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Abstract: The present essay aims to unveil underlying connections among Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* (1989), Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca* (1938) and the Netflix series *The Haunting of Bly Manor* (2020) which neither the British author's text nor its creator, Mike Flangan, ever acknowledged. In doing so, this paper sensitively discerns which literary issues from earlier centuries are still relevant and theorizes about the phenomenon of streaming platforms. The two novels are addressed through the works of scholars which coexist with non-academic sources like interviews or even internet blogs. The aim is to bring profiles of spectators who access the show from greatly different backgrounds into focus: erudite avid readers and hardened binge watchers. This work of analysis proves the Netflix series to be an adaptation of James's work by dissecting the changes it has undergone in order to appeal its audience while appropriating central aspects of *Rebecca* along the way. By the end of the paper, all three creative works reach a fluent dialogue about the two Rebeccas and their anthitheses. Their worlds slowly become one, channeled through the figure of Viola Willoughby, who merges both stories as an analogy of purgatory be it either at Manderley or Bly.

Keywords: *The Haunting of Bly Manor*, *Rebecca*, *The Turn of the Screw*, Netflix, Appropriation, Adaptation

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The Turn of the Adaptation: Henry James, Daphne Du Maurier and Netflix

Was there a 'secret' at Bly – a mystery of Udolpho or an insane,
an unmentionable relative kept in unsuspected confinement?
The Turn of the Screw, Henry James

0. Introduction

Henry James (1843–1916) published his novella The Turn of the Screw in 1898, almost bordering the turn of the century and, from that moment, his work became an object of scrutiny and provocation for both readers and critics given the uncertain situations a governess, two orphans and a housekeeper experiment in relation to ghosts. Little did he know that his text would still find new vehicles of expression in 2020 adopting the shape of a Netflix original series: The Haunting of Bly Manor (2020). In it, apparently random concepts such as high waisted acid wash jeans, chapels, Alfred Hitchcock, turtle necks or Deborah Harry come together in order to dress James's text with new garments which shall be analyzed throughout the following pages.

New TV series are aired online on a daily basis in current times, seeking to reach the greatest possible number of people; each subject to their own background of interests, education and beliefs. Many spectators who access The Haunting of Bly Manor as solely a means of entertainment are at first assumed not to establish links between it and its book of origin maybe because they are unfamiliar with it. Nonetheless, the reasons for its success are based precisely on the notion that faithfulness to a source is not vital if spectators do not have a previous knowledge of it (Wetmore 626) and, as Porras-Sánchez clarifies, the concept of fidelity was long ago overcome since it changes with time. It is a fact that this adaptation has done for Henry James what dusty and almost forgotten copies of his novels in libraries could not: it has repaired a breach among generations and returned, though adapted to new times, this late Gothic novel from the claws of academicism back to average consumers. The purpose of this essay is to provide a critical reading of the series by applying a comparative methodology to adaptation theory mixing book sources and on-screen versions with the purpose of determining the keys of the connection it shares with James's original text, as it has suffered a wide variety of changes and modifications. Furthermore, it is the aim of this paper to thoroughly demonstrate that the second primary source for *The Haunting of Bly Manor*, although not publicly acknowledged by its creators, is *Rebecca* (1938), by Daphne Du Maurier. Both sources play a different influencing role which shall be framed within adaptation and appropriation theory depending on the degree of openness in which their relationship with the main source is expressed.

While the premise for this paper is already that the Netflix series is an adaptation of The Turn of the Screw, as it has been confirmed by its producers, it is still valuable to study the nature and characteristics of such adaptation and how it settles within today's world of consumerism and fast production. Nonetheless, the differential value resides in an underlying

link with Du Maurier's text supported by the concept of appropriation, also understood as an unrecognized and unclaimed inspiration from a narrative to create a receding new one. Through a comparison in language, plot details, relationships among characters and even certain frames, a central cord which runs through the three texts is drawn thus bonding Du Maurier and James's world together in our collective imaginary.

Adaptation theory shall be addressed through the words of scholars such as Julia Kristeva, Linda Hutcheon, Siobhan O'Flynn and Julie Sanders. Nonetheless, among other influential names such as Mikhail Bakhtin or Deborah Cartmell, they will establish a dialogue with non-academic sources such as interviews or even internet blogs to distinguish the reception of two profiles of spectators: those initiated in literature and those who only wish to enjoy a horror show of quality. Using as reference the information on adaptation theory, the subsequent analysis of *The Haunting of Bly Manor* in relation to its two primary sources of inspiration is structured following a specific order. The initial part of the essay aims to discuss similitudes and differences between the series and James's work in terms of setting, time and characters . Nonetheless, it more specifically focuses on the characteristics of the romance between Peter Quint and Rebecca Jessel, Miles's expulsion from school and lastly the motif of ghosts with regard to the linguistic choices of the children and the shadow which looms over the governess's mental health.

Lastly, the analysis adds the third element, *Rebecca,* by establishing a comparison among the characters which answer to that name in the three works and both their antitheses: Danielle Clayton[1] and the new Mrs de Winter, who was never given a name of her own. At this point the paper focuses on aspects such as the importance given to hair or food, homoerotic behaviors, the perversion hidden in idyllic marriages and an overall parallelism of strong-willed women's fates. All these elements are channeled by an ever-present Rebecca who in this story answers to a different name: Viola Willoughby. This character, a novelty in the TV series that nonetheless pays tribute to other Jamesian stories, connects Manderley and Bly across three centuries and even different elements of nature.

1. Streaming the 19th Century à la Carte

In order to understand and establish a relation between *The Haunting of Bly Manor*, Henry James's novel *The Turn of the Screw* and Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca,* several concepts about the theory of adaptation and appropriation shall be developed throughout the length of this paper with the purpose of placing the object of analysis under a critical scope. As a general definition, Linda Hutcheon and Siobhan O'Flynn argue that adaptation is "repetition without replication" (7), "an acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works, a creative and interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging and an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work" (8). Their words provide with a structure the notions on adaptation than the average citizen may hold, as the process is generally understood by all as reinterpreting an artistic work by placing it in a different background or introducing noticeable changes in dialogues, plot or time-space sequences which makes it unique although openly connectable to the original source both by consumers and

[1] The new Jamesian governess.

acknowledging creators. The latter factor shall be of major relevance when determining the relationship among the three works on the table.

Following Julie Sanders, adaptation is "frequently a highly specific process involving the transition from one genre to another"; for example, "novels into film" (32) or, in this case, to TV series. She develops this notion further by stating that adaptation brings new creations "as a revised point of view from the 'original' adding hypothetical motivation or voicing what the text silences" (32–33).

