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The Grass is Not Always Greener on the Other Side or, *North and South*, *Our Mutual Friend* and Cultural Mobility

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Contents

Summary of Thesis

Deze scriptie onderzoekt de representatie van culturele mobiliteit, volgens de theorie van Stephen Greenblatt, in de klassieke romans *North and South* (1854) van Elizabeth Gaskell en *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) van Charles Dickens. De hoofdpersonen in de romans zijn representatief voor verschillende culturen en deze worden geanalyseerd naar weergeving en vergelijking van geografische verschillen en klasse verschillen in de culturen. Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat de culturen in *North and South* elkaar in zo een mate beïnvloeden dat beiden veranderen door het in aanraking komen met de ander, en deze veranderingen leiden tot begrip en vooruitgang binnen alle twee de culturen. Het verschil in de culturen in *Our Mutual Friend* is sterker dan in *North and South* door een duidelijke scheiding tussen goede en slechte voorbeelden van culture karakteristieken. De cultuur die moreel superieur is, zal uiteindelijk zegevieren over de gebrekkige cultuur, maar de culturen blijven echter gescheiden nadat de culturele mobiliteit heeft plaats gevonden.

Introduction

Considering Cultural Mobility in the Victorian Era, and the Novels *North and South* and *Our Mutual Friend*

In 1837 Victoria became queen of Great Britain and Ireland. (Homans xiii) Her reign would last until her death in 1901 and the period became a synonym for industry and progress, stark contrasts, and a culture that has never seen its equal. Speaking of the Victorian period means covering more than sixty elaborate years of diversity in two words and it comes as no surprise that there are many related subjects easily found deserving of a more in depth analysis. The Victorian period has been the subject of much research and it seems that almost every topic has been held under a magnifying glass. Victorian society, history, politics, education, and art can all become second nature to those who wish to make it so. However, with the help of the following thesis I wish to add to the large range of Victorian literary research done over the last decades by choosing a relatively new perspective on culture.

This thesis shall focus on the subject of cultural mobility, which implies simply that which it states, namely the migration of a culture or cultures. Researching cultural mobility means analysing the consequences migration can have on a particular culture, and also analysing the response of the resident culture in which the mobile culture settles long enough for the cultures to come in contact. This thesis shall explore cultural mobility in the Victorian novels *North and South* (1854) by Elizabeth Gaskell and *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) by Charles Dickens to define the conflict between cultures in Victorian Great Britain, and if possible, characterise their origin and or decline. The mobile and resident cultures shall be represented through the major characters in the novels, namely Margaret Hale and John Thornton in *North and South*, and Bella Wilfer and Mr and Mrs Boffin in *Our Mutual Friend*. Analysis of these characters will form the primary research of this thesis. Additionally, the television adaptations of the novels from 1998 (*Our Mutual Friend*) and 2004 (*North and South*) shall also be explored to analyse how our contemporary culture depicts the Victorian culture and its mobility in comparison to the original work.

The main research question will be: How do the main characters in the novels *North and South* (1854) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) represent the opposite cultures of the north versus the south, and high versus lower class, and how are the cultures of the mobile characters affected by the cultures they move into? In his *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto,* Stephen Greenblatt discusses several issues that should be considered carefully when doing cultural mobility research, and these issues shall therefore form a focal point of this thesis. In

his introduction Stephen Greenblatt explains his opinion on the current state of cultural mobility studies: "The problem is that the established analytical tools have taken for granted the stability of cultures, or at least have assumed that in their original or natural state, before they are disrupted or contaminated, cultures are properly rooted in the rich soil of blood and land and that they are virtually motionless." (3) Greenblatt means to emphasise that this is not the case at all, even throughout history, when most nations and their cultures seem fixed entities. He continues with saying: "Literary and historical research has tended to ignore the extent to which, with very few exceptions, in matters of culture the local has always been irradiated, as it were, by the larger world." (4) To think of culture means thinking of established, immovable societies, but as Greenblatt points out, this would be a false start to any cultural mobility study. To understand how change can affect a culture in any way, one must understand that a culture is always subject to change, and how a culture reacts to that change is how we define the perimeters of that culture and therefore the culture itself. Greenblatt gives guidelines, if you will, to ensure that any cultural mobility research is not impaired by other, prior and more determined analytical tools. As Wiley says in his review of *Cultural Mobility*, "[the book] is a blueprint and a model for understanding the patterns of meaning that human societies create. Drawn form a wide range of disciplines, the essays collected here share the conviction that cultures, even traditional cultures, are rarely stable or fixed." (145) Wiley continues with adding that "radical mobility is not a phenomenon of the twenty-first century alone, but … a key constituent element of human life in virtually all periods." (145) It becomes obvious that Wiley agrees with Greenblatt, implying that previous and current research on cultural mobility in any shape or form has been directed by the wrong principles.

