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**“HATH NOT A JEW EYES?” THREE FAGINS
IN LITERATURE AND FILM**

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Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso apresentado ao Departamento de Letras e Artes da Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, em cumprimento às exigências para obtenção do título de Licenciatura em Letras. Sob a orientação do Prof. Ms. Valécio Irineu Barros.

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RESUMO

O trabalho aqui apresentado intitulado "Hath Not a Jew Eyes? " Three Fagins In Literature and Film. Teve como objetivo analisar através de pesquisa bibliográfica e comparativa o personagem Fagin no romance de Charles Dickens Oliver Twist. Com o intuito de comparar o mesmo personagem em duas adaptações, de épocas distintas, com o mesmo título do romance. Os filmes foram produzidos pelos respeitados diretores David Lean e Roman Polanski. O objetivo foi através da pesquisa tentar elucidar qual dos Fagins apresentados nos filmes se aproxima da descrição de Dickens no livro. Após lida e fichado todo o romance, foi levado em consideração vários fatores dentre eles aspectos físicos, psicológicos e comportamentais do personagem Fagin. Também foi aprofundado os estudos nos fenômenos da adaptação com a redução, adição e transformação. Depois de coletado o material de análise, foi dado o aprofundamento da pesquisa com os recortes das cenas mais significativas para este trabalho na qual chegou-se ao resultado que um dos filmes apresentou um Fagin mais fiel ao de Dickens que conservou vários aspectos o original.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Fagin. Adaptação Cinematografica. Dickens. Filmes

ABSTRACT

The work presented here entitled "Hath Not a Jew Eyes? "Three Fagins In Literature and Film. Aimed to analyze through literature and comparative research the character Fagin in Charles Dickens novel, *Oliver Twist*, and compare with the same character in two screen adaptations of different times, with the same title of the novel. The films were produced by two respected directors David Lean and Roman Polanski. The objective was through research to elucidate which Fagin approaches the description of Dickens. After much reading and compilation of information regards whole novel, we took into account several facts, among them physical, psychological and behavioral characteristics of Fagin. It was also an in-depth study on the adaptation phenomena with the reduction, addition and transformation. After the analysis collected material, we gave further research with the indentations of the most significant scenes. The present work concluded that, one of the films presented is more faithful to Dickens' Fagin and attended various aspects the original.

KEY WORDS: Fagin. Cinematographic Adaptation. Dickens. Films

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1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this TCC is to compare and contrast the novel *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens with two films based on it, produced by David Lean and Roman Polanski respectively. An effort has been made to study the character Fagin, a Jew, who corrupted children by training them to become pickpockets. The construction of the appearance and personality of Fagin in the films has been analyzed in order to perceive the perspectives of Lean and Polanski. We have tried to observe which portrayal is closest to that of the book and which one seems more human and sympathetic. In this context, the attitude towards Jews as reflected in the presentation of Fagin has also been examined, so as to see if the fact that Polanski is Jew influenced his portrayal of the character. The study will examine some cinematographic resources used in the two films to make the adaptation of the literary source.

The first part of the work presented a brief explanation of what is adaptation in the view of recognized authors such as Oliveira (2005), Brito (2006), and Diniz (2009). The process of transforming the written language into image and sound is not as simple as one might suppose. It involves many technical procedures and narrative techniques such as reduction, simplification and amplification. These tools, together with many others, contribute to the process of adaption.

In the second part of the work we brought a historical overview of the Jew in the 20th century and how it could have contributed to Dicken's construction of Fagin. We noticed throughout the research an increased prejudice against the Jewish community of the early 20th century. Fagin is an example of how the Jew lived in Europe and their poverty, despair and precarious life. We might say, from a sociological point of view, that Fagin was a victim of his society and his life of crimes and villainy was fruit of a delicate circumstance of relationship, between his race and the prejudice of the white European society.

In the third part of the work, we analyzed the character Fagin in Charles Dickens' book. We brought the origin of the name and the inspiration Dickens's might have pondered in order to construct Fagin's physical and psychological characteristics. Fragments on the description of the book were used and personal and scholars comments on the subject. We also made a short comment on George Cruikshank's illustrations used in the book, which are very faithful to Dickens's description of Fagin in the book. Later the same illustration served as inspiration to film the director's construction of Fagin is physical appearance, with the analyses we noticed a preoccupation of Dickens to express the villainy, avaricious, egoism

and dissimulation. Fagin is a rich character who not only guides the reader's thought but also plays an important role in the plot.

In the fourth part of the work we analyzed Fagin in the 1948 film from the director David Lean. We can noticed how Lean tried to be faithful to the physical characteristics and behavior of Fagin of Dicken's novel. The film was totally shot in black and white and it contributed to reinforce the obscure characteristics of Fagin. Lean uses much of light and dark spots in the scenes as well as the abuse of closes. He was aware of the scene details, paying special attention to the objects and places. Lean used the reduction to bring much more impact to the chapters and the main turns of the story. Lean maintains the original idea that Mr. Monks contracted Fagin to demoralize, corrupt and get rid of Oliver Twist. We realized through research that Fagin of Oliver was criticized for being a bad example of Jew lifestyle. Even it had some scenes cut and prohibited in some countries.

In the fifth part of the work we analyzed Fagin from the 2005 film *Oliver Twist* directed by Roman Polanski's. We began by explaining Polansk's Jewish background and how it could have influenced the portrayal of Fagin in his film. After we went through some of the physical aspects of Fagin in the film and compared it with Charles Dickens description of Fagin. We also analyzed some objects used in the set and how it helped to make the film more faithful to the novel. We went through the behavior and destiny of the old Jew, and could demonstrate how Polanski constructed a much more human-like Fagin: using cuts of the scenes to reinforce this aspect.

In the final considerations, we came to the analysis and construction of our questions: which Fagin came closer to the Dicken's character. We also brought the mains differences between the directors, Fagin, and the techniques they used in order to validate what they wanted to transmit through their films. This fantastic novel written by the genius Charles Dickens with his lovable and involving characters enchants millions of readers around the world and is amazingly congruent with such magical form of art that is the cinematography.

2. Adaptation

Cinema has existed for more than one hundred years, although it is a relatively new form of art. At the beginning, filmmakers tried to legitimize their work by making adaptations of literary works of well-known authors, as few people had access to these authors. As matter of fact, with the appearance of Cinema, Literature gained public appreciation from a wider range of social classes. However, there was a prejudice among film critics, affirming that if a novel were adapted for Cinema, it would lose much of its original quality. The American scholar Robert Richardson, in his book entitled *Literature and Film*, emphasizes that specific features of cinematography, such as sound and the movements of the camera, were already intrinsically present in literary texts, because written language has the capacity of activating the imagination. It is imagination that gives us the capacity to visualize in our minds how a specific situation would be pictured in such a way that “the reader is removed from his passive position of mere spectator and thrown into the arena, called more and more, to share dynamically In the work of creation”¹ (OLIVEIRA, 2006, 54, Our translation).

