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## **‘Scenes of marvellous variety’: The work-in-progress screenplays of *Maurice***

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### **Abstract**

This article examines the work-in-progress screenplays of *Maurice* by Ivory (1987), which was adapted from E. M. Forster’s novel, published posthumously in 1971. The article examines the creative processes revealed in the writers’ treatment, and three manuscripts of the screenplay, held at King’s College, Cambridge, all of which differ from the film as it has subsequently been released in cinemas and on DVD. Writers James Ivory and Kit Hesketh-Harvey restructured the narrative order of the story in several different ways, before the film was eventually edited to follow (almost) the chronology of the novel. The screenplay was also significantly shaped through the collaborative assistance of Ruth Praver Jhabvala, who is not credited as a writer for the film. This article charts these hitherto hidden creative and authorial processes, and argues that the narrative’s journey from page to screen was not a straight trajectory, but instead constituted a move away from mainstream narrative genres, such as the *Bildungsroman* and the love story, and then a recommitment to them in the film’s ‘final’ cut. The multiple versions of the screenplay add to the palimpsestuous inscriptions of this already multi-layered, in-flux narrative, which was revised repeatedly by E. M. Forster over a 45-year period, and has also been reworked through new book editions, a re-release of the DVD that includes deleted scenes as ‘extras’, and fan activity on the Internet.

### **Keywords**

*Maurice*

screenwriting

manuscript

Ivory

Hesketh-Harvey

Forster

### **Adaptation as process**

It has become common practice in adaptation theory to distinguish between adaptation as ‘process’ and adaptation as ‘product’ (see Cardwell 2002; McFarlane 1996). This binary is usually intended as a means of promoting the study of adaptation as a product of its new entertainment industry, so that, for example, film adaptations of literature are identified as operating within cinematic practices relating to genre, stardom, film studios, national cinemas, etc. The notion of adaptation as ‘process’ is usually associated with what we might term more ‘traditional’ adaptation studies, namely the adaptation case study undertaken through comparative close readings. As a result its function within the product/ process dichotomy has largely been to define a conservative methodology and critical approach, often aligned with both literary and fidelity criticism (see Cardwell 2002: 10).

As yet, little attention has been given to the actual creative processes undertaken by adaptors when practising the art of adaptation. This is changing, particularly through critical reflections of practitioners themselves (the ‘Practitioner Perspective’ section of this

journal is leading the way here). In this article I discuss adaptation as creative process in the territory where such questions are most neglected – in the heartland and origins of contemporary adaptation studies – namely the adaptation of the classic novel to the big screen. In so doing, I seek to identify the implications (and some of the problems) of approaching film adaptation in this way, whilst also suggesting the benefits it can bring us.

On his death in 1970, the novelist E. M. Forster bequeathed the rights to his works to his Almer Mater, King's College Cambridge, where Forster also resided as a Fellow from 1947. This means that since 1970, television, radio and theatrical adaptations of Forster's novels and short stories have been obliged to secure the rights to their chosen source from King's. As a token of thanks for the successful procurement of the rights to three of Forster's novels – *A Room with a View* (1908), *Maurice* (1971) and *Howards End* (1910) – the Merchant Ivory Productions team donated their work-in-progress screenplays to King's E. M. Forster Papers, in the college's archives. The screenplays were written between 1982 and 1991 (Ruth Praver Jhabvala's first draft of *A Room with a View* having been written nearly four years before its release, whilst Ivory was filming *Heat and Dust* [Ivory, 1987]), and since none were word processed, they contain rich evidence of the changes that took place during their writing. They are particularly valuable documents for the study of adaptation processes, not only because they retain tangible traces of creative transitions (which are by definition transient), but also because they facilitate a focus on-screenwriting, itself a neglected area in both adaptation and Film Studies.

Kamilla Elliott has astutely pointed out that the words of film adaptations – and indeed words within cinema – have been consistently downplayed by adaptation and film scholars alike (2003: 82–83), who have sought to define and distinguish film as, above all, a visual medium. For Elliott what is at stake here are ongoing inter-media and interdisciplinary rivalries, in which media are understood in terms of hierarchy and difference, even (or perhaps particularly) where they are also analysed as ‘sister arts’, as they are within adaptation studies. Thus, just as montage has been awarded a special place within film aesthetics (in such a way that film is distinguished from its ancestral performed art, theatre), screenplays, as well as recorded, written language within films, are treated as by-products of, rather than central to, film art and communication. In this way film is differentiated from all the linguistic, narrative arts that are its close relations – theatre once again, and particularly the novel.

These ‘word and image wars’ (2003: 2), as Elliott terms them, have also been served by the study of adaptation processes as undertaken through close reading, since this has tended to elevate as comparative material what we read on the page as on one hand and what we see on the screen on the other. Critics such as Thomas Elsaesser and Michael Wedel, following the invitation of Brian McFarlane in 1996, have since provided illuminating accounts of film soundtracks in relation to adaptation (1997), yet the words of film screenplays remain neglected (whilst inconveniently integral) elements of film adaptation. In what follows, I seek to award them a more appropriate place within adaptation studies, by considering the language of screenplays as both the most

recognizable act of adaptation (through changes to and retention of dialogue), and as the building blocks of narrative organization in the transition from page to screen.

### ***Maurice* and its work-in-progress screenplays**

Of the three Merchant Ivory, E. M. Forster adaptations it is *Maurice* (Ivory, 1987), which contains the most radical changes across its draft screenplays.<sup>1</sup> These changes shed new light on Merchant Ivory approaches towards adaptation: widely labelled as ‘faithful’, Merchant Ivory adaptations have also sometimes been dismissed as *overly* respectful, particularly towards classic, literary sources (which are seen as synonymous with caution and conservatism when it comes to choosing material for the big screen). Reviewing Ivory’s *Howards End* (1992) for *The Independent on Sunday*, Blake Morrison considers Forster adaptations the ‘safe screenplays of the art-film circuit’ (1992: 21), whilst David Shipman has written scathingly of the screenplay for *A Room with a View* (Ivory, 1985) that Ruth Praver Jhabvala ‘couldn’t or wouldn’t reshape the material’ (Shipman 1987: 41). Such assumptions have been insufficiently challenged, and they have been reinforced by the particularly polarized, hostile debates that surround heritage cinema (see in particular Higson 2003).