When it comes to James's work, there are many elements left unsaid and unshown in the text which placed it under the scope of theories and academic interest; a treatment it still receives nowadays. *The Turn of the Screw* is not an explicit terror book for nothing explicitly terrifying happens within its pages; it feeds on the readers' implacable need to fill in all gaps. James plays with the Gothic term par excellence, uncanniness. There is apparently nothing wrong with the people in the House or the House itself but every detail leads the reader to confront a deformed version of reality which grimly mocks what they would find when raising their heads from the pages. It is the feeling of imminent danger and unreliability which causes real terror in the human mind, allowing us to find the darkest of explanations for every mystery the novel brings forward. It is never clarified whether the governess truly sees ghosts which have possessed the innocent soul of two kids; what is more, even though all readers are unsettled by the children's behavior, it is never demonstrated whether there is true evil in them or just the playful nature of two kids being recounted by a bitter and repressed governess. Real ghosts or figments of ill imaginations aside, the story sustains that Little Miles was expelled from school and although there are no strict details given about his actions, the use of language by the author which shall also be discussed leads toward the grimmest conclusions: sexual immorality, blood crimes, etc. The eerie feeling of danger is layered page after page with all the questions that readers hold and are too afraid to solve.

The Turn of the Screw, as Sarah Koch puts it, continues to be the most recurrently adapted out of all James's works and also generally in the literary world, not for the story told but for the interest of its characteristic telling (Recchia 28) "with 47 versions in all, 18 within the last 17 years" (Koch 61). Adaptation studies began in the last years of the 1960s but our understanding of adaptations and their relationship with their main sources has noticeably changed from that decade until current times (Koch 61). As it is only natural, this has affected the way in which artists have understood and reinterpreted *The Turn of the Screw* as well as those who have studied their approaches. According to Koch (60–61), there has been an ongoing conversation in the world of arts about the difficulty of giving James's text the screen treatment almost ever since it was published although the challenge seems to have fueled people's will rather than stopped them. Following the cataloguing made by Knoch (64–93), in the journey throughout the latest history of cinema, some screen adaptations like *The Others* (1953) or *The Innocents* (1961) are found; making their way to the finish line of the 20th century until bearing contemporary ones such as *The Turning* (2020) or *The Turn of the Screw* (2020). Eventually the most recent one, which is in fact the object of this analysis, makes its appearance: *The Haunting of Bly Manor*, a teleplay by Mike

Flanagan incorporating *The Turn of the Screw* and a mixture of different ghost stories by Henry James (Knoch 81–88).

Waldfogel explains that "digitalization has brought many new distribution channels, including video-on-demand through cable television operators, as well as pure online distribution through subscription platforms such as Netflix" (200), where the series was released in October 2020. The author develops further by explaining that Netflix offers an online delivery service of 4210 movies and 798 television series in the United States of America for only $7.99 per month, which makes it affordable for multiple types of economies and thus reunites a wide variety of citizens under its streaming arms. Given its visible success, the platform has extended its library beyond everyone's favorite shows and has begun to stand out because of Netflix original productions as well (211), among which this paper's focus can be found: Mike Flanagan's most recent series. James's novel has received varied changes in plot twists, time periods or settings in the different cinematic versions which have arisen, some of them explicated in previous lines, but creators are still determined to find new perspectives for it (Koch 60-61) and so, Flanagan and his team embarked in a new and daunting venture of adaptation.

When discussing this process, as well as endorsing it, Sanders claims that "we are often working with reinterpretations of established (canonical or perhaps just well-known) texts in new generic contexts or perhaps with relocations of an 'original' or source text's cultural and/or temporal setting, which may or may not invoke a generic shift" (34). This definition confirms that of the object of analysis for the Jamesian intention is still highly present at a first glance despite the major changes of epoch, subplots and characters. Moreover, in this adaptation of *The Turn of the Screw*, the modifications the text has suffered help "bring the text closer to the audience's personal frame of reference, allowing always for variation between local contexts and audiences" (qtd. in Sanders 38) in a movement which Burnett named 'proximation'. As support of these definitions, it is necessary to remember that *The Turn of the Screw* was published in 1898 and therefore, while it is never specified within the pages, the story occurs in a parallel temporal line to its story telling. However, as Trevor Macy stated about its 2020 Netflix adaptation: "[they] obviously took some liberties in updating it with a more modern setting" (Pruner).

In accordance to Hutcheon and O'Flynn's ideas "to appeal to a global market or even a very particular one, a television series or a stage musical may have to alter the cultural, regional, or historical specifics of the text being adapted" (30) and so can be seen in *The Haunting of Bly Manor*. The events take place in the decade of the 1980s, a fact proven by some cultural references found throughout the episodes such as Jamie's characteristic 'Blondie' T-shirt or Owen's mention of "Patrick Swayze" ("The Jolly Corner" 25:42). More specifically, the main story which concerns Danielle's job as the new governess takes place in "the year 1987" ("The Altar of the Dead" 46:07) and on the contrary to the manor in the novel, which is located in Essex, the Netflix Bly Manor is found in "Hampshire" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 2:16). The 1980s are seductive for different generations of watchers who either experienced them in their youth or are fascinated by their aesthetics and music in a vintage wave of sentimentalism. They are close enough to our times to make the story relatable and adaptable but at the same time it leaves the door ajar for the

paranormal side of science-fiction which was indeed developed back then and would find no room in our closest, technological days.

Further from the time line or setting changes and similitudes, it is unavoidable to draw the reader's attention to the figure of the governess. She was the main character in the novel and is, at last, provided with a name: Danielle Clayton. The classic job is adapted to her time as that of an au pair from the United States, a place she is running away from after the traumatic death of her former fiancé. Far from the conformity of maintaining the initial parameters of the novel, the Netflix producers have guided themselves by the wish of connecting with new audiences. Spectators from all ages can relate to James's story through the figure of a brave young woman who has changed epoch dresses for a pair of jeans and vintage outfits, items which are greatly familiar as they belong to our recent cultural heritage.

Although Henry James specifies that "a cook, a housemaid, a dairywoman, an old pony, an old groom and an old gardener" (James 7) live in the manor, this group of dwellers is highly modified in *The Haunting of Bly Manor* by introducing new characters or providing more relevance and depth to the already existing ones. Following James's enumeration in this analysis, the cook is portrayed in the character of Owen, well-humored chef who is in charge of a dying mother with dementia. The literary Mrs. Grose is revitalized as a younger Hannah Grose with a storyline of her own besides supporting the governess. The figures of the dairywoman, the old pony and the old groom are inexistent in *The Haunting of Bly Manor* although they do not have lines of dialogue in the novel either. Nonetheless, the gardener gains a new dimension in the series embodied in the character of Jamie. When it comes to the rest of characters present in both works, the narrative is no longer focused on the limited experiences of a Victorian governess but rather on highly varied plotlines of different and deeper tenor. This offers the spectator a wider range of content to feel identified with; the characters and their backgrounds are as different among each other as Netflix users could be. These theoretical definitions put in context with their on screen exemplifications confirm that of the object of analysis for the Jamesian essence is still highly present at a first glance despite the major changes of epoch, subplots and characters.