Through Charles Dickens’ novels, the cinematographer David Wark Griffith made discoveries that are essential today to a cinematic narrative, such as the invention of the close, to give dramatic meaning to a scene and to make to the scenes run alongside each other. (BRITO, 2006, p. 9) Nevertheless, Cinema also has many things to teach Literature. Actually, cinematographic language has been the object of study of many writers such as Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Dos Passos, in America, and in Brazil, of names like Rubens Fonseca.

Initially Literature and Cinema seemed to have a conflicting relationship, because each professed to be independent, occupying a “higher” position than the other. However, as time passed, writers saw that there was somehow a degree of dependency between them, that they could add to and enrich each other. Indeed, both Literature and Cinema have specific qualities of their own but can, in some degree, complement each other.

In his book “Literatura e Cinema” Brito (2006), emphasizes Richardson’s (1973) idea of Literature being a visual art. Cinema could be considered “...a ramification of Literature...”² (Brito, 2006, p. 132). In his chapter about literary and cinematographic techniques Richardson (1973) showed a list of examples of common points between

¹ “O leitor é arrancado de sua posição passiva na arquibancada, e jogado na arena, conclamado, cada vez mais, a compartilhar dinamicamente do trabalho de criação.” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 54).

² “... uma ramificação da literatura...” (Brito 2006, p. 132).

Literature and Cinema. There are many examples such as the dissolution of one image into the other, the use of image of places and things without the human presence, the multiple points of view about a subject, even the process of characterization of protagonists. Nevertheless, not all the techniques used in cinema came as influence from Literature.

Cinema differs from Literature mainly because of the perspective of reality that is different in the two arts. In Literature, there is a description of the facts so that a closer relationship of the reader with the work is necessary to imagine and interpret what shown in different ways. In Cinema, everything is already before the audience's eyes; sometimes there is no need to know a lot about the narrative to guess what will happen in the next scene.

In the process of transforming and transposing of what is on the paper onto the screen there are many obstacles. However, one is recognized, the adaptation does not need to be faithful to the original and leaves the screen director free to create a narrative in the way his imagination permits. "... because it is not enough to transport the original text to another medium (...) [it is necessary] to adapt the main aspects (theme, message etc.) to the construction of a new work". (DINIZ, 2005, 12, our translation).

Cinema is essentially a multidimensional form of art, because it has in its essence the ability of using the resources of other arts to narrate its stories. However, it also has its own resources. Almost all the literary work could be used as the initial point for a cinematic narrative. This depends on how the film director wants to convey his version to the audience.

François Truffaut insists on the fact that the filmmaker, through intuition and talent, can choose how he will adapt the scene. Francis Vannoye, in his book *Scenarios Modelès Modèles de Scenarios (Model Screenplays, Models of Screenplay)*, (1991), mentions two basic operations in the process of adaptation: reduction and addition. Brito (2006) adds two more processes: dislocation and transformation, the latter, he subdivides into amplification and simplification.

Reduction is used when there is something in the novel that was withdrawn from the film and, according to Brito (2006, p. 12), it is most frequent in the process of adaptation, because usually novels contain more material than it is possible to include in a film. Because the verbalization of the novel is more extensive, cuts are more frequent and usually unavoidable in film adaptations; especially when one considers that the longer, the film, the more expensive it is.

Addition is the opposite, when we add things to the film that were not in the novel. It could consist of a complete scene, an object or a character. Addition is used to compensate for verbal effects cut out at other moments. Though used less frequently than reduction, it plays a decisive role in the process of adaptation, contributing to give the film its specific tone.

One of the procedures that intensively influences the final composition and significance of the film is *dislocation*, which makes the order of the elements change to emphasize one point of view or to ignore part of the original content. Dislocation involves putting something that could have happened in the beginning of the narrative in the middle or at the end of the film or vice versa.

The processes of *transformation* are not always so obvious, and in many cases are micro-structured and need much attention to be detected. One of the examples of transformation is the importance of Mr. Monks; in the novel, he plays a very important role throughout the book. Otherwise, Polanski's screen version there is not even a reference to Mr. Monks' existence.

Simplification and *amplification* refer to diminution or increase of dimension in the elements of the novel. As an example the scene where Fagin is in jail in agony and turning insane. In the novel the scene is very important, but in Lean's film there is not such scene what characterizes as being an example of simplification.

These operations occur at various levels of intensity within a film. But to facilitate the study, these levels might be summed into three elements: the narrative, the characters and the language.

In the process of adaptation, critics often verify the conformity of the film to the literary source. Some film critics and the first theorists on the subject saw the film as a type of translation, and thus valued the criterion of fidelity.

Over time, film critics become more concerned with the relationship between the two arts: Literature and Cinema. There has been a constant process of transformation and restoration of the original work to please the audience. This allowed adjustments to be studied as processes of filmic translation, and opened the possibility of reinforcing the original identity of Cinema and its capacity to renew the story and bring new air to old facts.

The transformation process takes place based on some horizontal tools such as inter-textual dialogism. Stam suggests that "...just as any literary text can generate an infinity of readings, so any novel can generate any number of adaptations." In this sense, he adds "an

adaptation is, thus, less a resuscitation of an originary word than a turn in an ongoing dialogical process.” (2005, p. 4). Cinema has the power to reinvent what was already a successful book and make it even more appreciated among those who admire the story.

No film is so creative as to be considered unique. There will always be a sound, conversation and/or historical event that will cause another work to be remembered, making it, at some point, be seen as an adaptation from other sources.

Using the expression “unfaithful” when we are talking about adaptation conveys a feeling of disappointment. It feels as if the film did not have the ability to perceive or show the narrative, and the thematic or aesthetic literary devices portrayed in the original work. However, for Stam, this “should not lead us to endorse fidelity as a methodological principle. Indeed, it is questionable whether strict fidelity is even possible.” (2005, p.3)

Another aspect to consider when it comes to films is the issue of the perspective of the writer, the director and the viewers. According to Oliveira (2006), point of view has been explored in new ways by Cinema. Through flashbacks, slow motion, the assemblage and the dynamism of the near and far, a new way of apprehending reality is created.

In this sense, the camera thus becomes a tool to change not only the structural point of view of the film, but also the subjective point of view of the spectator. It gives the writer and / or director the ability to “bend” and “control” the views of others.

There is much disagreement among authors concerning adaptation. Some are more conservative, they think adaptation should be mostly faithful to the original text in order to make it respected screen version. Most modern critics, like Neto (2008) say that when adapting a book, the director should use his work as raw material and not as an end, but it should work so that the filmmaker reminds you of what you read. Marsh (2001, p. 205) states that “(...) all adaptation is interpretation, and all interpretation is time bound.” His time and the audience he wants to aboard influence the director. One example of adaptation influenced by time was *Oliver Twist* (1948) it had several scene cut out because of its supposed violence.

According to McFarlane, filmgoers are mainly interested in “how the film makers have gone about the business and art of transposition from one medium to another” (2010, 18). It is fascinating because many films have their roots in Literature. McFarlane (2010) also states that what film and Literature share is the “narrative”: the events in sequence virtually connected and well arranged.