Forster’s homoerotic novel, published posthumously in 1971 to a denigrating critical reception, can scarcely be considered risk-free narrative territory, particularly since Ivory’s film largely pre-dates subsequent critical re-appraisals of the novel. The complex changes across three versions of the film’s screenplay also suggest a much more fraught, ambivalent relationship with source material than is associated with Ivory’s films, as well

as a rigorous, interrogative approach towards adaptation processes. Given the maligned status of Forster's novel, it is also difficult to associate instances of faithfulness with cautious conservatism. What Ivory's *Maurice* in its various forms suggests, is a need to reconsider Merchant Ivory adaptations in terms of their presumed faithfulness as well as in terms of what faithfulness itself might actually signal about approaches towards adaptation.

That *Maurice* was not critically well received on publication has been well documented, with many reviewers and critics accusing Forster of failing on aesthetic grounds: '*Maurice* is novelettish, ill-written, humourless and deeply embarrassing', wrote Philip Toynbee uncompromisingly in *The Observer* (1971: 463); David Lodge summarized *Maurice* as failing in terms of 'complexity, interest, humour, and rhetorical skill...' (1971: 474) and suggested that whilst it would be 'too crude' to attribute this entirely to its homoerotic love story, it had 'one must feel, *something* to do with its subject matter' (original emphasis); Nigel Dennis, in *The Sunday Telegraph*, echoes Lodge's coupling of unsophisticated aesthetics with problematic content: 'The plot is simple... the theme is homosexuality – too taboo for words when it was written, it is perhaps too dated for words today' (Dennis 1971: 465). Reviews such as these established the idea that the complexity of Forster's other works rested on the 'codes' he found (through characterization, events, imagery) when writing heterosexual romances and same-sex, platonic friendships that were actually covert metaphors for homosexual love. Thus, in effect, Forster was only deemed subtle, interesting and 'good', so long as he dared not speak the name of homosexuality.

Since then, Forster's *Maurice* has been reappraised in terms of the complexity and sophistication of how it treats homosexuality (particularly in landmark essays by Robert K. Martin [1983] and John F. Fletcher [1992]). A number of more current analyses, such as those by Jesse Matz (2000), Howard J. Booth (2007) and Don Gorton (2009), as well as the novel's (and film's) inclusion in recent academic conferences (E. M. Forster's *Maurice: A Conference Marking the Centenary of Forster's Writing of the Novel*, organized by the Scottish Network of Modernist Studies, and 'Visible and Invisible Authorships', the 7th Annual Conference of the Association of Adaptation Studies) indicate that *Maurice's* critical rehabilitation continues (albeit slowly). Thus what were previously perceived as failings are now being re-examined as powerful aesthetic and political strategies.

Matz's essay argues that Forster's *Maurice* conforms to utopian fiction, projecting 'an idealized past into an idealized future' (Matz 2000: 189). Its story is 'tenseless' (Maurice and Alec living 'happily never after' at the end of the novel), which enables experiences to be represented without 'present-tense judgements about them' (Matz 2000: 191). This ingenious reading makes clear that what continues to engage *Maurice's* critics and its defenders is the novel's narrative structure, which is deemed performative in aesthetic strengths and weaknesses, as well as in the treatment of homoerotic themes. Crucially what is at stake here is the assertion that *Maurice* is a simple – or *simplistic* – narrative: as Lodge puts it: 'It is a *Bildungsroman* which follows the hero's fortunes in a straightforward and often summary way'. The plot had been summarized, in a favourable



response to the novel by Thomas Waugh, as ‘boy meets boy, loses boy, and meets another’ ([1987] 2000: 188), and this is indeed what unfolds: bourgeois Maurice Hall, meets Clive Durham while at Cambridge, and they embark on a romance, which (at Clive’s insistence) remains platonic; Clive then ends the relationship and marries Anne, who like him is a member of the (declining) landed gentry; on a visit to Clive’s estate Maurice meets Alec, the under-gamekeeper, with whom he falls in love and has sex (or perhaps vice versa); Maurice then fears Clive’s servant will blackmail him, but when Alec gives up his plan to emigrate to Argentina for Maurice’s sake, the pair are united at the end of the novel.

In the sometimes radical redrafting of the screenplay, which echo (though they do not mirror) Forster’s repeated reworking of the novel after its completion in 1914 through to the late 1950s, it is possible to detect an anxiety regarding the critical perception of the novel as an unsophisticated, linear love story, as well as a series of varied responses to these criticisms. Unusually for a Merchant Ivory production, *Maurice* was not scripted by long-term collaborator, Ruth Praver Jhabvala. Instead the screenplay was co-written by Ivory and by writer and comedy performer Kit Hesketh-Harvey, though Praver Jhabvala was to contribute significantly to its development. Whilst the film’s publicity explained Praver Jhabvala’s absence in terms of her commitment to writing the novel *Three Continents* (1987) (Harvey 1987: 72), Ivory was later to account for it in a way that echoed critical hostility to Forster’s *Maurice*: ‘Ruth Jhabvala, for complicated reasons of her own, liked neither the original novel nor the completed film, calling them sub-Forster, and sub-Ivory respectively’ (Ivory 1992).

Hesketh-Harvey, who was known to Ivory as the brother-in-law of *A Room with View* star Julian Sands, had not previously written a screenplay, and comparisons between the *Maurice* manuscripts and those for *A Room with a View* and *Howards End* reveal that the writing processes, as well as the writers, differed from the other two Forster Merchant Ivory adaptations. Both *A Room with a View* and *Howards End* were written in the first instance by Praver Jhabvala, and their work-in-progress are full of her own and Ivory's margin notes, which constitute a dialogue between the two on the strengths, weaknesses and required changes to the screenplays. Where these changes occur, they are often undertaken by cut-and-pasting – literally by 'cut-and-sellotaping', with new versions of scenes stuck over the top of older ones. In the case of *Maurice*, there are fewer margin notes overall and almost none by Hesketh-Harvey, though Ivory has annotated the manuscripts. The earliest of the manuscripts contains a large amount of additions and suggestions by Ruth Praver Jhabvala, most of which were subsequently acted upon, either in the next two versions of screenplay or in the editing of the film. The *Maurice* screenplays do not contain many newly written scenes stuck over the top of older ones, presumably because each new version of the screenplay was altered far more substantially than were the revised screenplays of *A Room with a View* and *Howards Ends*, which meant that they required repeated retyping more-or-less in full with each reworking.