The original 19th-century text, which was characterized by a "textual ambiguity of the ghosts" which derived, according to Dry and Kucinkas, to some extent from features named presuppositional constructions by which the existence of ghosts was assumed and presented as true both by the narrator and reader. This pragmatic device achieved the opposite effect of generating skepticism and disbelief in readers. These constructs, which "introduce information into a discourse as though it were already known to both speaker and hearer" (Dry and Kucinkas 74) have their origin in the logic field of philosophy and linguistics. They cannot be classified with regard of the truth value of each proposition but applying a negation test to them is effective to separate both elements and distinguish them from one another.

In order to illustrate how presuppositional constructions work"partially at least from a feature of James's syntax" (71), should we present the sentence "Mike Flanagan celebrates having adapted a novel by Henry James", it would lead to the assumption that Flanagan has carried out an adaptation as well as affirm that he celebrates having done so. If, however,

should we negate the verb and claim that "Flanagan does not celebrate adapting the novel", the fact that he has adapted the novel would still be presupposed (Dry and Kucinkas 73–74). Although not sure at times about her intentions, to Mansell's mind, the governess gives the impression to be writing about *the* subject itself rather than about *her* subject (qtd. in Dry and Kucinkas 72) which means that her narration is filled the confidence that only truth can provide. Still, the fact that what she sees is true for her does not mean it should be regarded as universally true outside her subjectivity. Looking at the unsettling narration with the power that only emotional and physical distance can provide the reader with, those outside the pages are aware of the fact that the governess cannot escape her own bias.

Since the governess's discourse is rather eccentric and she demands from the reader to presuppose a great amount of what should be new information but she presents as background instead in ghost scenes, her competence as a narrator is questioned. Mrs. Grose is never proved to have seen the ghosts and, what is more, Mile's actions at school are deliberately left obscure as it shall be discussed and generally the halo which surrounds both children leads to more than one interpretation (Dry and Kucinkas 71–84) making readers uneasy as a consequence.

Dry and Kucinkas (77–78) develop further on presupposition by analyzing excerpts of the novel. In her first encounter with the ghost of Peter Quint at a tower, the governess narrates: "when. . . I stopped short on emerging from one of the plantations and coming into view of the house. What arrested me . . . was the sense that my imagination had, in a flash, turned real" (James 18). This, among other observations, points out "brand-new" information which the governess communicates through prepositional constructs as it assumes that readers know beforehand she stopped short and was indeed stopped by something they are not aware of, being it the only fact left to uncover.

Although not all statements made in *The Turn of the Screw* focus on the governess's consciousness and not all she recounts about the ghosts is presupposed, it is important to highlight that such a pattern of assertion and presupposition is continued throughout the length of the novel. It is for these reasons that the text is configured in a rather distinguishable style which makes the story telling impossible to be transferred to a screenplay barely untouched. In relation to this, the reason why *The Haunting of Bly Manor* stands out is primarily the vehicle which has been used to share it with the public, for it carries the instantaneity and almost obscene explicitness of the 21st century within. A screen version like it "fills in the blanks and lifts the fog where the book leaves certain details unclarified" (Farkas 105–106). In other words, it undoes the effect of James's presuppositional constructs by displaying more than implying.

Sanders expands further on her ideas on adaptation by stating that they may be an "attempt to make texts 'relevant' or easily comprehensible to new audiences. . . aimed at engaging young audiences" (33). This completely matches the methods followed by Netflix, a platform that although used by people of all ages, is extremely popular among teenagers and young adults. When it publishes a new TV series, all episodes are aired at the same time so there is no waiting for the viewers, who demand a faster and more explicit content as the hypermodern era unfolds. Moreover, in order to provide entertainment, the content of James's short novella has been notoriously modified in *The Haunting of Bly Manor* in order to

fit episodes which last 54.8 minutes on average, which Martin designates as a phenomenon called "stretching" (22). Even its director expressed to *Semana* magazine in an interview that "just as it happened with *The Haunting of Hill House* (2018)[2], the original material does not sustain an entire season, therefore something new had to be created around" (Echeverry) and the results are of great interest to the public and also to critics for the series is as ambitious as to solve James's intentional gaps as well as newly introduced plots.

It is unavoidable to reference the chosen title for the series, as there is no such thing as whims of chance when dealing with the process of adaptation. The full impact of the adaptational bond will depend upon the audience's awareness of an explicit relationship to a source text; therefore, the most formal adaptations carry the same title as their source or informing text (Sanders 38). The title of the series shares a closer relationship with the name of the house and its ghosts than Henry James initially planned for his paper and ink creation. This is Flanagan's homage to the gothic genre, as the American director wished to follow the same pattern of his previous work. In relation to this, the author's origins play an important part when discussing adaptation for they provide a precious context which works as foundation for what is to come. As for Henry James, he is an American author writing a Gothic story which takes place in England. It can be stated that the very concept of haunted house is an adaptation, understood in the broadest and most physical sense and made evident in the work of other American authors like Nathaniel Hawthorne who adopted narratives from across the ocean.

The old continent gave birth to the Haunted House subgenre, but it saw the first adaptations of it within Britain as well. Elizabeth Gaskell, who specialized in the Brontë Sisters and even wrote a biography about Charlotte Brontë, surely utilized *Wuthering Heights* (1847) as a reference to give her own novel of reference in the Gothic genre a shape: *The Old Nurse's Story* (1852). It was not after that date when Henry James transported such literary dreads and horrors across the ocean to the United States of America. Not only could he have drawn his gaze back to Britain and Gaskell's stories, but as Stampone argues, he also held Horace Walpole as a referent. Both James in *The Turn of the Screw* and Nathaniel Hawthorne and his novel *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) "borrow its foundational bricks and mortar from Walpole and it repurposes them to build a new, definitively American "castl[e] in the air" (88), understood as an elevated and evolved version of the British haunted house. In the case of James's text, horror is sublimated in pure linguistic and syntactical matters which even put the true presence of ghosts under question; almost as intangible and ethereal as a castle in the air could be, seen by all but unreachable and rather unreliable.

Now that James's castle in the air has been remodeled into a Netflix show and shared with millions, the following lines shall deal with the true nature of the product. Dwelling on Deborah Cartmell's ideas, Sanders explains that there are three broad categories of adaptation: transposition, commentary and analogue. Transposition could be defined as the closest form of a copy as "they take a text from one genre and transport it into a new modality and potentially to different or additional audiences, also in cultural, geographic and

[2] Based on Shirley Jackson's 1959 homonymous novel.

temporal terms" (35). Commentaries entail certain noticeable changes from the original text leading to the last term and in analogues, the final product is sufficiently modified for it to be considered a separate work. Thus, spectators do not need to have read the novel in order to enjoy the show but their understanding will increase dramatically when aware of its background and origin. At first sight, all screen versions of novels would be considered transpositions, being *The Haunting of Bly Manor* no exception while also fully resonating with the last enunciated category.