When adaptation takes place, the screen director has the objective of “paring down or performing the surgery that removes a whole section” (id. Ibid). One good example we have of this phenomenon is the *Oliver Twist* (1948) of David Lean. About this film, MacFarlane says:

The Lean adaptations of Dickens illustrate these different approaches. For the most part *Great Expectations* opts for the shaving down of the events and characters..., whereas his *Oliver Twist* (1948) takes a much more ruthless scalpel to the original. In the latter, Lean hacks out ... a great hunk of the novel's last third, in which Dickens indulges both his love of complicated relationships and his sentimental view of the life of rural retreat. (2010, p 24).

McFarlane (2010) brings interesting comments on adaptation. He states that “fidelity” is no longer a factor that needs to be discussed when writing about adaptation. To make a good film version the director has to rethink the way the scene is being placed to nourish the eyes of the audience that is expecting to be surprised. There is also a misconception “imagination”. There is a discussion on film adaption theories, which say, “film makes fewer demands of imagination than a book does” (McFarlane, 2010 p .16). The complicity of a film makes us “work” more intellectually, emotionally to understand the resources applied in the film production, and this effort makes the audience exceed interested in the picture.

To make a good novel or film it is important to understand the culture and the behavior of the time. Charles Dickens gave such care when he created the character Fagin. The figure of the Jew had its particularities in the Nineteenth Century episteme; there was the group of relationships that can be found from a given time between the sciences when they are analyzed in the level of discursive regularities. This knowledge is important to get deep into Fagin, and it is the topic of next section.

3. The position of the Jews in the nineteenth century English Society

In order to better understand the character Fagin in Dicken’s novel as well as in Polanski has and Lean’s films. One must consider the situation of Jews in nineteenth century. For this task we shall use the paper entitled “Jewish Life in Germany: Memoirs from Three Centuries (The Modern Jewish Experience)” (1991), by the Emeritus Professor of Hamburg University, Monika Richarz.

Though Jews lived in many parts of Europe during the nineteenth century, because of the laws in the Christian nations of Europe, “they became very restricted in their freedom

and their rights.” (Richarz, 1991, p. 77). They did not have the freedom to move inside Europe and they could only live in a place if they had a special permission. Many countries closed their borders to the Jews. In some countries, the Jews could not own property and lived in places called “ghettos”. In many countries, Jewish people were prohibited from holding official positions.

In 1791 the French Parliament granted the Jew legal equality. In England, the Jew became emancipated during the 19th century, but it was very much a slow pace movement. It took “125 years for emancipation to become effective for all Jews in Europe.” (Richarz, 1999, p. 78). Even so, they did not have the same rights as the other citizens. The acceptance of the Jew varied from one country to the other. Anti-Semitism grew strong throughout Europe during the nineteenth century. Often, the Jew was blamed as the cause of social and economic problems.

In fact, the Jews had to forcibly adjust and absorb European Christian culture in order to be accepted and tolerated. (loc. cit)

3.1. The prejudice against the Jew in the 19th Century as reflected in Charles Dickens’ Novels

The Jewish issue has been a subject of study for many authors throughout the years and in many areas. It is a very delicate issue judging whether a work has or does not have anti-Semitic content.

When we study the image of the Jew in the novels of Charles Dickens, the most prominent figure that comes to our mind is the character Fagin in *Oliver Twist* (1837-1839). In fact, according to Kaplan, Fagin’s name has become a symbol of “meanness and depravity” (1993, p. 448)

Oliver Twist has emerged from an era that was traditionally anti-Semitic. Everything, including the Law, newspapers, magazines, and songs reflect hatred against the Jew. Kaplan points out that “In 1830 a Jew could not open a shop within the city of London, be called to the Bar, receive a university degree, and sit in the Parliament.” (1993, p. 449)

In Dickens’s time London, we can find many examples that could have inspired the writer to construct the character of Fagin. In an article, Kaplan (1993) mentions a Jew called Isaac Solomon who was on trial in 1830 for having “stolen jewelry, clothing, and fabric.” He was sentenced to seven years in prison for burglary.

Although there are anti-Semitic characteristics in *Oliver Twist*, as Kaplan points out “there are no Jewish portraits” in Dickens’ other early works (loc. cit). In *Oliver Twist* The Jew is unpleasant and conventionalized. When the writer thinks of Jews, he sees “money and beards”. Thus, in this sense, *Oliver Twist* would be a reflection of an author that accepts anti-Semitism. (loc. cit.)

In Fagin, Dickens produced a typical stage Jew, with stereotyped characteristics such as red hair and whiskers, hooked nose, shuffling gait, and a long gabardine coat, and broad brimmed hat. It was difficult for Dickens to escape the anti-Jewish prejudice, but as time went on, he changed his approach. In the years from 1830 to 1860, the Jew became more respected and this is reflected in many works including those of Dickens.

Between the years 1867 and 1868, according to Kaplan (1993), Dickens revised his volumes and published them with some changes. Some of these changes took place in *Oliver Twist*, where he made “several emendations”, most of them concerning Fagin, the Jewish character. In Chapters XXXIX, XLIV and XLV he replaced the words “the Jew” with “Fagin” or “he”. In Chapter LII Dickens changed the title from “The Jew’s Last Night Alive” to “Fagin’s Last Night Alive”.

Through these emendations, Charles Dickens showed that he accompanied society in repudiating the prejudice against Jews. “He was mirroring the new times, he was advancing towards toleration; he was a “creature of his times.” ” (Kaplan, 1993. P. 450)

In a peer-reviewed article “The Absent Jew in Dickens: Narrators in *Oliver Twist*, *Our Mutual Friend*, and *A Christmas Carol*” (1996), Professor Grossman gives us a better insight of how the Jew is viewed in *Oliver Twist* through Fagin’s characteristics and the other characters’ behavior towards him.

Grossman states that Dickens in his novels’ “depiction of Jews has been seen as proceeding from an anti-Semitic stereotype to an apology” (1996, p. 37). He sees a growing preoccupation of Dickens in not appearing anti-Semitic. *Oliver Twist* passed through an overall review, and the last version published in 1867 selectively deleted all the expressions “The Jew”, showing that Dickens was preoccupied with the bad repercussion the term had in society.

The Fagin of Dickens throughout the novel is a very good expression of the prejudice against and of the position of the Jew in the English society. It is worth noting why that name was chosen, and we will see this in the next chapter.

4. Fagin in Dickens

The name Fagin is derived from a boy who was Dickens' friend in childhood. In 1824, the Dickens family confronted an enormous financial crisis and Charles, who was only twelve years old, was sent to work, as his father, John Dickens, had been imprisoned for debt. Charles went to work at a blacking warehouse, receiving for his work six or seven shillings a week, and working twelve hours per day. Dickens' work was "to cover the pots of paste-blackening" (Kaplan, 1993, p. 483). Three boys did the same work in the warehouse, and one of them was Bob Fagin, who taught Dickens how to use the string and tie the knots around the lids of the pots. We can find a similarity between Bob Fagin teaching Dickens and the Fagin of *Oliver Twist* teaching "class in elementary and advanced pocket-picking" (KAPLAN, 1993, p.483). Though Bob Fagin was a kind and friendly boy, Dickens was ashamed of his own poverty and concealed his family's real situation from him.

4.1 Physical appearance

Most of what is said about Dickens' character Fagin is notorious. He has such a unique aura of villainy that it is reflected in his physical appearance.