In an unpublished, covering letter sent to King's with the *Maurice* screenplays, Ivory gives an explanation of the film's screenwriting process:

The script of 'Maurice' was written on both sides of the Atlantic: by Kit Harvey in London, and by me at Claverack, in upstate New York, and at Lake of Woods, in Oregon. Kit Harvey came to Claverack early in the summer of 1986, where his portion of the script was put together with mine, and the combined script was then given to Ruth Jhabvala for her comments. We then went back to work – I compressed and wrote new scenes while in Oregon, Kit worked on his own changes in England and at Edinburgh, where he was performing at the Festival in August/September and where I went to meet him for further discussion. The first printed version, done in New York, went to actors and technicians at the end of the summer, and a revised script, used to shoot the film with, was finished in London just prior to production. (1992)

The letter containing this account is dated 28 April 1992, which is in fact nearly five years after the release of the film, and only two days before the UK premiere of *Howards End*. (This may account for the slight discrepancy between Ivory's account and Hesketh-Harvey's in 1987, where the pair are described as meeting in upstate New York in August, rather than 'early summer', 1987 [see Hesketh-Harvey 1987: 30]. What is clear from both accounts is that the script was written in a very short time-frame.) There are in fact four different versions of the *Maurice* screenplay in the King's archive, which for the sake of clarity I shall refer to as Versions 1 to 4 (1 being the earliest, 4 being the most recent). They are not dated, but are individually labelled as follows.

Version 1: (in pen) ‘First draft – or combined draft of the screenplay, some portions by J. I., some by K. H. with notes and suggestions by Ruth Jhabvala sprinkled throughout’.

Version 2 (in type): ‘First printed draft of screenplay’.

Version 3 (in type): ‘Final Draft’ (and in pen) ‘revised screenplay, used for shooting film’.

Version 4 (in type): ‘Combined Dialogue and Continuity Post Production Release Script’.

There is, therefore, no version of the screenplay that indicates which portions were written by Ivory and which by Hesketh-Harvey, and whilst Ivory’s covering letter suggests that different parts of the book were assigned to each writer, there is no indication on how this was done. The earliest available version is the one in which the two individual portions of the script have already been added together, although the confusion of this script indicates that the resulting jigsaw contained numerous gaps and awkward joins. (e.g., on page 103 Maurice meets Anne, Clive’s new wife for the first time, despite the fact that he arrived at Clive’s estate some time before [a note by Praver Jhabvala suggests ‘rewrit(ing) this scene, with Anne and Maurice as acquainted’]; similarly Anne appears, as if by magic, at the end of an exchange between Maurice and Clive on page 112, although she was not present on the previous page, and her entrance would be problematic and unlikely, since this is the moment where Maurice and Clive kiss hands to mark an end to their romantic relationship.) The scenes in this ‘combined script’ (Version 1) have been extensively renumbered using typing fluid and pen, and the

new numbers coincide (sometimes exactly, sometimes a few numbers out) with the order of scenes as they appear in Version 2. This indicates how much, drastic restructuring of the screenplay took place between one version and the next, and makes clear that Version 1 is very much an 'in flux' text, bearing often, rough and messy markings of what the screenplay will look like in its next incarnation.

The relationship between these first two manuscripts is not entirely consistent, in that some amendments to Version 1 have been typed up and included in Version 2, whereas others have been excluded, despite the fact that they appear in Version 3, labelled as 'used for shooting'. The reason for this seems to be that only smaller amendments, which Ruth Praver Jhabvala and James Ivory were able to mark up on the page, have been typed up in Version 2. Thus, where Ivory annotates in Version 1 besides a flashback to Maurice's public school (a scene that does not appear in the final film) 'Sequence to be shot in black and white. It will have a larger-than-life dimension' (45), this is typed up in Version 2; however, where Praver Jhabvala suggests (on an added sheet of yellow notepaper) a whole new scene in which the butler, Simcox, 'makes some sniggering insinuation about Maurice' to Alec Scudder (to which Ivory adds that Alec 'either tells him to bugger off – or stay with a thoughtful silent Alec') this does not appear until Version 3 (with the intriguing direction that 'We sense that SIMCOX uses his authority over Alec to vent his frustrated physical desire for him' [108]).

Version 1 contains twelve added sheets of yellow notepaper, of which ten contain suggestions for added scenes, one contains comments on the characterization of Maurice

and Alec, and one suggests reversing the order of the two closing scenes. On six of the twelve sheets Ruth Praver Jhabvala initiates suggestions to which Ivory then contributes, whilst the other six are written exclusively by Ivory. Of the ten proposed added scenes, only one (Maurice's apology to his sister, Ada – a scene in which Forster's dialogue is used extensively) is in Version 2; nine additions appear in Version 3 (one of them, concerning the fate of Lord Risley, involving extensive added scenes), although three of these nine do not in fact find their way into the film itself. (These are a charades scene in which Maurice, whilst miming, transfers his attentions from the Hall family's young lady guest, Gladys Olcott, to the teenaged boy Dickie Barry; a revised version of the argument between Clive and Maurice before Clive leaves for Greece; a scene in which Alec waits for Maurice on Clive's estate, and kills a frog in frustration when his lover fails to arrive. The first and second of these were in fact filmed, and are included on the extras of the 'Merchant Ivory Collection' DVD release; the third scene appears in the film in an altered form in that we see Alec smoking at the boathouse – to the sound of croaking frogs – although he is not at this point waiting for Maurice.) Importantly, the episodes concerning Risley, although included in Version 3, are significantly different in places to what was eventually recorded and included in the film.

What these details demonstrate is that the screenplay's narrative changed considerably between each subsequent version, and that it continued to change as late as between the script used for shooting and the film's final cut. It is also the case that the script sent to actors and technicians towards the end of the summer of 1986 (Version 3) did not contain a number of crucial scenes, which were to alter significantly the story – and to reinterpret Forster's novel.

### ***Maurice* and narrative structure**

The most crucial difference between the novel and the three screenplays in the King's archive (not including the post-production script, which effectively transcribes the film itself) concerns the chronology of the narrative. Although Ivory reveals in the audio commentary that accompanies deleted scenes on the 'Merchant Ivory Collection' DVD that 'in the first edited version of the film, a great chunk of the story was told in flashback', this does not come close to conveying the complexity of the narrative order as it was envisaged at various stages early on in the scriptwriting process. Given that the novel has been critiqued for its narrative and aesthetic simplicity, the writers' experimentations with story chronology are highly suggestive of attempts at 'correcting' the novel, particularly given the elaborateness of the various analeptic structures proposed: there are three flashbacks in Version 1, eight in Version 2 and two (one small and one large – the 'great chunk' referred to by Ivory on the DVD) in Version 3 (used to shoot the film).

