be retained, but split between multiple agencies, greatly facilitating the rendering of the discourse.

Film Can Only Adapt the Narrative: The limiting notion that the only aspect of a novel that can survive the transfer is the narrative was presented in chapter one. Brian McFarlane establishes “procedures for distinguishing between that which can be transferred from one medium to another (essentially, narrative) and that which, being dependent on different signifying systems, cannot be transferred (essentially, enunciation)” (McFarlane 1996, p.vii). This advocacy for compromise was addressed by suggesting a flexible relationship between narrative and enunciation. This point can again be exemplified through the case studies. A simple transfer of the narrative in *Apocalypse Now* would have led to a film completely stripped of the novel’s commentary. Since that commentary was a crucial function of the novel, often undermining the narrative events, the result would have made the exact opposite point of the original. The success of the film in conveying the commentary through verbal discourse, but also through cinematic devices, is proof that the suggested compromise is not necessary. In the case of *Notes from Underground*, the proposition of strictly narrative transfer would have deemed the novel unfilmable. If such an attempt was made under this

restriction, the elimination of the commentary would have eliminated the biggest part of the literary text. At the same time, the dismissal of the original stylistic strategies would result in an indefinable story of a deranged man. It has been argued, through the exploration of the poetics of the novel, that it is possible to transpose more than the narrative of the original. In certain cases it might actually benefit the transfer to depart from that narrative in order to achieve a more substantial transposition.

Analogy: As explained in chapter one, the danger of perceiving literature and film in terms of similarity is just as substantial as examining them in terms of difference. “While these analogies imply affinities, they more often foster word and image wars” (Elliott 2003, p.2). The thesis rests on the balance between the two approaches. It uses solutions of equivalence as well as categorical distinctions in the service of a larger system. Both concepts become relevant in the process of poetic transposition. The consideration of equivalences suggests solutions for the transfer, while the categorical distinctions reveal the obstacles in the process. Both these tools are useful, but neither can perform the full process of transposition on its own. The former is too inclusive, whilst the latter is too exclusive to produce a balanced result. In the case of *Notes from Underground*, an analogical model would lead to a film that could not be sustained by its new form, while a categorical model would result in a film that contained only a small fraction of the original. The system of poetic transposition uses the two models to pose questions and to suggest answers. This dialogue produces ideas that take into account the core of the original and the attributes and potential of the new medium.

5.5 Bakhtin

The theory of Michail Bakhtin has informed this study to a great extent. His contribution is discussed in chapter two (2.9 and 2.10). Bakhtin’s type of intertextuality serves this thesis through its wide scope, and through the concept of an organising authorial agency. His descriptions of

literary works, exemplified in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984), are very close to the concept of poetics, as it is employed here. Bakhtin presents the author's work in terms of its mechanics and the functions of its elements in the whole. He creates an abstract system that is the distillation of the core of the text. He identifies aesthetic objectives and studies the structures that are employed to achieve them. Discussing Dostoevsky's polyphonic novel, Bakhtin suggests that "only in the light of this artistic project can one understand the authentic function of such compositional elements as the narrator and his tone, the compositionally expressed dialogue, and the peculiarities of narration direct from the author" (Bakhtin 1984, p.64).

The efficacy of the Bakhtinian approach to a text was demonstrated in chapter three, where it was employed in the analysis of the literary as well as the filmic text. The result was a better understanding of the works themselves, but most importantly an evaluation of their relationship. Furthermore, Bakhtin's focus on socio/historical situation, significantly informed the study of two works that are set in very different historical contexts. An observation at this point has been that because Bakhtin's theory is based on linguistic systems, his specific notions of dialogic interactions were not as useful in the context of adaptation as was his method of textual analysis. Bakhtin provides the theoretical justification for the model of the study of interactions, and a solid template for textual analysis that can be employed in any medium. His contribution in the discussion of the actual details of the transposition is less pronounced.

Bakhtin's relevance to the chapter of adaptation practice is two-fold. He provides the theoretical framework for the experiment, and also a big part of the specific textual analysis at its centre. This was a convenient coincidence. There is no suggestion here that the view of adaptation that is outlined needs to be paired with a Bakhtinian reading of the text. Nevertheless, Bakhtin's analysis of Dostoevsky's work was more easily translatable into the poetic structure that derives in part from

his theory. His notion of the chronotope, and his view of textual situation, were as relevant to this test as his examination of the literary text itself. The inclusion of other interpretive ideas in the process was necessary to cover aspects of the work that Bakhtin did not, and to accommodate the project of transposition to another medium.