The first time appearance of Fagin is shown in the book in Chapter VIII, when Jack Dawkins, the Artful Dodger, offers Oliver a safe place to live in London. He refers to Fagin as an old man. Fagin first appears to Oliver in a dark, dirty and cold place. The object he holds is a "toasting-fork" (p. 71), an object similar to the fork used by Satan in many paintings in Dickens' time.

Dickens' first description of Fagin is as an "old shriveled Jew" (p. 71). Which means Fagin looked small and thin. He goes on in the same paragraph to say that he had a repulsive, dark face full of "matted red hair" (loc. cit) meaning the hair was twisted or stuck together and usually dirty.

Fagin is dressed in "a greasy flannel gown" (loc. cit) while he is cooking for his pupils with "his throat bare" (loc. cit). In Chapter IX Oliver, half awake, sees him cooking and whistling and notices that he had a "half-closed eye" (p. 73). In the same Chapter, Fagin's eyes are described as "bright dark eyes" (p. 74), the expression dark is used to give us the idea of evil in the personality of Fagin, "dark" is used here as synonym of "bad". We do not have any further details - we know that Fagin had a half-closed eye but we do not know how he got this eye problem.

In Chapter IX, we can see a description of how Fagin gets dressed to play a "very curious and uncommon game" (p. 77). This is actually Fagin teaching his pupils how to

pickpocket. He places a “snuff-box” in one pocket of his trousers, a “note-case” in the other, a “watch” in his “waist-coat’ pocket with a “guard-chain round his neck”, a “mock (false) diamond pin in his shirt”. He also puts his “spectacle-case” and “handkerchief” in his pocket.

In Chapter XII, after Oliver is arrested, Charley Bates and Dodger tell Fagin what has happened. He appears with a “rascally smile on his white face” (p. 105). He also has “red eyebrows” (loc. cit).

In Chapter XV, Fagin is dividing sovereigns with Sikes when his friend Barney, who is also a Jew, appears, “nearly as vile and repulsive in appearance” (p. 130) as Fagin. In Chapter XVI, when Fagin meets Oliver after he is been kidnapped by Nancy, he takes off his “nightcap” making a great number of low bows towards Oliver, showing by this act a sign of falsehood towards the boy. Fagin wants to deceive Oliver into believing that he is a kind gentleman. In the same chapter, after a discussion over the money Oliver was carrying in his pocket to pay for Mr. Brownlow’s books, Sikes calls Fagin “avaricious old skeleton” (p. 140). From this statement, we can understand that Fagin was both old and thin.

In Chapter XVI, when Oliver falls at Fagin’s feet in desperation, he reacts by “knitting his shaggy eyebrows into a hard knot” (p. 141) with a villainous attitude. Chapter XIX begins with Fagin preparing to leave his house to meet Sikes. The narrator describes Fagin’s body as a “shriveled body” (p. 167) meaning that his body was shrunk and decaying. In the same Chapter, Fagin arrives at Sikes’ den, and then goes to the fire to warm his “skinny hands” (p. 169).

In Chapter XLII, after meeting Mr. Claypole, there is evidence of Fagin’s big nose: “Fagin followed up his remark by striking the side of his nose with his right forefinger, a gesture which Noah attempted to imitate, though not with complete success, in consequence of his own nose not being large enough for the purpose.” (p. 396)

In Chapter XLVII, entitled “Fatal Consequences”, we see other physical characteristics of Fagin. He had “long black nails” (p. 437) and “toothless gums” (loc. cit) and “such fangs as should have been a dog’s or rat’s” (loc. cit). These could be considered animal characteristics resulting from the prejudice against Jews, which also serve to emphasize the age of the character.

Dickens’ Fagin is a physical construction to externalize some internal characteristics. He is a small and thin old man. His face was dark and covered by red hair meaning that he was redheaded a feature very common among the Ashkenazi Jews who emerge from a distinct Jewish community traced back to immigrants from the Israelite tribes of the Middle East (Behar, 2006).

4.2. George Cruikshank's illustrations in *Oliver Twist*

We cannot talk about Fagin in *Oliver Twist* without mentioning the work and influence of the illustrations of the book in the construction of the character. As matter of fact, although George Cruikshank “illustrated only two of Dickens’ works – *Sketchers by Boz* and *Oliver Twist* – [he] still remains Dickens’s best-known illustrator, particularly for such powerful images as “Fagin in the Condemned Cell.”” (Jordan, 2001, 168)

Dickens was fully active in the process of creation of the illustrations, and required that such illustrations should remain a “faithful rendering of the details he imagined first.” (Cohen, 1980). His letters to Cruikshank always tended to show that the control belonged to the writer.



Figure 1.

Among Cruikshank's illustrations, three are most worth to mention. Figure 1. Shows Fagin teaching his pupils the “art” of pickpocketing. It shows Fagin wearing his greasy flannel gown, his skinny old body, long beard, with a teacher's look. In one hand, he is holding the pitchfork the symbol of evil and punishment, and in the other, the frying pan. His grotesque aspect in this picture helps the reader to build the evil physical image of Fagin.



Figure 2.

Figure 2. "Oliver's reception by Fagin and the Boys". It includes many narrative details, for example: Oliver's new clothes and books. Bates' candle held very close to Oliver, the Artful Dodger picking Oliver's pocket, Fagin's "mock humility" bowing to Oliver and taking off his hat and dressing in his great coat, the intimidating presence of Bill Sikes and his dog, and Nancy's odd smile almost outside the scene and the big shadow of Sikes. Cruikshank illustrates the scene with mastery and originality.



Figure 3.

Figure 3. is the very powerful drawing of Fagin in the Condemned Cell. Fagin is portrayed with a lunatic look. His eyes look nowhere and the position of his body expresses his full realization that his sins have been the cause of his approaching death. The image shows a demoralized villain. It makes the reader ponder on the psychological state of the character. It shows the mental instability of one man a few hours from being executed. The fear in Fagin's eyes and the position of his body shows the fear of the unknown, he does not want to die this way and in his mind he does not deserve such a death (Jordan, 2001, p. 169).

4.3. Behavior / Character / Destiny

According to Kaplan, Fagin is the most enigmatic character in *Oliver Twist*. He is also the most discussed because he is a Jew, but "there is otherwise nothing particularly Jewish about him" (1993, p. 478). We could suggest that Fagin is a renegade Jew. In the very first scene when Oliver arrives at Fagin's house, he is cooking sausages for his pupils, a kind of food an Orthodox Jew not eat. In the scene that Fagin is cooking sausages, the distance between Fagin and the religion can be demonstrated. "More importantly, the odd, but cozy domesticity of the scene indicates how Fagin, in his little community is not defined against the (underworld) society in which he lives" (1993, p.38). However, we cannot assume with a degree of certainty that Fagin did not practice the religion; there are no direct references to his devotion to the Jew Law. Nevertheless, by his attitudes with others and society he showed to be somehow uncompromised with religious dogmas.