In addition, there are nine flashbacks in the initial treatment of the film by Ivory and Hesketh-Harvey, which is also contained within the King's archive, and none of these breakdowns include fantasies *within* flashbacks, of which there are several in each version (there are also flashbacks within flashback, which I have included here). The fact that across time and across the five narrative structures available to us (including the treatment and the film itself) the number of flashbacks fluctuates from nine, to three, to eight, to two, to none, suggests something of a pack-shuffling element to the business of

narrative chronology. This was surely in part brought about by the need to combine two portions of writing by two separate writers working on two separate continents: confusingly the treatment and Version 2 resemble each other much more closely in terms of narrative organization than they do Version 1, where events that seem to require explication and build-up – such as Maurice’s consultations with Dr Barry, an old family friend, and with Mr Lasker-Jones, the hypnotist – occur very early in the plot (again, this suggests the highly provisional nature of the first piecing together of the two writers’ work).

Yet, the variety of chronologies entertained by the writers is not only the product of the piecing together of a collaborative effort. Their complexity makes clear that the writers’ aim was to reshape radically how we witness Maurice’s emotional and sexual development: whilst Maurice’s trajectory still follows the pattern of ‘love, loss, another love’, the Maurice we first meet in the treatment and screenplays is the older man who has already loved and lost Clive, though he has not yet loved and won Alec. This disruption of *our* journey through Maurice’s life constitutes a departure from (and disguise of) the traditional genres of the *Bildungsroman* and the marriage story, to which the novel has often been likened (see Booth 2007 below), and as a result it also distances the (hypothetical) film(s) from the conventions of Hollywood – from a narrative with clearly signalled cause and effect, which moves with seeming inevitability towards a happy, romantic conclusion.

Ivory’s and Hesketh-Harvey’s treatment of the novel is prefaced by a lengthy explanation



of what they envisage for the film. Whilst their reordering of the plot implies a desire to improve the novel, they begin their account by praising it:

Not ‘officially’ part of Forster’s work for sixty years and therefore not overlaid with generations of critical exegesis, and despite Forster’s fears that it might have dated, *Maurice* strikes the sympathetic reader today as particularly fresh – as almost new, or a modern, book about a subject matter that has itself been raked over by generations of writers on things psychiatric and sexual until it seems nothing more or new could ever be said about the loves *Maurice* describes. But in 1986, after a quarter of a century of our having had every kind of Lib with us, and in the aftermath of (and more immediately, the reaction against) the breaking of every sort of taboo regarding the ‘permissible’ in literature, in the theatre, in films, and on television, the insights Forster provides into the predicament of his young protagonists Maurice Hall and Clive Durham are utterly contemporary. Only the story’s trappings can be said to have dated, for the situation is timeless and is encountered unchanged today on both sides of the Atlantic. (Ivory and Hesketh-Harvey 1986a: 1)

Ivory and Hesketh-Harvey continue by stressing the rich drama of the novel: it is ‘full of marvellous scenes, and scenes of marvellous variety too – scenes of confrontation which are the building blocks of drama and of films’. They then move on to explain why they propose radically to change the chronology of the story:

Since one actor will have to represent Maurice from the age of about 20 through 26, it seems better to me if we do not take the story in its chronological order, but begin it with scenes of the mature Maurice, and return via flashbacks to the Cambridge scenes. I feel an audience will accept more readily youthful transformation presented within a flashback, than if we meet him for the first time as an undergraduate. The same necessity applies of course to Clive, who moves from undergraduate to rising young politician with thinning hair. But beyond this necessity, I also feel it will be more interesting, more dramatic, to begin in the midst of Maurice's misery, then go back via flashback to the beginning of his love affair with Clive (and sometimes even farther back, to childhood), return to the present order to resolve the story and to bring Alec Scudder centre stage, then proceed to the end and its promised happiness. To reconstruct the story in this way seems less plodding somehow, less predictable. (Ivory and Hesketh-Harvey 1986a: 3)

In this account of their responses to the novel (the treatment and preface are credited as the work of both writers, with Ivory's name appearing first, though the preface is clearly written in the singular), the films' writers echo a number of concerns that arise repeatedly in critical interpretations of Forster's *Maurice*. The issue of whether the novel has become 'dated' since its first draft (written 57 years before its first publication) is set alongside assertions of the 'freshness' of the story and its subject matter, and such

tensions – between what is perceived of as tried and tested (and sometimes tired and hackneyed) and what is perceived of as new and original – typify many scholarly interpretations of *Maurice*. Thus Booth summarizes the achievement of the novel in the following terms:

*Maurice* can be seen as highly conventional, combining two of the main master plots of the novel as a genre, the *Bildungsroman* and the ‘marriage plot.’ It is, though, a new departure for the novel, as Forster had to meet the technical challenge of writing a *Bildungsroman* where the result of the protagonist’s engagement with society is the decision to live outside it, and a ‘marriage plot’ where the lovers are two men. (2007: 173)

For Booth, as for Martin (whose 1983 essay on *Maurice* constitutes the first significant critical reappraisal of the novel), this negotiation between familiar paths and new territories is precisely the challenge facing Maurice himself, who is, paradoxically, engaged in a search for behavioural models whilst attempting to break free of social expectations that do not accommodate his homosexuality and result in desperate loneliness.

Ivory and Hesketh-Harvey depart from their praise of the novel at precisely the point where they put forward their proposal to restructure the plot, and they counter their claim of the novel’s freshness, with their projected aim to make the story ‘less plodding’ and ‘less predictable’. Here their proposed revised chronology is explicitly associated with a

need to improve on the novel, and with the implication that the plot treads a path that is (too) well beaten. Of course there is also a specific practical reason given for the ‘necessity’ of the change in plot chronology, namely that this will aid the audience in accepting the six-year time-frame of the story (in fact the novel ends when Maurice is 24). Given that many films cover a far greater story duration than this, this justification is a less convincing than the writers’ expressed desire to avoid plodding predictability.

It is also the case that the flashbacks do not really assist the audience’s progress through the narrative, and a number of practical problems arise from the analeptic plot structure, particularly in the treatment and Version 2, where the number of flashbacks is high in each case. This can be seen in the instances where the duration spent in the ‘present’ is extremely short, so that we seem scarcely to occupy the later period (which is of course the point in time which defines the flashback as a flashback) before we are again thrust back into the past. Thus, the opening of the treatment begins with the 12-year-old Maurice receiving a (baffling) explanation of sex from his teacher as they walk along a beach (in the novel Maurice is 14 at this point; the treatment specifies his age as 12; the film features 13-year-old Orlando Wells, who looks younger than his years). This is followed by a scene in which the adult Maurice attends a concert (as he does in Chapter 32 of the novel), but we return immediately in flashback to the period we have just left, as the boy Maurice weeps for the loss of George, the gardener’s boy who has left his mother’s employment (unusually, dialogue for this scene, taken from the novel, is included in the treatment).