The notion of intertextuality is of great importance for the treatment of adaptation in this paper since, as Julia Kristeva develops, it takes over the term of "subjectivity" in the sense that "any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (37). Hence, it can be ascertained that there is an inherent adaptation in all texts as they all echo others creating an ongoing dialogue among authors and epochs. Martínez Alfaro summarizes, Kristeva's concept of intertextuality requires that "we understand texts not as self-contained systems but as differential and historical, as traces and tracings of otherness, since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures" (268). With this, the Victorian text and the screenplay shake hands in understanding, for the Bulgarian-French author viewed aspects such as drama and literature constantly connected as all texts form a mosaic which is created by a continuous absorption of other narratives and quotations (Kristeva 66). 21st-century viewers are not as patient and therefore they are shown much more than only suggested; some of them are not even acquainted with the text, making it necessary for the original eerie and dubious ambience to be portrayed quite differently as the following pages will prove.

As it is the purpose of this essay not only to compare James's work to a Netflix series but to demonstrate an underlying presence of *Rebecca* in the latter, it serves as a manner to illustrate the particular bond among the chosen texts for "there are always other words in a word, other texts in a text" (Kristeva 36). The intertextual reality of Du Maurier's novel, which performs the role of classic myths as Italo Calvino (2012) understands them, is present in the series as a cultural palimpsest which portrays the memory of those who read it before and those who will read it in the future (Porras-Sánchez). Those palimpsests, as explained by Linda Hutcheon echoing Michael Alexander, are adaptations whose presence we always feel "shadowing the one we are experiencing directly" (6) for an "adaptation is a derivation that is not derivative – a work that is second without being secondary (9).

The link between Flanagan and Du Maurier is no other than the film director Alfred Hitchcock, who has been an important influence in Flanagan's career and who had adapted *Rebecca* in 1940, two years after the novel had been published. In the previously mentioned interview for *Semana*, Flanagan related: "When I grew a bit older, I began to watch as many films as I was able: Kubrick, Spielberg, De Palma, Hitchcock and Scorsese. Those are my parental figures when it comes to cinema" (Echeverry). Furthermore, when asked about *The Haunting of Hill House* (2018), his previous and revealing work, the director and showrunner once explained that he was influenced by Hitchcock's *Rope* (1948) when he shaped episode six (Lara). Thus, this is a suitable premise to prove his references to *Rebecca* in *The Haunting of Bly Manor* (2020) since he had been already inspired by the British author and previous cinema adaptations of her work in at least one previous occasion. Even though it

has not been officially confirmed by him, the evidence of his homage to Hitchcock, and by extension Du Maurier, is undeniable.

"Easter eggs," a rather symbolic term designed for gestures to other works globally acknowledged within a specific artistic creation in order to pay tribute to them and connect spectators to their cultural heritage, are rather present in the series. There is a constant presence of the song "O'Willow Waly", which was composed expressly for the previously mentioned *The Turn of the Screw's* well-known adaptation *The Innocents*; it is recited by the narrator, hummed by Flora, played by a music box and sung by Viola being thus present in all layers of the story. Another tactic to achieve the public's attention is showing a somber Danielle in the room 217 of a flat which may be directly traced back to Stephen King's novel *The Shining* (1977), or choosing a particular affectionate name for Danielle, Poppins, which echoes Mary Poppins and the fact that they both are governesses. Flanagan even resorts to mirroring his previous adaptation, *The Haunting of Hill House* (2018), in multiple spheres such as lines of dialogue — "You're expected" — or full sequences which entail doll houses or violent awakenings from nightmares. Moreover, other texts by James himself are honored in episodes' titles, names of characters (Nguyen, 2020) and even the entire plot of episode eight, which shall be dealt with in the last section of this paper.

The North American filmmaker once expressed that, to his mind, one of the best things about people who love movies is the possibility to awaken moments of joy in them, as they will be able to recognize his references (Mellor). This is precisely what leads us to *Rebecca*, as if *The Haunting of Bly Manor* were a Matryoshka doll of adaptation, and so it shall be clarified below for Flanagan's concessions of Daphne du Maurier's text are nothing but a homage within the genre of adaptation yet to be classified. As Sanders puts it, one of the practices of reworking the artistic past that has been put into practice since the Victorian era (16); the starting point of this intertwined chain of plots.

The exposure to the fast and changing world has also created new ways of analyzing audiovisual pieces as critical and formal essays are not the most immediate and demanded source of information anymore; therefore, it has not taken long for internet users to notice a deep *Rebecca* signature underneath the main Jamesian plot and more precisely in episode eight which shall be dealt with in depth. Fast viewers have already expressed their ideas online: "I just read the book and as SOON as they mentioned her name was Rebecca, I instantly thought of Daphne Du Maurier's novel" (Davidenko), thus eliciting interesting discussion threads. Henry James is closer than ever to the average citizen, for Netflix has brought together erudite avid readers and hardened binge watchers.

2. Loose Screws at Bly

After having dealt with the general characteristics of *The Haunting of Bly Manor* which bring the series nearer and further from *The Turn of the Screw* at the same time, this paper shall focus in detail on the relationship between Quint and Jessel, the portrayal of Miles on screen and the changes the governess has undergone with regard of mental illness. Once a classification in adaptational terms has been exposed, the characters now invite the reader to a time travel, just as it happens in the episodes but across centuries; Henry James's novel finds a cutting-edge vessel for its Victorian soul in the following sections.

2.1 A Deadly Affair

The bonding between Rebecca Jessel and Peter Quint is of great importance both in the original text and in the Netflix script for "much of what initially seems mysterious at Bly can indeed be traced to Quint and Miss Jessel through the effects they have had on Miles, Flora, and Mrs. Grose" (Nardin 134). Thus, the nature of their connection is to be unveiled in detail. Peter and Rebecca's evil nature is associated with their sinful romance in the original text, something that will be made evident in Mrs. Grose's opinion as she utilizes words such as "contaminate" or "corrupt" (James 13) to speak about the couple. Throughout the novel they are both present as purely evil characters, as Grose describes: "'Miss Jessel – was infamous … 'They were both infamous'" (James 35). Nonetheless, Rebecca Jessel is reinvented in *The Haunting of Bly Manor* as a passive and loving version of a step-mother, a figure often loathed by orphaned kids, as it is her job to provide knowledge and nurture at the same time as a mother would. In order to make her more likeable and human to the viewer's eye, she is placed under the claws of male dominance and loses that sexual aura, which she equally shares with Peter Quint in the novel.