We find the first reference to Fagin in Chapter VIII (p. 69). When "the Artful Dodger", Jack Dawkins, a "protégé" of Fagin's refers to him as a "spectacle old gentleman" meaning that Fagin was a respectable gentleman, something that in the eyes of the Artful Dodger could be true because in his history he could not recognize any other gentleman who was as kind to him as Fagin was. Maybe the Artful Dodger resorted to the same tricks Fagin played on him before, in order to hoodwink Oliver, by portraying Fagin as a kind and supportive old man.

In chapter VIII, Fagin meets Oliver and his first reaction is to smile and bow before him, and say he "hoped he should have the honour of his intimate acquaintance" (p.71). Showing intimacy and respect is the way Fagin found to make Oliver more comfortable and welcome to his house, it might shows that Fagin was preparing Oliver to be exploited in the near future, to be an obedient pickpocket. When Oliver stares at the hanging "pocket-handkerchiefs" (p.72) with a curious look, Fagin makes sure that Oliver knows that the

material is just for washing. He also makes Oliver drink alcohol, after which the boy “sunk into deep sleep” (loc. cit).

In Chapter IX, we have the first proof of the avaricious and possessive care Fagin takes of the expensive objects he has acquired from his life of stealing. While he looks at the objects inside the small box, he talks to himself, showing his fears that somebody could find the box with the precious belongings.

After Fagin observes Oliver staring at him and the box, he shows his identity for a moment, when “he closed the lid of the box with a loud crash; and laying his hand on a bread knife which was on the table, started furiously up” (p. 74). This scene shows the true Fagin hidden underneath the old man, when, for a second, he unveils his true personality. He then tries to undo this impression by playing “with the knife a little before laying it down” (p. 75) this act shows Fagin disguising his identity. At the same moment, Fagin demonstrates that he is a very avaricious person: “They – They’re mine, Olive; mine little property” (loc. cit). He tells the boy, referring to the hidden jewels.

In Chapter IX, we can also see that Fagin had no scruples about teaching young boys how to pick pockets. When Oliver begins to have his first lessons watching the Jew, the Dodger and Charley practice the criminal act, Fagin makes the act of stealing appear to Oliver as something very natural and dignified. He emphasizes to Oliver the importance of making the other boy a model, saying that if Oliver followed the Dodger’s example he would be “a great man” (p. 79)

In Chapter LII, “Fagin’s last night alive”, he is very desperate in jail he sees himself every second closer to the final breath. The day passed and he receives a visit of venerable men to pray with him, probably they might be Jew of certain leadership in the community, but showing some kind of lunacy, he then “had driven them away with a curse.” (p. 501), as they try with effort to speak to Fagin, he eventually “beats them off” (loc, cit). Such an act could be considerate Fagin’s lunacy or his detachment from dogmas and religious practices.

Another interesting aspect present in the whole novel is that Fagin does not speak with a Jewish accent even with other Jews, for example with Barney, the boy-of-all- work at The Cripples. As for Barney, he “speaks with the pronounced nasality which was apparently characteristic of London Jews during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” (KAPLAN, 1993, p. 479). This may be used to show Dickens wish to mischaracterize the Jew in the figure of Fagin or else to show how Fagin was distanced from the Jewish community and entirely absorbed in London’s underworld, jargon and accent included.

5. Lean's Fagin

The film *Oliver Twist* (1948) by the prominent director David Lean was produced right after World War II. The 1948 adaptation was considered a “controversial masterpiece.”(JORDAN, 2001, p. 211) though Lean had “respect for the inherently cinematic qualities of Dicken’s texts” (Id. *ibid*).

According to Jordan (2001, p. 213) David Lean brought some innovative techniques like the use of “camera lens with a dramatically longer and narrower range than normal.” In this sense, his film has a fairy-tale style background. The way *Oliver Twist* (1948) was produced permanently affected the design of films after World War II. Instead of big and expensive sets, he used very well made miniatures and tricks like making clouds out of pieces of glass (Id. *Ibid*).

Oliver Twist (1948) was the second film of David Lean based on a Dickens’ novels, and according to Jordan, he inherited in his work the “visual qualities of Dickens’s writing” (2001, p. 218). An example of translation from the book to the film was the scene in which Fagin is in the “Three Cripples” pub and in the film Lean uses the resource of light and shadow on the characters’ faces, to bring a realistic and Gothic visual to the scene. Therefore, he could reinforce the evil characteristics of the characters.

Jordan also points out that Lean’s portrayal of Fagin in his film “relied heavily on Cruikshank” (2001, p. 218). Fagin’s face appeared very grotesque, with a big, fake nose, so Lean tried to make his “Jew” somehow a reconstruction of the Fagin of Cruikshank’s drawings. Jordan also give us an important piece of information about Lean’s construction of Fagin: he hired a “convicted burglar as a research consultant” (*loc, cit*), such attitude contributed to reinforce the evil stereotyped Fagin. For us it seems that Lean did not realize the effect that the anti-Semitism reflected in the character’s appearance would have on a post-World War II audience.

About this impact, Jordan comments that *Oliver Twist* (1948) was a reminder of the stereotypes of the Holocaust and it was judged as “particularly gross in an international context” (2001, p. 219). The film provoked riots. In America, David Lean’s film was banned for two years and then released but with twelve minutes cut out of the scene, which shows Fagin’s agony inside of the condemned cell. Lean also cuts the importance of Monks as a character in the film by making him somehow invisible and much more mysterious, which turns Fagin into the most evil character in the Lean’s film.

5.1 The Physical appearance of Fagin in Lean's Film:

As mentioned before, Fagin in Lean's film *Oliver Twist* (1948) follows the description of Cruikshank's drawings for the original book very closely. An important aspect of the Lean film is the contrast between light and darkness in every scene in which the character Fagin appears. He uses this effect in order to reinforce the evil characteristics of Fagin



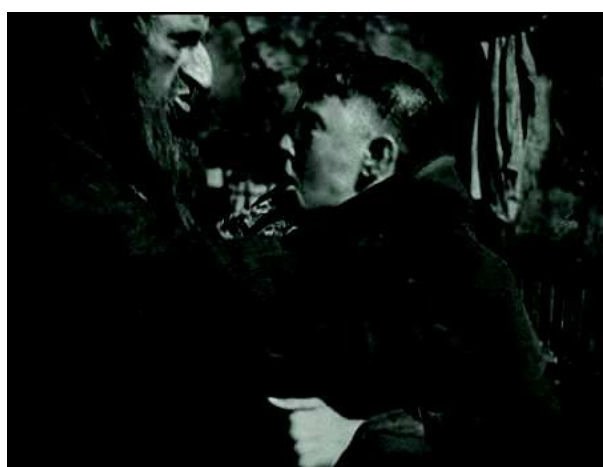
We can see that David Lean's Fagin (left) shows a close similarity to the Jew portrayed in Cruikshank's illustration (right), wherein is portrayed a particular scene from the book: the moment the Artful Dodger introduces Oliver to Fagin. David Lean's Fagin is an old man, has a big nose, the face covered by hair, dressed in a long dark overcoat. One strong aspect of the character in the film is his shriveled body. The face is unattractive as that of the illustrations, but with a peculiar and somewhat sad expression. In Lean's film, we cannot notice a physical defect Fagin is described as having in the book, the half-closed-eye. On the contrary, Fagin in the film expresses a lot through the eyes and he seems to have perfect sight.