Similarly, in Version 2 we return between flashbacks to Maurice writing an account of his sexual experiences for the hypnotist Lasker Jones (here his written history seems to motivate the flashbacks, which cover the period he is recounting), and these departures are frequent, yet extremely brief: we end a fantasy within a flashback (recounted below) in Scene 116, return to the 'present' in Scene 117 (in which Maurice is still writing), flashback to an encounter with a man who makes a pass at Maurice in Scene 118, return (again fleetingly) to the present in Scene 119, then flashback to scenes of Maurice consulting Dr Barry in Scene 120. Whilst it is probable that the enactment of flashbacks on-screen would have given them greater coherence than is afforded them on the page, it remains the case that the chronology adopted here jumps backwards and forwards in disruptive (indeed clumsy) ways. The consistent fluctuation between two time periods does not really suggest the ambiguity and disorientation of high Modernist, art-house cinema (as in, for example, Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Spider's Stratagem* [1970]), yet the persistent interruptions ensure that there is a difficulty in establishing each timeline.

This problem is exacerbated by the addition of flashbacks within flashbacks, memories within memories (as when, during the flashback to Maurice's Cambridge years, Maurice remembers – in the sequence Ivory annotates as to be shot in black and white – his school speech day at Sunnington) as well as fantasies within flashbacks. For example, in Scene 115, after Maurice attempts to seduce the teenaged Dickie Barry, there is a three-part fantasy sequence, in which Maurice first imagines that Dickie responds to his advances, and then that he recoils in horror and tries to jump out of a window; after this we are told that 'The police come charging up the stairs of Alfriston Gardens. MAURICE is arrested

and led away in shame. MRS HALL and ADA cry. KITTY watches coldly' ('First printed draft' [Version 2]: 102). These terrors of Maurice's are included in passing in the novel's Chapter 30, where we are told 'He saw the boy leaping from his embrace, to smash through the window and break his limbs, or yelling like a maniac until help came. He saw the police – ' (Forster [1971] 1999: 127). This suggests that the fantasy sequences seek to include (sometimes quite small) details of Maurice's thoughts and psychology, and they, like a number of the flashbacks (such as the inclusion of George, the Gardener's boy, in the treatment) indicate a desire to encompass as much of the novel as possible. The envisaged sequence contains a large amount of action and occurs at the end of a flashback – facts that disrupt still further our sense of location in the past we are currently occupying and the present we are about to enter.

Although Ivory and Hesketh-Harvey suggest an analeptic chronology as a means of bridging the gap between the beginning and end of the story, there are moments in the manuscripts that make abundantly clear that the narrative does not require such tactics. In fact, the past often seems to be in danger of catching up with the present: in Version 3, where one long flashback is motivated by Maurice's memories of Lord Risley following the news of Risley's suicide, the flashback ends with Maurice's journey to Pendersleigh (Penge in the novel) to attend Clive's wedding to Anne, an event which is only a few months before the Pendersleigh scenes in the second half of the plot, which take place shortly after the marriage.

Where the past and present are close together in time, the danger of actual confusion, rather than disorientating fluctuation, between the two arises, especially when the physical locations are the same. (This occurs in Version 2, when the 24-year-old Maurice, a guest in Pendersleigh's 'Russet Room', remembers his first visit to the estate, when he slept in the 'Blue Room'. The different rooms and colours mark different phases of Maurice's and Clive's relationship, but are also necessary to keep the two timeframes apart.) A hint of anxiety is suggested in the treatment about the way that the past nearly collides with the present, for whilst the early flashbacks are recounted in the present tense – 'Risley is at lunch with DEAN CORNWALLIS' (Treatment 4) – the later flashbacks are written in the pluperfect – 'On a train to the city, an old fat man had made a pass at MAURICE' (Treatment 10). The combination of two past-tense verbs is highly suggestive of a need to disambiguate the two timeframes. Thus, far from easing our understanding of the narrative's temporality, the analeptic plot structure created difficulties that Ivory and Hesketh-Harvey struggled to resolve. Indeed the later drafts of the screenplay seem intent on correcting, not only aspects of the novel, but also the organizational 'sprawl' created by the many flashbacks (as when, in Version 3 Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's annotation from Version 1 is written up, combining two separate flashbacks and episodes from Maurice's romantic experiences – one involving Gladys Olcott, the other involving Dickie Barry – into the charades scene featuring both characters).

What the various flashback chronologies of the work-in-progress screenplays address is the supposedly 'simple' love story of Forster's novel. By restructuring the story into an

analeptic plot, the narrative can no longer stand accused of being ‘novelistic’ and unsophisticated. It also no longer follows the patterns of predictability embedded in the *Bildungsroman* or the marriage plot, in which the story chronology is not conventionally disrupted because the genres rest precisely on cumulative development flourishing into a satisfying conclusion. This plot structure is of course also the conventional one of the comedic Hollywood romance (not least because the romantic comedy is generally also a marriage plot), which even more than the nineteenth-century *Bildungsroman* or romantic novel, functions by clearly signposting its direction and outcome (thus fulfilling conventional Hollywood promises of ‘making dreams come true’). Clearly in revising the chronology of the novel, the work-in-progress screenplays effectively distance the story of Maurice Hall from such mainstream narrative practices and wish-fulfilment fantasies.

It is also the case that James Ivory and editor Katherine Wenning (a recurring Merchant Ivory collaborator, who also edited *The Bostonians* (Ivory, 1984) and *Slaves of New York* (Ivory, 1989)) in re-editing the narrative after shooting so that the film largely matches the running order of the novel subsequently realigned the story back towards the mainstream. Whilst Mark Finch and Richard Kwietniowski argue that Ivory’s *Maurice* resembles not so much the Hollywood romance but rather the melodrama or women’s picture (which they characterize as ‘Hollywood’s most ambiguous site of wish-fulfilment’ [Finch and Kwietniowski 1988: 73]), it is in fact the work-in-progress screenplays that resemble this genre more. It is in these plots that an emphasis on memory and loss are much more suggestive of the compromised happiness and/or unfulfilled longing that typify the narratives to which Finch and Kwietniowski compare



Ivory's film (such as *Brief Encounter* (Lean, 1945), *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (Ophüls, 1948), *All That Heaven Allows* (Sirk, 1955) and *Stella Dallas* (Vidor, 1937)).