5.6 Adaptation Criticism Conclusions

At the end of the case study, it was possible to draw a number of conclusions regarding the efficacy of the thesis in the case of adaptation criticism. The poetic system, as a means for describing both works, comprises a structure that facilitates their joint examination. Narrative, thematic and stylistic elements are addressed as parameters of the poetic system, that can be reshaped in the transfer but also migrate to another state. This allows for the identification of connections that would have been obscured by an analysis that separates the nature of the elements and deals with the transfer on a state-by-state basis as transfer of the narrative, themes and style respectively.

The focus on poetics allows for an inference of the adapter's process and rationale, not in biographical but in conceptual terms. It also allows for the recognition of intertextual influences and identifies their function in the new work, as well as in the dialogue between the two texts. In the same vein, the system of poetics can accommodate a discussion of the socio/historical situation of both works and thus inform the examination of the transposition. Finally, the use of an abstract descriptive system creates a reference structure that can potentially shed light on the intricacies of the inter-medium transposition itself. For example a discussion of functions can inform a comparison of the literary and filmic devices concerning point of view.

Possible Limitations: The tentative conclusion of this chapter was that a focus on poetics can indeed inform the study of the products of adaptation. Nevertheless, there are some restrictions to a

universal application of this approach. As mentioned before, this strategy cannot provide significant insight in cases of superficial transfers. Nevertheless, the superficiality is not necessarily a result of the specific process that drove the transposition, or of the intention of the adapter. This approach assumes a deeper level of connection between the works, and therefore the existence or absence of those connections will often only be revealed after the examination has taken place. This means that the system suggested here cannot offer initial pronouncements regarding the nature of the relationship, as a superficially detached film might reveal a concealed affinity, and vice versa.

Another issue that might limit the scope of this thesis is that the abstraction of addressing functions rather than elements of each work assumes an inferred intentionality in their creation. This means that the examination of works that have been created through a process that eschews intentional structures is somewhat less likely to offer significant insight. Nevertheless, the process can still identify patterns in works that do not contain them intentionally. Furthermore, the utilisation of randomness or of the subconscious can still be considered parameters of the works poetics. The issue that remains is that the results of those devices are highly unpredictable or subjective, and therefore the analysis will not be able to identify common ground beyond the point of the basic poetic structure.

A possible objection regarding the general conclusions of chapter three is the use of a specific work that seems to reinforce the central point of this thesis. The results of the study were not predetermined. The choice of *Apocalypse Now* was based on an initial hypothesis of poetic proximity. The case study was attempting to determine whether the theory can produce useful results. The fact that the object of the study contained the potential for such results was therefore fortunate, because it showcases the efficacy of the theory, not because it verifies the initial assumption.

5.7 Adaptation Practice Conclusions

Based on the experiment of chapter four, it has been argued that the poetics-based approach suggested here can function as an organising tool in the process of adaptation, and filter creative and interpretive forces through an understanding of the original. The final result can thus achieve a proximity to the source, that is not only more plausible than any type of strict fidelity, but also adheres to its most essential conceptual framework, rather than the details of its implementation. This more complex sense of fidelity works on the basis of a hierarchical structure of the original elements, regardless of their nature as narrative, thematic or stylistic, thus carrying over the ideological or aesthetic priorities of the original. Medium-specificity is partly transcended through the abstraction to functions. The poetic structure operates as an essential and concise overview of the original work, allowing for a constant examination of the transposition in the context of the work as a whole. Essentially, the structure can function as a tool that poses questions, facilitates the formulation of hypotheses and finally tests the results of the process.

Possible Limitations: The most important caveat in the efficacy of this approach is the assumption in terms of the objectives of adaptation. This system becomes irrelevant in the case of an adapter who does not wish to focus on the transfer of the original text. This restriction limits the scope of the system's application, but is in keeping with the definition of adaptation that is addressed here. Nevertheless, the system is flexible enough to incorporate various approaches to the text and different levels of engagement. For example, it could function as an organising principle for an adaptation of more than one work, or in the case of a heavily intertextual project. The poetic abstraction could potentially be applied primarily on the new work as an overarching structure for multiple influences.

Another objection that might be raised in the context of the experiment is the use of Bakhtin's reading of the literary text. The utilisation of an analysis that is compatible with the theory might be considered too convenient to allow for the extraction of general conclusions. This would not be accurate criticism. The compatibility between the theory and the example of its testing is only partly a choice of convenience. The main objective of this experiment was to explore the possibilities of the application of the theory on adaptation practice. The volume of discursive possibilities was maximised through the use of Bakhtin's reading, giving the opportunity to address several general issues of the discipline. Nevertheless, it has also been argued that any reading that can be translated into a poetic structure is applicable as a basis for the system proposed here.