On this line, even though the nature of their relationship is shown openly in the novel, the pages cannot escape the century they were written in. The Netflix series becomes openly sexual and presents innuendos which make even the current spectator uneasy for their explicit content: "Last time I saw you, you were banging on about me having Owen's batter in my mouth" ("The Altar of the Dead" 15:54). All in all, it was Flanagan himself who stated about Quint: "Much is made about him in the book about being a very toxic person, and particularly toxic within relationships" (Pruner), so it is only natural that it was portrayed in the series as well.

When it comes to both character's deaths, *The Haunting of Bly Manor* takes a new path; in James's novel the motive of Miss Jessel's death is never fully unveiled as the reader is solely told "Rebecca went on holiday and never came back, she died and it was confirmed by the master" (James 14). On the contrary, the series illustrates how Rebecca seeks her own death by drowning in a desperate move to be reunited forever with Peter Quint after inviting the ghost to share her body. There is more than meets the eye when it comes to Rebecca's ending, for what is made up as a passionate story is in reality one of abuse and gender violence. This is one of the biggest changes implemented by Flanagan, given the fact that Jessel and Quint were equally evil in the pages. What the viewers find on screen instead is the truncated promising future of a young woman who is, for all intents and purposes, tricked and killed by a man who does not want to be alone.

In relation to Peter Quint's death, in the novel Mrs. Grose explains that he "was found, by a laborer going to early work, stone dead on the road from the village … fatal slip" (James 30). Nevertheless, in order to fit the ultimate turn of the plot machinery in the Netflix series, which is to be analyzed subsequently, Quint is murdered by strangulation when he crosses paths with the ghost of Viola, who roams the house at the same time night after night.

Quint serves as link for the next issue to be discussed as he is greatly associated with Miles's behavior, both in the novel and in the Netflix series. As Grose explains to the

governess about their bond, "'it was Quint's own fancy. To play with him, I mean – to spoil him' … 'Quint was much too free'" (James 29). It is a matter of speculation whether Quint sexually abused the kid in *The Turn of the Screw* or whether he just exposed the child to sexual practices or knowledge through his lustful relationship with Miss Jessel. In the Netflix series, Miles wishes to know what the ghost of Viola has done to Peter Quint after their fatal encounter. However, since he is not yet aware of his own death, Quint believes that the kid is asking about Rebecca Jessel and provides a sexually illustrative answer: "You're a bit too young to hear, my lad" ("The Altar of the Dead" 40: 46).

2.2 Secrets in the Boarding School

In the original text, the governess rapidly links events of this sexual nature with the reason for Miles's expulsion from his boarding school as she conveys to Mrs. Grose: "They go into no particulars. They simply express their regret that it should be impossible to keep him. That can have but one meaning … That he's an injury to the others" (James 13). An injury that could only have moral connotations as Miles confesses, in a rather obscure manner, that he had said things he should not have to people he liked at school and that they would have most definitely repeated such things to those they liked as well (James 91–92). Not only does the governess puts Miles' possible words under scrutiny, but she also claims he stole a letter whose content was not convenient for him to be aired. Hence, this behavior could have been the true motive of his expulsion had he also stolen at school.

Even though Miles denies having done such a thing in his past—"No. I didn't steal" (James 91)—it is remarkable how the Netflix Peter Quint, Miles's assumed role-model, is precisely accused of stealing a most valuable necklace which belonged to Miles's mother; as Hannah Grose denounces: "You're taking things that aren't yours" ("The Altar of the Dead" 18:53). It is precisely in James's original text that Mrs. Grose makes the connection between the child and theft: "'I make out now what he must have done at school.' … 'He stole!' … 'He stole letters!'" (James 83). Yet, *The Haunting of Bly Manor* eliminates all speculation by providing the audience with the longed-for answers that have kept readers on the edge of their seats for centuries. As the narrator explains on screen, "The reason for Miles's expulsion was difficult to pin down. He was expelled, it turned out, for an injury, an accident, a crime, a fight and, finally, an affront" ("The Pupil" 22:53): killing a dove. Nevertheless, the only possible clue is the revealing drawing of a child and two adults who resemble Quint and Jessel that Flora posts to her brother asking for help.

The dreadfulness of the unsaid reigns in *The Turn of the Screw,* for readers of all centuries and ages find themselves horrified at the endless possibilities of the nature of Miles's crime. It is the freedom of spectators' imagination which produces utter fright, when put together with the narrating voice of a governess who looks at her world with suspicion. On the contrary, by providing an explicit view to all of Miles's deeds, *The Haunting of Bly Manor* produces shock in the spectator as an angelical child is shown performing such an unholy activity as killing a dove. In this case, horror dwells in his clear and hollow gaze, for the young actor delivers each of his lines and facial expressions with mastery. Nonetheless, there is room for empathy as well, which is forced onto watchers after the revelation of Flora's letter: an emotional but rather unsettling drawing of both children and two figures in

black headed by a cry for help, "come home". At that moment Miles's troubling actions seem to be justified by the love he feels for his sister, a necessary move to keep viewers engaged while trying to conform a solid opinion on the true intentions and feelings of the child.

2.3 Ventriloquist Quint

Miles's particular speech in *The Turn of the Screw* seems too adult and well formulated to have been delivered by a child; what is more, it hides a latent sexual nature which may have been presumably induced by Quint. In *The Haunting of Bly Manor* this characteristic has been preserved and even enhanced, for the series hold a great number of scenes in which Miles's lines of dialogue seem inadequate and rather uncomfortable to watch. Miles shows himself in a seductive manner as he speaks in Danielle's ear and even plays with her locks, which causes rejection in her. Unsettling as his behavior undoubtedly is, it is not only circumscribed to Dani, for he is capable of predatorily replying: "Look at you all flushed. You look pretty when you flush" ("The Altar of the Dead" 13:44) to the gardener after provoking her anger.

Both children present adult-like manners and expressions which respond to the fact that the ghosts of Peter Quint and Rebecca Jessel keep entering their bodies repeatedly and acting through them; a fact that is never shown explicitly in the novel. Since Miles is merely a passive element through which Quint directly speaks, an explanation is given to Miles's murderous behavior towards Hannah Grose or his spontaneous rage fits when he is not allowed to drink alcohol or play with lighters. Quint is the perpetrator of all these actions in the shadow, until he gains total control and succeeds in taking total possession of Miles's will: "it's you, it's me, it's us" ("The Two Faces, 2nd Part" 48:29).