Finch and Kwietniowski's reading, which maps onto Ivory's *Maurice* familiar melodramatic figures and moments (such as the 'wanting woman' and the "'explosive moment' [of] male-identified lust' [Finch and Kwietniowski 1988: 79, 76]), is at once ingenious yet also perverse in the way it reads against the determinedly optimistic conclusion of Maurice's and Alec's romance. Their reading seems to arise from the school of thought within film criticism, which consistently reads costume drama – and Merchant Ivory films in particular (see Higson 2003) – as ideologically conservative, regardless of the actual story and thematic content of the films (Finch and Kwietniowski even imply that *Maurice* condemns English bourgeois values only in order that viewers may take 'guiltless' enjoyment in the spectacle of 'Cambridge interiors, dinner-parties, punting and cricket matches' [1988: 77]). The interpretation of the film as ambivalent melodrama enables the suggestion that *Maurice* does not whole-heartedly endorse the happy outcome of its hero's life and romance. Of course it is worth noting that whilst Finch and Kwietniowski concede that the film is inscribed with 'a voice of (gay) authenticity' through E. M. Forster, they were apparently writing in ignorance – in common with most critics prior to Ismail Merchant's death in 2005 – of the fact that Ivory and Merchant were themselves a gay couple. This remained largely unreported even when *Maurice* was released, (although John Stark interviewed them for *People* [1987] in their home in the Hudson River Valley and, unusually, made clear the fact that they were co-habiting). The journalistic and scholarly neglect of this fact ties in with a

predominant, hostile critical tendency to view Merchant Ivory films as celebrating the elite and bourgeois classes they depict, since the film-makers' marginal status as a gay, long-term cohabiting couple sits uneasily with this image (particularly in the context of Thatcherite and Post-Thatcherite Britain, and the introduction of Clause 28).

The work-in-progress screenplays are reminiscent of melodramatic narrative models precisely because of their deployment of flashbacks. In Version 2 four of Maurice's flashback memories stem, not only from that desperate period of his life between losing Clive and meeting Alec, but also from his attempt to find a 'cure' for his homosexuality. Thus the second flashback (to Cambridge and his first meeting with Clive) is motivated by Maurice receiving a telegram from Lord Risley giving him Lasker Jones's name, whilst the fourth takes place later that same night, after Maurice has fallen asleep still clutching the telegram; the seventh and eighth flashbacks are both motivated by Maurice writing his account of his sexual history for the attention of Lasker Jones. What is downplayed in this plot structure is precisely the story of *Bildung*, of development: we encounter first, and are repeatedly returned to, the older Maurice who has already reached a degree of self-knowledge (he has at least understood enough to believe he requires curing). The chronology of the novel, on the other hand, emphasizes precisely the laborious struggle of the anti-intellectual Maurice to reach such points of self-awareness: 'His whole life he had known things but not known them' (Forster [1971] 1999: 178) the narrator tells us, when Maurice at last (and with horror) realizes his love for the working-class Alec.

The novel's plot illustrates its hero's protracted progress towards self-discovery: Maurice requires ten chapters to recognize his attraction towards men, 38 before he has sex and 45 before he finally chooses life with Alec. Crucially what the novel enacts is Maurice's, and its own, search for a vocabulary with which to access and name the experiences of burgeoning homosexuality. During this struggle the effort is described with topographical metaphors, whose euphemistic nature suggests that the journey is incomplete. When Maurice realizes that he is gay, we are told: 'The brilliancy of the day was around him, he stood upon the mountain range that surrounds youth, he saw' (Forster [1971] 1999: 46). Maurice's development is linked explicitly with language during the height of his relationship with Clive – 'their love scene drew out, having the inestimable gain of a new language' (Maurice: 76) – and again when Maurice eloquently takes his leave of Clive to live out his life with Alec – 'Who taught you to talk like this?' (Forster [1971] 1999: 213) flounders the formerly articulate Clive. Because Maurice's development – which is depicted in the novel as being towards social, as well as sexual, freedom – is linked specifically with his (and the narrative's) linguistic fruition, the *Bildungsroman* chronology, in which story- and plot-order coincide, plays a significant role. In Version 2 it is clear that a different Maurice, as well as a different plot, is constructed, in that this is a man who is surely more introspective and more knowing: the older Maurice spends much of his time looking backwards at his younger self, and this encodes the character with a greater sense of memory, regret and self-reflection. This Maurice does not stumble upon the summit of an epiphany without even knowing he was climbing towards it, but instead surveys the territory already traversed before making his final ascent to the peak.

In Version 3, used to shoot the film, it is principally the romance narrative, which is downplayed by the reworking of the plot. The main, long flashback of the screenplay is motivated not by Maurice's search for a 'cure' for his 'condition', but by a tragedy that prompts Maurice to revisit his past: in a crucial addition to the story of the novel, Lord Risley is arrested after taking a rent boy home to his flat (unlike in the actual film, where he has an encounter with a guardsman in an alley), and the plot begins at the point when he is already disgraced: in the sixth and seventh scenes Risley visits his London club, and in the sixteenth scene his body is discovered there after he has committed suicide (these three scenes were shot and included on the DVD extras, but were cut from the film). Maurice's memories of Cambridge are triggered by the news of Risley's death, with the flashback following the moment Maurice reads about the event on his way home from work.

In the theatrical cut of the film, one of the pleasures of the narrative is the innocent joy of Maurice's first love for Clive, and this is supported by the all but fairy-tale images of the *mise-en-scène*: Maurice climbs through Clive's window at dawn to return his declaration of love; in close-up their hands join against the backdrop of a sun-drenched meadow; they gallop together on horseback across the Pendersleigh estate and embrace in the morning mist framed by the doorway of a stone folly. The middle portion of the plot (dominated by interior and urban scenes) shows Maurice's depression following Clive's desertion, whilst the end of film charts a recovery of happiness and love when Maurice meets Alec. The *mise-en-scène* also recovers its romance: Alec, this time, climbs a ladder at night to Maurice's bedroom, where they make love; Maurice and Alec are reunited at

the Pendersleigh lake in a beautiful, wooden-beam boathouse; in the film's penultimate scene the lovers' future, social isolation is represent by this idyllic waterfront seclusion, as they embrace in the flickering golden light of a fire. These moments affirm the film's adherence to the romance genre; had the film opened with the first romance already tainted by the viewer's prior knowledge of future disgrace and death, then clearly the pattern of innocence, lost innocence, followed by the knowledge of greater love would not stand; instead the audience would in all probability expect a story of impossible, doomed romance, in spite of Forster's well-known declaration that 'A happy ending was imperative' (Gardner 1999: viii). The analeptic plot structure not only resembles melodrama more than romance, but it is also reminiscent – in the inclusion of plot complexity, the foregrounding of sexual desire, the breaking down of clear cause-and-effect patterns, the emphasis on character subjectivity and the undercutting of a satisfying narrative conclusion – of the practices of European art cinema.