In the scene above, the other orphans are laughing at Oliver because he gave a silly answer to one of Fagin's questions. Fagin is holding a toasting-fork similar to the one described in the book. In the novel and in Lean's film the toasting-fork is used to punish the orphans, as we can see in the second scene where Fagin hits one of the boys, his apprentices in crime, with the fork. The fork, linked to Satan, has the negative connotation of the repressive hand of the devil.



In the next important scene of the film Fagin teaches his pupils how to pick pockets through a game wherein he plays a distracted walker staring at the store windows. There is a similarity between the objects Fagin wears in the film and those described in the novel. He places the watch in his waistcoat, and the notecase in the coat pocket. In Lean's film, Oliver helps Fagin by placing a note-book in Fagin's coat-pocket, something which doesn't happen in the novel.



In the scene above, Fagin is being told about Oliver's imprisonment. In the book, Dickens describes Fagin as having a "menacing look" (p.105). We can see this expression in Fagin's countenance. In Lean's film, as in the novel, Fagin knows how dangerous it could be if one of his pupils were caught by the police, and this makes him show his true brutal identity.

5.2 Behavior / Character / Destiny of Fagin in Lean's film.

Fagin in Lean plays a very important role as a central character as he also serves as the link between the scenes. We can also observe Lean's concern to be faithful to the Fagin of Dickens, trying to bring almost identical significance to the scenes.



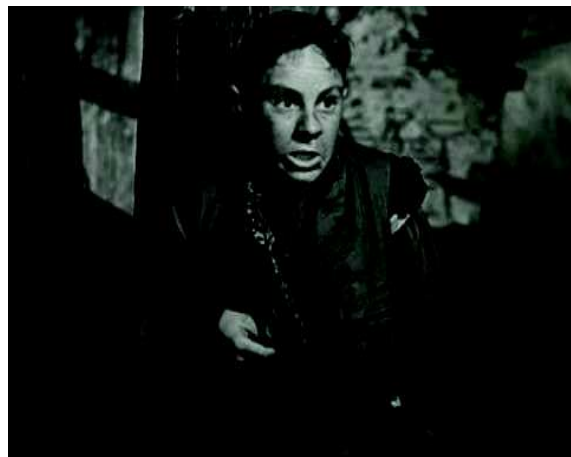
In the first scene where Fagin appears, he is cooking with the toasting-fork in his hand but in the film he does not eat the sausages. He asks his pupils to eat them and a plate with sausages appears in the scene. Therefore, Lean pays attention to the fact that a Jew cooking sausages violated Jewish beliefs and rules. The action demonstrates Fagin's distance from his religion. Another aspect of Lean's Fagin is his tongue-tied speaking, which is portrayed in an original and clever way, the sounds when produced by Fagin can be compared to the hissing sound of a serpent.



In Lean's movie, a day after Oliver arrives at Fagin's house and is sleeping on the floor, "a mysterious man", Oliver's half-brother Monks, is called by Fagin to see the boy. Monks gives Fagin some coins and then leaves. In the book Monks has a very important function in the sequence of the story. However, in Lean's film, as already mentioned, the character was omitted leaving Fagin with the full responsibility of embodying alone the evil presence in the story.



In the given scene, while Fagin is cutting a slice of bread to Oliver, he asks if the boy could pull the handkerchief of his pocket without being noticed. The scene is also present in the book, but David Lean changes the order, placing the scene when Oliver discovers the precious belongings after the scene Fagin teaches the pupils how to pickpocket.



The following scene of the film shows Fagin's enraged and despaired after having noticed the absence of Oliver. He shakes Master Bates with fury and the boy sneaks from the big coat, passes Fagin and holds the toasting fork against the Old Jew. The Jew flies towards a pot and throws it against the boy. The scene is a turn on the story as it marks the downfall of Fagin's fortune; it seems to foreshadow what is going to happen to him.



The scene continues with the appearance of a new character called Mister Sikes. He brings Fagin stolen articles, which seem to be from a church. Fagin explains to Sikes the reason he is mad and that with Oliver's imprisonment they could be in serious trouble. In the book we don't have such objects; it might be a resource Lean uses to emphasize the criminal nature of the characters, as well as their lack of respect for religion at large and for Christianity in particular.



One very important character appears in the same scene. Nancy knocks on the Jew's door, making Fagin and Sikes rapidly hide the theft products. Fagin convinces Nancy to go to the police court to "rescue" Oliver. In the book, there are two girls in the scene but as the

other character does not speak, Lean uses the resource of subtraction and does not include the second girl in the scene, as her absence does not bear on the plot.



Nancy returns from the court and alerts the Jew that Oliver had been taken home by noble gentlemen and certainly when Oliver recovers, he will tell where Fagin's house is. Fagin and his pupils flee from the house. In the book Fagin, in the same scene, asks Nancy and The Artful Dodger to find out where Oliver is housed. Fagin then threatens to kill Oliver: "If he means to blab us among his new friends, we may stop his mouth yet" (p.115).



The scene above shows the moment when Oliver is captured by Nancy and Bill Sikes and returns to Fagin. It is very faithful to the book and shows the devil aspect of the Jew's personality. Fagin tries to spank Oliver with a glove after Oliver attempted to run away from the situation, but is prevented from doing that by the revolted Nancy. She, in turn, tries to

attack the old Jew but is seized by Bill Sikes. The scene is used by Lean to reinforce the grotesque aspect of Fagin. Nancy does not seem to accept that Oliver undergo the same situations that she underwent in her earlier life in the company of the old Jew, the beating could have been something very frequent in her life in the early years.



In the following scene, Fagin is walking when he suddenly sees a reward sign from Mr. Brownlow to whom finds information about Oliver Twist. The Jew then tears the reward sign; a scene that is not in the book. Lean uses the process of addition to emphasize and inform the audience that Oliver is being looked for by the authorities. Fagin meets Nancy and Sikes and plans to use Oliver to steal a house in Chertsey. In the book, the meeting happened in Sikes house and they have a quite long conversation. Lean uses of economy and covers in the same scene, the planning of the house burglary using Oliver and the appearance of Mr. Monks the mysterious character.



Fagin and Mr. Monks meet at a hidden place, but Nancy overhears the conversation through a secret window. Mr. Monks tells Fagin that he has rescued from the orphanage the

only proof of Oliver's background. Mr. Monks leaves now to Fagin the right to do whatever he wants with Oliver, specially let him be caught in a crime, so Oliver could go to jail. Even death could be a good end in the eyes of Mr. Monks.



After learning that Nancy heard the conversation he had had with Mr. Monks, Fagin recruits the Artful Dodger to follow and spy Nancy's steps, to see if she might be a threat to him. The time line of the scene is very different from what happens in the book. The scene when the Jew delivers Oliver to Sikes happened in the same day and hour that they depart to do the burglary. In the book, Nancy delivers the boy at Sikes house. She instructs Oliver not to react to the madness of Bill Sikes. Fagin does not go to Bill's house. This is an example of transformation.