2.4 Mental Illness: Ghosts and Hallucinations

Carvel Collins, the first person who configured the theory that "Douglas, who owns the governess' manuscript, is little Miles grown up" asserted that "the governess is a victim of hallucination because of her love for her employer, her repressive upbringing, her new responsibilities, and the increased difficulties of her family at home" (121). Contrary to James's text, the viewer can experience the ghosts from multiple perspectives and in a more direct manner than text can offer in *The Haunting of Bly Manor*. In the series, although not clear at first clear, the narrator who tells the story is not Danielle but rather Jamie as an old lover who reminisces about her romance. Regardless of her subjectivity as a partial narrator, she allows the watcher to access a time in which Danielle had not arrived to the manor yet and thus contributes to expand the watcher's knowledge.

Nonetheless, Danielle is visited by another kind of ghastly apparition that has followed her all the way to the New Continent: recurrent visions of her deceased ex-fiancé Edmund O'Mara. His name is not casual, as it directly pays homage to Henry James's *Sir Edmund Orme* (1891) who suffers a parallel fate (Nguyen, 2020). It can be considered that Danielle suffers from Posttraumatic Stress Disorder[3] as Edmund dies violently before her eyes after having been rejected by her, which causes a wound of guilt she is unable to heal.

[3] Referred to as PTSD from this point onwards.

Thus, if contrasted to the ghosts who dwell the manor, her hallucinations make them stand out as real.

According to the *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*[4] (2013), "The central symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder concern intrusions about, and avoidance of, memories associated with the traumatic event itself" (American Psychiatric Association 194) and there are events that can be traumatic for witnesses like Dani such as "unnatural death'' or "accident" (American Psychiatric Association 194). When it comes to the nature of her visions, "examples of intrusive symptoms include unwanted thoughts or flashbacks of the event" (Brady et al. 206) and on this line DSM-V contemplates:

> The individual may experience dissociative states that last from a few seconds to several hours or even days, during which components of the event are relived and the individual behaves as if the event were occurring at that moment (Criterion B3). Such events occur on a continuum from brief visual or other sensory intrusions about part of the traumatic event without loss of reality orientation, to complete loss of awareness of present surroundings. These episodes, often referred to as "flashbacks," are typically brief but can be associated with prolonged distress and heightened arousal. (American Psychiatric Association 275)

This bonds intimately with the original text but at the same time addresses mental health issues from a contemporary and empathetic manner. The governess, who had been dismissed under the critical scope of "sexual hysteria'' (Renner 177), a Victorian term only meant for women's insanity (Showalter 161) and which served as a method of discarding any behavior which was not convenient for the maintenance of a patriarchal order, lets the spectator into her past and is now embraced rather than suspected. Released in a time in which the stigma of mental illness has started to be slowly erased mostly because of a constant work of activism by youngsters on social media, the audience is at last ready to provide a deeper meaning and comprehension to the feelings Danielle holds: she is not directly discarded as an intense woman whose sanity totally revolves around the presence or absence of men. On the contrary, she is appreciated by her full array of feelings and honesty framed within a prior context of which spectators are *connoisseurs* but only belongs to her as the proprietor of her own story.

3. The Ghost of Rebecca

Although the coincidence between the names of Rebecca Jessel and Maxim de Winter's deceased wife is unquestionable, *The Haunting of Bly Manor* hosts a number of parallelisms which, although less evident, make both texts converge in the canvas of this TV series. As it has been proved throughout this paper, Flanagan has been greatly influenced by Alfred Hitchcock so these links are based as well on the certainty that the producer has watched his *Rebecca* (1940), which is at the same time very loyal to Du Maurier's original text.

[4] Referred to as DSM-V from this point onwards.

3.1 Rebecca Jessel and Rebecca de Winter

There are two layers in the *Rebecca* parallelism which will be developed throughout this section. The first one stems from the portrayal of Miss Jessel, the former governess, who is described in the original text as "dark as midnight in her dark dress" (James 63), a "vile" (James 63) "woman in black, pale and dreadful" (James 33). Nonetheless, she is also portrayed as "young and pretty" (James 14), of "extraordinary beauty" (James 35). In relation to this, *The Haunting of Bly Manor* presents how Henry James envisions Rebecca Jessel in the most literal of manners as Tahirah Sharif, the actress who gives life to the character has Pakistani and Jamaican roots (IMDb). Rebecca de Winter is also described in the same parameters: "tall, slim, dark, very handsome" (Du Maurier 411). These descriptions establish a bond between black color, either in clothes or physical features such as hair, and immorality.

On the contrary, the governess and her Netflix version Danielle embody naivety and goodness just like Maxim's new wife, for both fulfill the role of protagonists who are meant to restore the order and peace in the story. Even though we do not know details about the governesses's physical appearance, it is evident in the text and series that both Mrs. De Winter and Danielle Clayton present opposite physical features to their predecessors as they are blonde, fair skinned and have blue eyes. This is also the case of Hitchcock's 1940 cinematic adaptation. According to Gitter, "while women's hair, particularly when it is golden, has always been a Western preoccupation, for the Victorians it became an obsession" and thus, a link between James's époque and its 21st century representation of characters can be established. The author develops further by arguing that "golden hair became the crowning glory of the mythologized Victorian grand woman" (936), a fact that when put together with "a literary vogue of fairy tales, many of which involve golden-haired heroines or quests for golden hair" (943) sets the path for a generalization of fair hair in both Dani and the new Mrs de Winter as heroines of their own plot-lines.

Flora shows great fondness of their previous au pair as she keeps repeating the phrase "perfectly splendid" ("The Great Good Place" 19:05) throughout the episodes, something she learned from Jessel. Miles takes his admiration one step further by gifting Danielle Clayton a butterfly hair clip which belonged to the au pair, an action which greatly offends Flora: "it doesn't belong to you" ("The Great Good Place" 25:51). This makes Dani suddenly feel out of place, as if she was not sufficient to fill the void the previous woman whom she never met had left. There is a connection between the constant reminders of Rebecca Jessel at Bly and what the new Mrs. De Winter experiments when she moves to Manderley, as she expresses: "I know that all the time whenever I meet anyone new, they are all thinking the same thing – How different she is to Rebecca" (Du Maurier 147).

In relation to Jessel's clip, there is a special focus on hair items in the British author's novel for there are many scenes in which the actions of hair combing and intimacy are not scarce. The new Mrs De Winter recalls an uncomfortable interaction with Mrs Danvers, "I could not go on sitting there, playing with my hair-brush, letting her see how much I feared and mistrusted her" (Du Maurier 81) and another one with Beatrice: '"These are nice brushes. Wedding present?' 'Maxim gave them to me"' (Du Maurier 116). The true meaning of hair brushes in the text is totally unveiled when Mrs Danvers shows the protagonist

another set, this time, Rebecca's: '"there they are, just as she used them, unwashed and untouched. I used to brush her hair for her every evening"' although Maxim used to do it for her in the early days (Du Maurier 190). To Gitter's mind, money and the expression of female sexuality are inherently connected (936) through hair and its combing ritual as they also embody sensuality and closeness 'through hair and its combing ritual as they also embody sensuality and closeness. Thus, these scenes allude intimate moments of both characters in which their appeal becomes protagonist.