In the use of flashbacks and the crucial addition of the Risley subplot, the screenplay manuscripts strongly suggest the desire to 'correct' weaknesses in Forster's (supposedly simplistically mainstream) novel. This is supported by a note at the bottom of the final piece of yellow paper that is included in the 'combined draft', which reads

Clive's change of heart} the major flaws

Underdeveloped Alec

This could refer to flaws in this first, rough draft of the screenplay, but it also reads like a comment on the novel. (Indeed the development of Alec is a narrative element that seems to have plagued Forster in his rewriting of the novel, with the late addition of Chapter 44, in which Alec and Maurice spend a night together in a Bloomsbury hotel, and Forster's confession in an undated letter to fellow Cambridge graduate J. R. Ackerley that 'I can't hear [Alec's] voice in the dark' [Gardner 1999: xxxiii].) The second and third screenplay manuscripts address both these issues, through the analeptic structure's much earlier introduction of Alec (in Scene 9 in Version 2 and scene 37 in Version 3), as well as in the introduction of a motive for Clive's transformation, namely Risley's trial, imprisonment and death.

The most striking change that the film makes to the story of the novel is obviously the tragic fate of Risley. In the film, Risley does not commit suicide since these scenes were cut in the editing suite, and our final view of him is one that powerfully suggests a casting into oblivion – Viscount Risley descends from the dock down a cold, echoing staircase to his cell, never (we feel) to be heard from again. In tracking the introduction of this new storyline across the screenplays it is possible to see details of collaboration and authorship that are unacknowledged in the film's credits and publicity. In his covering letter to King's, Ivory explains that Risley's story was the inspiration of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala:

It was she who came up with the idea of the catastrophe that ruins Risley and helps to turn Clive away from his romance with Maurice – a solution to the

major problem of the novel for most readers: Clive's vague change of heart while in Greece. Something stronger than that, something sharp and dramatic, would be required for a film, she felt, and we introduced Risley's entrapment and trial. The episode was somewhat suggested by material in Ackerley's 'My Father and Myself', as well as old English newspaper accounts from the 20's of earlier homosexual scandals. (Ivory 1992)

Thus the largest difference between the novel's and film's narrative was introduced by Praver Jhabvala, an uncredited contributor to the screenplays. Its sources, beyond the obvious parallels with Oscar Wilde, include one of Forster's own advisors in the later stages of revising the novel, the openly homosexual, promiscuous author Ackerley, whose memoir *My Father and Myself* was published in 1968, the year after his death (Ackerley's *E. M. Forster: A Portrait* (1970) was also published posthumously, in the year that Forster himself died).

The Risley subplot is first mentioned in the notes and yellow-notepaper additions to Version 1; it is not included in Version 2, but is written in to Version 3. Version 1 contains a margin note by Ruth Praver Jhabvala on page 67 (simply 'Newspaper Report' and below this 'Court Scene'), and then the following notepaper addition:

(Praver Jhabvala's writing) Happy London scenes – Maurice unsuccessfully tries to hide a newspaper report of a homosexual arrest from Clive – Clive

unwell but goes to court – Shivering with fever, he watches trial proceedings

–

(beside this, in a circle, Ivory's writing) watches in dock to Hall ladies & M's anecdote.

(Praver Jhabvala's writing) street boys bearing witness – dead-pan and obscene –

(Ivory's writing) + terrible scandal they hear of – beginning of collapse –

(Ivory's writing, beside a green sticker) court scene – Clive feverish foolish chatter at dinner table & Maurice's boring story Clive faints.

What this conveys is not only Praver Jhabvala's role in initiating the addition, but also the long-term collaborative partnership between Ivory and Praver Jhabvala: Ivory both clarifies the significance of Praver Jhabvala's idea (this will be the beginning of Clive's 'collapse') and suggests additional scenes and a possible plot sequence (from the court room, to Maurice's family, to Clive fainting at the dinner table). Each throw-in suggested contributions, building up the scenario and its implications. What emerges here, and in the film itself, is that Clive makes a conscious decision to disavow his sexuality, and that this is based on a terror of discovery and disgrace. He does not, as he states in the novel, 'become normal' (Forster [1971] 1999: 97), and there are a number of other amendments to the screenplay, which also make this distinction clear. (e.g., in Scene 69 of Version 1



when Maurice and Clive attend a concert and ‘a party of good-looking girls’ [‘Combined Draft’/Version 1: 67] notice them, the direction that Maurice ignores them but Clive does not is amended to the simple statement that both men are oblivious.) What is missing from the initial suggestion in this draft is the idea that it is the charismatic and witty Lord Risley (a Wildean figure, though allegedly based on Trinity alumni, Lytton Strachey) who is in the dock. This is added in Version 3 where the fall of this formerly comedic figure is all the more shocking.

In Version 3, labelled as ‘used for shooting’, Risley’s entrapment scene still does not appear as it does in the film itself. Instead Risley is arrested in his own home:

‘POLICEMEN are rifling his rooms in Albany. There are sounds on the stairs and they become silent. Risley enters with a young RENT BOY, and his laughing face freezes.

The RENT BOY smiles at the SERGEANT-IN-CHARGE’ (‘Revised Screenplay’ [Version 3]: 56). The absence of any written version of the scene as it appears in the film in scripts prior to shooting suggests a relatively late revision of the screenplay, although James Ivory has indicated in an e-mail correspondence with me that a scene in Risley’s home was never shot and was ‘never practically contemplated’ (Ivory states ‘I remember going relatively early in our location scout to the pub in London where we shot the guardsman scene. No “rent boy” actor was ever interviewed during casting, or an Albany-like location sought’ [Ivory 2014]). The scene as it appears in the film seems more closely indebted to Ackerley’s risqué memoirs, which includes an incident of picking up a guardsman, than does the earlier version. The scene and subsequent trial constitutes a major story and thematic departure from the novel, palpably demonstrating

to the late twentieth-century audience the possible consequences of being homosexual in 1913, and also changing the actions and character of Clive (who becomes more comprehensible, more pitiable and also less honest, as a result). In the resulting cohesion and drama, as well as in the decisive comment made on thwarted homosexuality, this is an instance where, to my mind, the film offers a decided improvement to Forster's novel.