In the next scene, Fagin learns from the Artful Dodger that Nancy talked to Mr. Brownlow at the London Bridge and that she promised to deliver Oliver the following morning. Fagin is very disturbed by the news and alarms Sikes about what he heard. Fagin

then tries to convince Sikes not to be too brutal with Nancy, but Sikes is furious and leaves Fagin's house enraged.

After the killing of Nancy by Sikes, Lean makes the film move in a faster pace with many events happening in a row. Mr. Monks is arrested and Fagin and Sikes are declared wanted by the police. Fagin hides from the police with the help of his pupils and the hopeless Oliver.



Running away from the police Sikes ends up hiding together with Fagin and the pupils. Suddenly they hear the barking of Sikes dog outside, which leads the police and the locals to Fagin's hideout.



Fagin sees no hope as he stares the door being put down by the mob. He is arrested by the police and carried to jail. Lean's film does not bring the scene of Fagin's trial or the scene of his madness in the Jail, when he screams out the lines he has in the book in his

death cell, "Strike them all dead! What right have they to butcher me?". The director also omits the scene of his execution. It seems that Lean did not want to attack the audience even more with the scenes, which are by far the strongest ones in Dicken's of the novel. However, the lack of these scenes did not damage the plot, because Lean rightfully sewed it.

6. Polanski's Fagin

Oliver Twist (2005) directed by Roman Polanski and with the screenplay written by Ronald Harwood was also based on Charles Dickens eponymous novel. The film was shot in Prague, Beroun, and Žatec in the Czech Republic. Polanski's version - like David Lean's has omitted the Maylie Family, but unlike Lean, Polanski also "omitted Monks, as well as the entire subplot of a conspiracy to defraud Oliver of the inheritance money that his father left him. Oliver now has no origin, but is an anonymous orphan like the rest of Fagin's gang. To fill up the gap left by the absence of Monks and the Maylies, the film creates a subplot wherein Fagin's intentions toward Oliver become murderous and he plots with Sikes to actually kill the boy, which never happens in the novel." (IMDB, 2016). However, even in this same scene Polanski tries to soft Fagin is participation in the planning. Sikes plans to draw Oliver but Fagin suggests releasing the boy in the wilderness and letting him walk. Fagin somehow tried to save Oliver by giving him a chance to scape.

Ben Kingsley - an English actor whose father was Indian - played Fagin in Polanski's film. He became famous for interpreting Gandhi in the eponymous film. Michael Gross (2001), an American author and journalist who writes for The New York Times, in an article called "A face lift for Wretched Old Fagin", points out that the Fagin of Polanski is more humanlike and less repulsive. In the same article, Polanski is quoted as having stated: "There is no completely bad man, Fagin, with all his villainy, is still giving the children some kind of home, you know. What was happening to these kids in the street was just unbearable." (Polanski apud Gross, 2001, p. 1).

6.1 Roman Polanski's Jewish background

Polanski was born in 1933 in Paris from Polish parents. His father had Jewish descent and his mother was Roman Catholic with a Jewish background, though both declared themselves to be agnostic. Polanski moved back to Poland in 1937, shortly after the outbreak of World War II. He was raised in Jewish communities but called himself an atheist.

Polanski's parents were caught by the Germans and his father was transferred, along with thousands of other Jews, to Mauthausen, a group of 49 German concentration camps in Austria. His mother was taken to Auschwitz and was killed soon after arriving. He remembered seeing his father being marched off with a long line of people. Polanski tried to get closer to his father to ask him what was happening, and managed to get within a few yards. His father saw him, but afraid his son might be spotted by the German soldiers, whispered (in Polish), "Get lost!" After the war he was reunited with his father, and moved back to Kraków. His father remarried 21 December 1946 to Wanda Zajączkowska (a woman Polanski had never liked) and died of cancer in 1984.

6.2 The Physical appearance of Fagin in Polanski's Film:

The appearance of Fagin in *Oliver Twist* (2005) is much lighter than the one described in the novel or in Cruikshank's drawings. The Fagin of Polanski is colored and it's an important aspect of the character that makes it more agreeable. In order to preserve some of the original dark persona of Fagin, Polanski used much dark spots in the scenes where Fagin is present.



In the first picture, we can see that Roman Polanski's Fagin shows some similarity to the Jew portrayed in Cruikshank's drawings. The particular illustration (above) is a scene in the book where the Artful Dodger introduces Oliver to Fagin. Polanski's Fagin is an old man, has a big nose, the face covered by red hair, dressed in a long dark overcoat. One strong aspect of the character in the film is his shriveled body very well played through the movie, which is a peculiar characteristic. The face is as unattractive as in the illustrations, but with a welcoming and friendly countenance. In Polanski's film, we are able to notice the physical defect Fagin is described as having in the book, the half-closed-eye as one you can see in the first picture. (Left)



In the scene above, after Oliver is being introduced to Fagin is asked to sit on the table and share some food. Fagin is holding a toasting fork similar to the one described in the book, and later on the Artful Dodger feeds Oliver with the same instrument. In the novel, the toasting fork is used to punish the orphans, but in Polanski's film, there is no aggression with such instrument. The fork, linked to Satan, has not the negative connotation in Polanski's film, as it does in David Lean's.

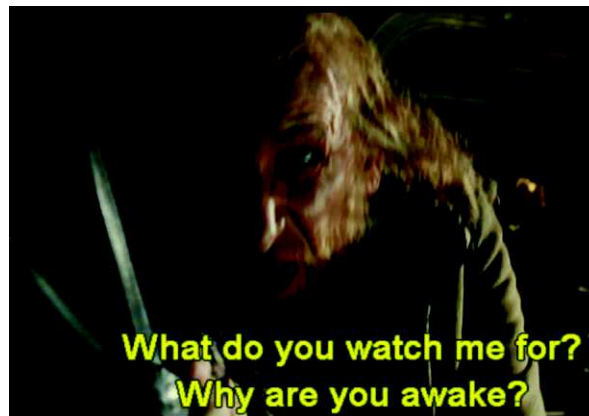


In the next important scene of the film Fagin and his pupils, demonstrate to Oliver how to pick pocket. He acts as a distracted old man on the street being subtracted by two of the boys. The objects Fagin uses in the scene are similar to those used in the book such as a watch, a notecase and a handkerchief. The scene is very similar to the details described the book and it is more humorously played, so as to amuse and in make the audience laugh. Through greater dose of humor, Polanski managers to soften the heavy characteristics of Fagin.

6.3 Behavior / Character / Destiny of Fagin in Polanski's film.

As already mentioned, Polanski gives as more human rendition of Fagin, who plays very important role throughout the film. As a central character, Polanski had care with Fagin makeup and body language, so they could maintains the novel's descriptions, but he also

innovated by portraying Fagin as a friendly old gentleman more or less deceived by the circumstances of life. The fact of Fagin being a Jew does not influence too much the plot and does not become a bigger issue.



Above there is the first scene which shows the possessive and villain behavior of Fagin in Polanski's film. The scene is very faithful to the book and shows Fagin's ambition towards the belongings he has been collecting probably through his whole life. In the scene, Fagin makes sure that Oliver is deep asleep to pull out his precious box from a hidden place inside the old house floor. While Fagin appreciates the jewels, Oliver wakes up and Fagin then angrily takes some scissors and runs towards Oliver. Fagin shows a furious face, but after that he realized how aggressive he was towards the boy, he refrains and starts to play with the scissors.