Following the line of Mrs Danver's servility, when it comes to romantic relationships, her homoerotic fascination with Rebecca has been scrutinized from different perspectives. Theories have been elaborated both in the world of literary academicism and by every average spectator, as perception as the governess's implications have been differently understood in accordance of how society and its norms have developed and reached the masses. *The Turn of the Screw* also presents signs of physical love between women, the governess and Mrs Grose, although always under the standpoint of sisterly love: '"Would you mind, miss, if I used the freedom—' 'To kiss me? No!' I took the good creature in my arms, after we had embraced like sisters." (James 17). The support that the governess finds in Mrs Grose is fully developed in the shape of a Sapphic relationship between Danielle and the gardener Jamie in *The Haunting of Bly Manor*. This summit of explicit romantic love between women has been one of the main changes between the text and the Netflix adaptation, for the latter reflects an acceptance of the 21st century diversity and celebrates it by openly portraying a same-sex couple. What truly stands out if compared to the presence that queer relationships have been assigned in the latest decades' shows is the fact that this love story is developed on the same level of naturalness than any heterosexual one. Neither the narrator nor the characters themselves give any special attention to the fact that they are women, running away from previous tendencies of basing the story plot on their inner and outer struggles with regard of their sexual condition. The governess and gardener share an intimate relationship which is enjoyable, beautiful and works as an audience-engaging tactic but they have further roles in the development of the story separately.

There is also an importance conferred to food which is not present in *The Turn of the Screw* but indeed found in *Rebecca*, a relevance which has been rescued from it by Flanagan in *The Haunting of Bly Manor*. The kitchen at Bly is a place of reunion for all characters, which chatter at the table and enjoy the dishes that Owen prepares participating in their making and delightfully tasting them. Thus, food is of great importance to the characters and is dedicated numerous minutes of screen time. When it comes to *Rebecca,* Daphne du Maurier writes great lengths of detailed descriptions of the food that is enjoyed in the house such as breakfasts, tea time appetizers or the official menus which are served daily and the new Mrs de Winter must supervise: "curried prawns, roast veal, asparagus, cold chocolate, mousse […] 'I rather think Mrs de Winter would have ordered a wine sauce, Madam'" (Du Maurier 96).

Following the line of similitudes, both in *The Haunting of Bly Manor* and *Rebecca* there is a wing of the house which, although not strictly forbidden, is kept out of use as a sign of respect to those who used to dwell there and are no longer alive. As Mrs Danvers explains about "the west wing", Maxim and Rebecca "used those rooms when Mrs De Winter

was alive" (Du Maurier 84). The new Mrs de Winter ventures the room, as she cannot resist her curiosity, only to find "the outline of furniture swathed in white dust-sheets" (Du Maurier 100) precisely as the Wingrave's old room was displayed at Bly. A place which witnessed the tempestuous romance between Jessel and Quint and also belonged to a deceased character which though not fully visible until the end, shapes the rest of stories: Viola.

3.2 Viola Willoughby

Each episode in *The Haunting of Bly Manor* is named after different works by Henry James and so it is the case of episode number eight "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes", which leads the narrative toward an unknown path which makes the spectator wonder whether they are watching a different series. This short story about the Willoughby sisters, a surname that James changed to Wingrave in the 1885 published version, has been adapted to fit the general plot in order to give Danielle Clayton's story another turn of the screw. Viola personifies the second and last layer to the gear assembly which recalls Daphne du Maurier's novel, as she becomes an ever-present Rebecca at Bly Manor. This analysis will revolve around the concepts, as enumerated, of physical appearance, personality, ambitious drive, value of fashion, falsehood in matrimonies, murder and lastly water as the balm that makes all elements homogeneously settle in.

Viola resembles Rebecca both physically and psychologically for she is a strong-willed woman with dark features. As the eldest sister, after the death of her father she must marry a man in order to make sure Bly stays in the family. In order to do that she orchestrates a plan which the narrator delivers alongside a summary of her nature: "The sweat of her ride, the wildness of her hair. The business, the books. The riding boots in the foyer. Even the portrait hanging beyond commissioned by Viola as a part of her true message to Arthur: he may marry her, or marry her sister, but there should be no mistaking the true authority of Bly Manor" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 5:45). On Du Maurier's side of this parallelism, Mrs Danvers mentions the haircut that Rebecca once had, which also reveals some of her passions to the reader for "short hair was much easier for riding and sailing" (Du Maurier 190). Thus, both Rebecca and Viola are amazons, enjoy wild sports and possess a strong character. Furthermore, there is an analogy between the portrait shown in the series and Caroline de Winter's portrait in *Rebecca,* "a sister of Maxim's great-great grandfather who married a Whig politician" (Du Maurier 227).

Viola's story takes place "toward the middle of the 17th century" (2:00 "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes") therefore both women do not share a timeline although it is undeniable that the image of a powerful woman presiding the stairs, as well as that of a ball held inside the manor, is influenced by *Rebecca* as *The Turn of the Screw* does not present any of those elements. Nevertheless, Rebecca once "was painted on horseback" (Du Maurier 190) so it is a fact that both Viola and Rebecca were immortalized in that way.

When it comes to clothes, they play an important part of Rebecca's character in Du Maurier's text for she was known for her excellent taste and presence, as Mrs Danvers joyfully narrates to the new Mrs de Winter and even proceeds to make an enumeration of all of Rebecca's possessions such as sleepers, dressing-gown, chinchilla furs, underclothes or velvets (Du Maurier 190-191). In *The Haunting of Bly Manor*, the two qualities that the

narrator decides to highlight about Viola are precisely her "wit" and the fact that she is wearing "the finest of dresses" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 3:37) as "Viola had an inordinate love of dress, and the very best taste in the world" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 10:50). Just like what Mrs. Danvers achieves by describing Rebecca's possessions, the spectator is provided with great detail of what Viola's taste in clothes used to be, as she owned "innumerable yards of lustrous silk and satin, of muslin, velvet and lace from all over the world and all manner of expense; some as rare and rich as if they were spun of threads of jewels" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 10:55). Such is Viola's appreciation and zeal for her pieces of garment that, when she knows her death is close, makes her husband promise "That you'll keep them for her. That you will keep the key and you will never give it to anyone, except our child" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 25:17). Just as Maxim does with Rebecca's secrets, although for different reasons, Lloyd respects his dying wife and locks her clothes in the article which connects her story directly to Danielle's across the centuries: a chest.