### **Conclusion**

The work-in-progress screenplays of Ivory's and Hesketh-Harvey's *Maurice* suggest the benefits, and also some of the difficulties, of working with archive material, and of studying adaptation as (screenwriting) process. In *Paratexts* ([1987] 1997), Gérard Genette includes a chapter on the uses of 'pre-texts' in the study of literature, and outlines a number of key methodological difficulties of working with such documents: thus Genette points out that unpublished manuscripts do not tell us 'how the author wrote this book'; rather they tell us 'what the author is willing to let us know about the way he wrote his book' ([1987] 1997: 396), and he also warns against 'assigning hermeneutic privilege to what is earliest' ([1987] 1997: 402). The key point here is that neither the author nor the text should be afforded such a privileged position that we overlook the contexts in which work-in-progress is made available to us: no manuscript survives entirely untouched by acts of authorial censorship, and in this instance, Ivory submitted the screenplays to King's in a way not so very far removed from his contributions (on the 'bonus features' disk) to the commercial product which is the 'Merchant Ivory Collection' DVD. (In each instance, Ivory made a decision about what to share and what to withhold.) Similarly, I am conscious that my own readership of the manuscripts adds

several additional, filtering layers of authorial statement and meaning; my interpretations take place on a number of levels, from deciphering and distinguishing between handwriting, to selecting and weighing up the significance of changes made to the manuscripts, and to commenting on and offering a critical analysis of them.

It is also the case that in any account of adaptation processes there will always be significant gaps. Even in the wealth of material available on *Maurice* at the King's College archive, there is still no screenplay available that allows us to chart the change from the 'rent boy' to the 'guardsman' entrapment, whilst it is clear that a key decision about plotting took place, not during the writing, but subsequently in the editing room, where the chronology of the novel was restored. In this instance we have only Ivory's explanation that the film was edited down from three to two-and-quarter hours, and that the reordering of the plot was part of this process (see audio-commentary, deleted scenes, 'Merchant Ivory Collection' DVD of *Maurice*). Obviously the screenwriting process constitutes only one of many adaptation processes, such as casting, performance, music, sound-effects and many aspects of *mise-en-scène*, and it is impossible to illuminate the entire transition from page to screen.

Nevertheless, the *Maurice* manuscripts demonstrate a number of insights for adaptation studies that can be gained by a focus on adaptation processes. In the first instance it is clear that the journey from page to screen is not always a straight trajectory. In this instance, across the five narrative structures available to us, from treatment through to the film itself, the adaptation charts a circuitous course, moving away from, and then back

towards Forster's novel (as opposed to moving incrementally away from the source text). Whilst the manuscripts cannot provide us with unfiltered access to what happened when the authors wrote the screenplay, it is clear that they do offer a different perspective on the writing processes than those offered anecdotally by the writers themselves: for example, on the documentary *The Story of Maurice*, which is included on the DVD bonus features, Hesketh-Harvey presents his principal contribution to the screenplay as the 'extrapolation' of the novel's 'main scenes', a description that suggests mechanical simplicity and entirely covers up the way that these 'main scenes' were reworked into four different chronologies prior to the theatrical cut of the film. Thus manuscript evidence sometimes undercuts authorial statement, a useful counterbalance to Genette's assertion that pre-texts are themselves authored by artists seeking to control textual content and their own public image. In fact the writing processes revealed in the screenplays convey a rigorous, experimental, trial-and-error approach not acknowledged by Hesketh-Harvey, and certainly not recognized by those who categorize Merchant Ivory adaptations as reverently, unquestioningly faithful to their sources.

The *Maurice* manuscripts shed particular illumination on often-overlooked authorial acts – adapting, screenwriting and collaborative writing. In so doing, they promote alternative models of authorship than those so often promoted as epitomizing artistic achievement, such as the solitary artist figure and the attainment of 'originality'. In the moments where the three writers annotate, change and complement both Forster and each other, we can see the creativity involved in collaborating and adapting.

Genette is again useful in suggesting the benefits of pre-textual material: as Genette puts it, manuscripts enable us to confront ‘what the text is with what it was, with what it could have been, with what it almost became...’ ([1987] 1997: 402). In this instance, just as the contrasts between an adaptation and its source are often praised for illuminating aspects of the ‘original’ work, the work-in-progress manuscripts throw into relief the film itself, so that the romance of the film is exposed through earlier decisions to follow more experimental, more sombre plotting, which emphasize memory and loss over development and happiness in love. The succession of versions across the manuscripts seems to ‘vindicate’ Forster’s maligned novel, particularly as many of key experiments were abandoned in the theatrical cut. The decision to revert to the novel’s ‘simple’ love story is itself a bold one, and suggests how useful this model actually is: the Maurice of the novel lacks, and searches for, models of homosexual behaviour through which to understand himself (he reads a biography of Tchaikovsky; Clive reads Plato). We too are provided with pre-existing models: whilst the Edwardian Maurice and Alec live out their love in social seclusion (and even here, Maurice’s model is Robin Hood), for viewers and readers this is counterbalanced by the narrative’s mainstream, generic familiarity.

Genette points out that, in providing alternative versions to the ‘finished’ narrative, manuscripts help ‘relativize the notion of completion, to blur the “closure” that has been made too of, and to remove the aura of sacredness from the very notion of Text’. In this way, manuscripts operate in much the same way as do adaptations themselves, and in providing alternative models, they can never be deemed to have fully vindicated any single (or ‘correct’) version of a text. What they do is keep the text in flux, just as Ivory’s

film does – and as his deleted scenes and DVD bonus features also do. More recently *Maurice* as both novel and film has found a lively, post-textual life in the form of fan-generated fiction, icons and videos – see Monk (2011) – and these add further palimpsestuous layers to those already available, such as Forster’s revisions of his novel, published in the Abinger Edition of *Maurice*. In outlining, in this article, the three work-in-progress manuscripts and the treatment of the film of *Maurice*, my principal aim has been to make visible more traces in the palimpsest. My own authorial interpretations of the palimpsest are of course also palimpsestuous inscriptions. It is this multi-layered experience of adaptation, which demonstrates endless ‘re-readability’ and ‘rewritability’, that is key to the art of adaptation as process, and the pleasure of adaptation as product.

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Note

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<sup>1</sup> This article has arisen out of a larger research project, a monograph on E. M. Forster adaptations, which I am currently undertaking, where I also offer detailed analyses of the screenplays of *Howards End* and *A Room with a View*.