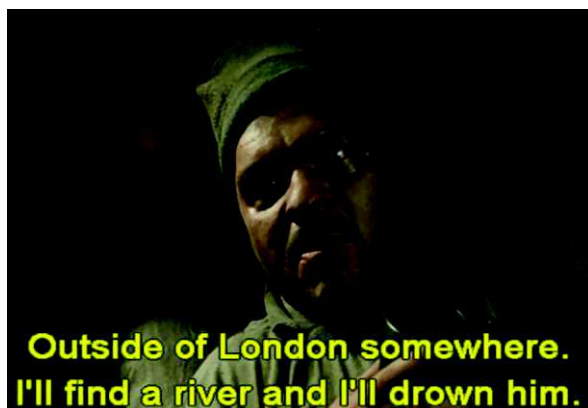


In the next scene, Fagin shows desperation when he learns that Oliver did not come back with the other two boys, his desperation seems uncommon and makes the boys very confused. Oliver is important to Fagin not only as a new recruit for pickpocketing, but also because he fears Oliver might squeal about his illegal activities. In the same scene a new and important character appears, Sikes. He interacts with Fagin and helps him with the dialogs in the film.



Fagin feels relieved when Nancy brings Oliver back over. Even in this situation, Fagin shows his villainy by locking out Oliver. He then brings Oliver some food in the morning and with his dissimulation: "...took the opportunity of reading Oliver along a lecture on the crying sin of ingratitude" (p. 157). Trying to explain his reasons, Fagin tells Oliver about the story of a young fellow who "proving unworthy of his confidence and evincing a desire to communicate with the police" (p.158), was hanged at the old Bailey. The very well-played scene is a plead of Polanski's Fagin to convince Oliver through threats to be quiet in reveals the Jew's evils nature. In this part of the film, the Jew did not know but he was prophesying his sad end. From this time on, an important part on the Fagin's sick mind is shown: his growing fear of having a tragic end.

In the same scene, " the Jew, smiling hideously, patted Oliver on the head, and said, that if he kept himself quiet, and applied to himself to business, they would be very good friends yet". In the novel after the dialog between the two characters, Fagin locks the door of the room where Oliver was and he remains there for many days. In the novel, such attitude highlights Fagin's mean nature. Polanski, however, was not faithful to the end of this act. Different from the novel, Polanski's Fagin leaves the door open and let Oliver free to choose to get out of the room and go downstairs. Maybe it was one more strategy Polanski used to make Fagin look more human-like. Indeed a greater commitment to "faithfulness" to the original, in this scene would have Polanski's portrayal of Fagin much more negative.



The scene above shows a dialog between Fagin and Sikes after the unfortunate attempt of robbery. They plan to get rid of Oliver. Sikes suggests drowning Oliver in the river, but Fagin does not like the idea and suggests letting Oliver walk in the wilderness. In the book, Fagin plans Oliver death with Mr. Monks, the boy's half-brother. Polanski with his set of scenes brings a softer appearance to the film. If the reproduction of Fagin and Mr. Monks scenes were placed in the film, there would be a heavier characterization in terms of evil and the scenes would be out of tune with the whole film.



The last scene of the film is somehow faithful to the book in terms of how Fagin is shown. He is totally out of mind, and saying nonsenses. Oliver goes visit Fagin on the day before the old man's execution. In the novel Fagin confesses that the papers "the papers which proved that Oliver was Mr. Brownlow's grandson are in a canvas bag, in a hole a little way up in the chimney in the top front-room" (p. 505). In Polanski's film, there is no such inference because there is not any reference towards Mr. Monks existence. Thus, in the final scene, instead of Fagin confessing where the canvas bag is, he tells Oliver where his precious jewels were hidden.

7. Final considerations.

This research was a comparative and contrastive work of the classical novel *Oliver Twist* written by the well-known writer Charles Dickens with two films. The first film analyzed was realized in the year of 1948 and directed by the prominent director David Lean. The second film analyzed was a more contemporary work from 2005 and was directed by the no less prominent director Roman Polanski. Studying the novel and the two adaptations, focus was placed upon a very polemic and important character: Fagin. He plays a key role on the novel. The analyses aimed at finding the differences and likeness of Fagin's characteristics in the novel in relation to those presented in the two chosen films. The main question this paper wanted to answer was which of the two Fagins, Lean's or Polanski's is more faithful to Charles Dickens' original portrayal of the controversial old Jew.

From the David Lean's film (1948), we could notice the care that was placed upon his work. There were some reductions of scenes as it is normal when you have long novel such *Oliver Twist*. Fagin is well played and characterized. The clothing is very similar to Dickens' description as well the Cruikshank's illustrations that is the base of Fagin characteristics in the movie. There is a preoccupation to pass the body signs and positions described in the novel, as the inclined posture and the half-close eye. The characterization of Fagin was so faithful that in some countries some scenes were prohibited because it was considerate very offensive for that time. Lean also follows a very loyal chronological sequence of the event and does not change the mains plot of the story. There was a continuous use of the novels vocabulary and dialog.

The film produced by Roman Polanski (2005) is considerate a beautiful and touching piece of art. There is much of emotional appealing, but also, it is a very humorous and playful version of *Oliver Twist*. The film does begins telling the first part of the book, the background of Oliver is not known. The film is faithful to the characters but also omitted some of them. The most important was Mr. Monks the half-brother of Oliver. There is also cuts on scene which could be if it was faithful much more violent. Sometimes brought the violent scenes but with a dose of humor. The scene Fagin teaches his pupils how to pickpocket.

After analyzing Polanski's version of Fagin and comparing with Dickens, we see some significant difference. The body behavior is the same; the Fagin of Polanski has much more curved posture than is described in the novel. Fagin has a more friendly appearance. Polanski maintains the Jewish characteristics of Fagin such as the big nose, but we can notice a more kindly Fagin despite of he still been vile somehow. In some scenes, Fagin

contradicts his what the novel describe and shows a moral preoccupation. We can highlight the scene, which after Oliver is brought back to the Jew's house. The original Fagin let Oliver is lockout in a bedroom for a whole daylong. Nevertheless, Fagin of Polanski leaves the door open if Oliver wants to get downstairs. The last scene of Fagin in Polanski film when Fagin is closed to his death is one of the most impacting parts. But also contradicts the original scene from the novel in which Fagin tells Oliver where is hid the papers that proved the Mr. Brownlow's parentless with Oliver. Instead of it Fagin of Polanski tells Oliver where is hid his box of personal fortune.

Analyzing Fagin in Dickens with those of Lean and Polanski, we concluded the Fagin who is more faithful to Dickens is the one produced and directed by David Lean, because its likeness to the original one. The care Lean took towards was much to conserve Fagin as the one from the novel. Fagin of Polanski is much more kind and friend than the original one.

The present study is concluded, but is not closed to further analyses of the facts and information and deep research on Fagin's real influence throughout the novel and the two analyzed films. Much more can be done and this work can be as bases for further researches in the literature area.

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