Nevertheless, there is a parallelism between the falsehood of the matrimonies of both Rebecca and Viola for both marry out of sheer ambition rather than love. Even though Bly belongs to Viola's family from the beginning, she cannot claim it and thus conjures the wedding plan developed in the beginning of this sub-analysis. Viola will never obey him, as she proves by missing the word on purpose during her nuptial vows ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 6:48). Concurrently, Rebecca manipulates Maxim into marrying her as she presents herself in the beginning as a "lovely," "accomplished" and "amusing" (Du Maurier 304) woman and only tells him the abominable truth about herself once they are wedded (Du Maurier 305) so that she could run his house (Du Maurier 305).

Whereas Maxim "did not love Rebecca" (Du Maurier 306), "Viola found that, under its purpose, her marriage may have a certain amount of love to it, after all" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 9:12). Rebecca had lovers and although truthful to Viola until her death, Lloyd begins to feel attracted to Perdita given her wife's unavailability due to a fatal lung illness. This is something she shares with Rebecca as well for Mrs. De Winter suffered from a deadly illness diagnosed by Doctor Baker (Du Maurier 412-413). The lives of both characters come to an end in a similar manner for the executioners Maxim and Perdita, due to their personal stories with each women, had had "enough" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 27:28) and murder them.

Water is the element which fuels both stories and merges them together for it harbors Rebecca's dead body and the chest of clothes where the worn-out soul of Viola dwells. Both the ocean and the lake serve as graves to these women even though none of them died by drowning. Their husbands got rid of their mortal remains by letting them disappear in the depths, an action which triggered their preternatural and indefatigable presence. Rebecca never abandoned her grave of water, for Du Maurier's novel does not contain uncanny elements, but her presence is felt in Manderley long after her demise and seems to haunt the house and all its inhabitants, who never cease to mention her and therefore keep her alive: "It's always Rebecca, Rebecca, Rebecca" (Du Maurier 267); just as it happens with Rebecca Jessel in Bly.

On the other hand, the ghost of Viola has kept physically roaming the manor for

centuries and hence, is present in the central axis of all stories that are to come after her. Although her identity is unknown to others, her influence is not since the "invented gravity that held her to the grounds, that kept her in purgatory, it would hold others too" ("The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" 48:55) precisely until the 80s, when the main story is settled. Danielle Clayton, the new Mrs the Winter and the rest of the characters who share their story become as haunted as the house they live in (Stampone 84) for Viola is the executor arm in Bly as Rebecca is in Manderley; snatched from life but greatly present in that of others.

4. Conclusion

Throughout the length of this paper, an analysis of the similitudes and differences among *The Haunting of Bly Manor* and its two primary reference sources has been established in order to finally determine its nature and classify it. It has been openly acknowledged in the credits and by the creators that the series is based on Henry James's novel *The Turn of the Screw*. The analysis that has been carried out confirms that the features of the Victorian text are still recognizable and visible on its new face mainly through the unsettling aura which surrounds Miles and Flora, their adult lexical choices and the connection between morality and sex in the figure of Rebecca Jessel. Thus, since the source text survives alongside its version, the ongoing process of juxtaposed readings that are vital to cultural processes of adaptation (Sanders 42) is enabled in *The Haunting of Bly Manor* and can fully be classified as such.

On the other hand, the adaptational bond between *Rebecca* and *The Haunting of Bly Manor* responds to the name of appropriation for, as Sanders argues, "appropriations do not always make their founding relationships and interrelations explicit" (50) and they "tend to have a more complicated … and sometimes embedded relationship to their intertexts than a straightforward film version of a canonical … text would suggest" (Sanders 43). As it has been developed, Flanagan was highly influenced by classic cinema and is a great connoisseur of literature so, even though *Rebecca* is not explicitly referenced or acknowledged, it is honored as a part of our cultural background and thus, exists in his unconscious creative process. Stories like Du Maurier's always emerge periodically from our subconscious just like its protagonist from the depths.

The Haunting of Bly Manor reflects its time by reinventing plot gaps from Henry James's original text and providing them with contemporary garments. Even though the setting is a traditional English manor, the characters of Rebecca Jessel, Hannah Grose and Owen Sharma are racialized. Furthermore, there is a Sapphic couple which is central in the story for James's governess is given a love interest he would have never considered. Although the purpose of the Netflix series is not to raise its audience's moral standard, it openly exposes social issues such as the gender violence which Quint inflicts on Jessel. It also addresses concealed struggles which are not often openly discussed, such as the derivation of mental health problems. This draws the narration closer to the spectator's social context since f there is little in the struggles of a 19th century unmarried governess that they could relate to. Furthermore, as it is recollected in previous pages, the figure of the governess as a step-mother suffers a change in Rebecca Jessel.

If there is one thing *The Turn of the Screw* is remarkable for in terms of story-telling, it is James's usage of language. In order to transmit a feeling of uneasiness to readers without making anything explicit, Henry James utilizes prepositional constructs, which according to Dry and Kucinkas are "syntactic structures that, in normal conversation, evoke a type of pragmatic inference difficult either to verify or to challenge" (77). Hence, the narration is presented as a faithful recollection of the governess's story, which she wrote on paper, but the reader is from that moment trapped in her subjectivity.

In the Netflix series, the viewer relies much more on visual inputs than they do on narration, but they cannot escape Jamie's perspective either, as the ghosts are explicitly shown because the producers mean to. Furthermore, instead of proposing a fixed and asphyxiating narrative, different settings, temporal moments and plots are offered to match individual interests. The typical elements of horror films such as ominous music, reflections such as the ones Danielle sees or the use of negative space, where nothing is apparently happening in the frame, are used to provide a more direct sensation of imminent danger. Nonetheless, dialogues still play a relevant part for the children's words, as developed in the essay, are as uncanny as they were on paper since they do not match their ages or the manner in which people typically interact.

Beyond all script modifications and plot variabilities, *The Haunting of Bly Manor* is all in all an exercise of a bond across three centuries which manages to sensitively discern which issues are still relevant for a contemporary spectator and adapt them so that these stories never die.

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Paula Lobato Díez (Madrid, 1998) is an English Studies graduate from the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), where she defended this Bachelor's dissertation in June, 2021. She is currently working as an EFL teacher and researching for a Master's degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language at the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM). There, as a Departmental Collaboration Scholarship holder, she is developing a series of activity packs which aim to address the lack of literary materials in the Spanish basic curriculum of non-bilingual Secondary Education by promoting interculturality through original works. Additionally, she will pursue a Master's degree in Literature abroad next year, following the expectations of the academic semester she spent at Maynooth University (Co. Kildare, Ireland) as an Erasmus student in 2019. Her interests reside mainly in Romantic, Gothic and Victorian literature although she is also curious about Shakespearean and Irish Studies, Myth Criticism and the intrinsic connection among music, literature and social issues. Moreover, she is interested in British literary studies, the phenomena of pop culture and the imaginary of national icons.

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