5.10 Contribution

It has been argued in this thesis that a focus on poetics can inform the study of literature to film adaptation. It can do so by providing a theoretical bridge between the two media, and a conceptual framework for the examination of the transposition between them. In the area of adaptation criticism, this approach can support a meaningful comparison between works, whilst addressing important issues of adaptation discourse. The system can be applied to any work, but most importantly, it can assume any conceptual agenda in the examination. For example it can address an adaptation from a historical perspective, or through a narratological filter, and examine the transposition on that specific basis. The example provided in chapter three attempted to display a variety of areas for exploration, in order to demonstrate the potential of the theory, but it could be used in a more contained manner to achieve greater depth. The poetic-focused approach can thus serve as a flexible tool for the examination of adaptations from multiple perspectives.

In terms of adaptation practice, the poetic system can inform specific projects on multiple levels. It models the process of understanding the original, reveals the choices that need to be made in the

transposition and structures the consideration of the differences between the media. In that sense, it can serve as a conceptualising tool throughout the process, or as a checking system on specific issues that arise. It is not a mechanistic method and it does not dictate decisions, therefore it allows for a fluid cooperation between analytical structures and creative faculties.

5.11 Further Development

If this approach is accepted as valid and productive, it could potentially form the basis for a wide area of further development. In terms of the theoretical implications, the poetic approach could be applied on specific issues of adaptation discourse, such as point of view, narration and medium-specificity. Throughout this thesis these issues have been discussed, and the possible results of such applications have been outlined, but more rigorous examinations of each subject would surely yield further results. In terms of adaptation criticism, the method of this thesis could be applied to other works. This would not only provide the possibility for a better understanding of the works themselves, but it would also further the evaluation of the theory. An examination of the potential of the thesis would be greatly enhanced by more case studies, as they would reveal its strengths and weaknesses. There have been some projections on this subject, but only a wider application would demonstrate the true analytical power of the ideas suggested here. Further application would provide answers to questions such as which works (genre, style, format) and which readings are more compatible with the theory and to what extent. It would also suggest which interpretive strategies are more consonant with this approach. In terms of adaptation practice, it would be useful to observe the theory implemented on specific projects of adaptation, and employed on different levels of the process. It would also be useful to examine the application of the system on different types of literary works, again with the aim of assessing the compatibility of the approach with each one.

It is hoped that this thesis will find its place in the field of adaptation studies and instigate an original discussion. Even if it does not reach the status of a “presiding poetics” as Thomas Leitch (2003) wishes, it could be established as *a* theory of adaptation based on the concept of a presiding poetics.

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Berlin Alexanderplatz, 1980. TV Series. Directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder. Germany: Bavaria
Film

Clueless, 1995. Film. Directed by Amy Heckerling. USA: Paramount Pictures

Dr. Strangelove, 1964. Film. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. USA: Columbia Pictures

El Hombre del Subsuelo, Film. Directed by Nicolás Sarquís. Argentina

Greed, 1924. Film. Directed by Erich Von Stroheim. USA: Metro-Goldwyn Pictures Association

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, 2001. Film. Directed by Chris Columbus. USA: Warner Bros

High and Low, 1963. Film. Directed by Akira Kurosawa. Japan: Kurosawa Production Co

Le Mépris, 1963. Film. Directed by Jean-Luc Godard. France: Les films Concordia

Man Friday, 1975. Film. Directed by Jack Gold. Denmark: ABC Entertainment

Naked Lunch, 1991. Film. Directed by David Cronenberg. USA: Film Trustees Ltd

Notes from Underground, 1995. Film. Directed by Gary Walkow

O, 2001, Film. Directed by Tim Blake Nelson. USA: Chickie the Cop

Partie de Campagne, 1936. Film. Directed by Jean Renoir. France: Panthéon Productions

Quatre nuits d'un rêveur, 1971. Film. Directed by Robert Bresson. France: Albina productions

Sabotage, 1936. Film. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. UK: Gaumont British Picture Corporation

The Dark Knight Rises, 2012. Film. Directed by Christopher Nolan. USA: Warner Bros

The French Lieutenant's Woman, 1981. Film. Directed by Karel Reisz. UK: Juniper films

The Great Gatsby, 1974. Film. Directed by Jack Clayton. USA: Paramount Pictures

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The Raven, 2012. Film. Directed by James McTeigue. USA: Intrepid Pictures

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Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy, 2011. Film. Directed by Tomas Alfredson. UK: Studio Canal

Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy, 1979. TV Series. Directed by John Irvin. UK: BBC

Une Femme Douce, 1969. Film. Directed by Robert Bresson. France: Marianne Productions

Zeralti, 2012. Film. Directed by Zeki Demirkubuz. Turkey