In his conclusion, Greenblatt summarises the results on cultural mobility research of the collected essays, and these points will now be further explained. Firstly, "mobility must be taken in a highly literal sense", or in other words, cultural mobility must simply be understood as the literal movement of people and their values and ideas between places. (250) Secondly, "mobility studies should shed light on hidden as well as conspicuous movements of people, objects, images, texts, and ideas", and after the literal and visible movement of these aspects has been dealt with, their underlying movement in metaphorical spheres can be analysed. (250) Thirdly, "mobility studies should identify and analyse the "contact zones" where cultural goods are exchanged". (251) These contact zones are supposedly places of importance for specific cultures, and one should analyse why these places are of importance for the particular culture and how the cultures react to these places.

Fourthly, “mobility studies should account in new ways for the tension between individual agency and structural constraint”, meaning that cultural mobility studies should analyse how movements and transportations that seem fixed, are in fact being influenced and changed by unexpected and possible encounters or confrontations between different cultures. (251) Lastly, “mobility studies should analyse the sensation of rootedness.” (252) The idea is that a certain place carries rootedness; the feeling of belonging, the traditions and rituals that people retain in a specific area, and the practising of faith in that area. Greenblatt emphasises that there is a certain fear that springs from the idea that with mobility this rootedness if often diluted, twisted or lost, which triggers individuals or groups of people to shut themselves out from the outside world and in some cases even makes them violent towards others. (252) These guidelines for cultural mobility study, constructed by Greenblatt, shall decide the course of this thesis and thus create its outcome. Through analysing the characters in the novels by Gaskell and Dickens and their adaptations, the representation of the different cultures depicted and characterized by these leading writers of the Victorian period will surface and result in an interesting insight in to Victorian cultural opinion. Not all Greenblatt’s guidelines will be equally discussed in this thesis because their applicability depends on the novels.

In the novel *North and South* (1854) by Elizabeth Gaskell the major characters will represent the different sides of the progressive, upcoming industrial environment during the 1850s. Margaret Hale represents the idyllic and authentic south of Great Britain, while John Thornton will represent the industrial and arduous north. In the following chapter on *North and South* the focus will be on the cultural differences between these two cultures that were both influenced by the industrial revolution in different ways, and on how the initial conflict between the two is based on prejudice and ignorance on both sides. The following questions shall direct the research: How are the different cultures of the north and south of Great Britain represented in Margaret Hale and John Thornton, especially in comparison to each other? Which aspects of her culture does Margaret Hale retain after her move from the south to the north, and which of these aspects have survived or have been changed due to the transition of environment? And how do the different cultures of the north and the south, represented in Margaret Hale and John Thornton, influence each other and to what degree? The hypothesis is that the old south, as Margaret Hale represents it from the start until certain events change her life considerably, cannot compete with the rising and industrial north, as represented in John Thornton. However, both cultures have faults, which are more visible to the “other” culture than can become possible in self-reflection, and it is exactly this conflict between the

cultures that forces both to broaden their perspective and contemplate their own failings. As a result of the cultural mobility of one culture into the other, Margaret Hale and John Thornton learn that one can always change and adapt if one wishes, and more decidedly must do so to survive the continual change of a society revolving around industry and a traditional social system.

In the novel *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) by Charles Dickens the major characters will represent the lower and higher classes of Victorian society in the 1860s, and the constant moral questions which accompany the borders that separate them. Mr and Mrs Boffin will represent the lower, working class, and their climb up the social ladder to the upper of upper classes as a result of inherited money will also, relatively quickly, make them the representatives of the upper class. Miss Bella Wilfer will represent the lower middle classes and her acquired share in the Boffin's inheritance also makes her part of the higher upper classes for a while. The Boffins form a connection between the Victorian classes as they themselves move through them: "Thus from the beginning Dickens makes connections between the murky depths and the glittering surfaces, employing a diversity of voices to reveal each as part of a continuum within British society." (Wynne VIII) The third chapter will thus focus on the different social classes in Victorian Great Britain and the following questions will direct the research on *Our Mutual Friend*: How are the different cultures that belong to the opposite social classes represented through the Boffins and Bella Wilfer, and how are they represented in comparison to each other? Are the differences between the social positions and their belonging cultures made more visible after the Boffins have moved and how? And which of the aspects of the lower class cultures of the Boffins and Bella Wilfer have shaped their previous social positions, and which of these are retained, affected or changed by a new cultural environment? The hypothesis is that Dickens intentionally wrote these characters as representations of the 'good' and the 'bad' rich, meaning that the Boffins form a stark contrast with the rest of high society because they were not shaped or influenced by this society, but were thrust into it after maturity. Bella Wilfer will become a representative of the 'spoiled' rich once she possesses wealth, but her "rich" faults lie in the fact that she came into the circles of corruptible society before leaving her adolescent and gullible years. These and the previous questions will also be used when analysing cultural mobility in the adaptations of both novels by Elizabeth Gaskell and Charles Dickens.

To understand a culture, however, one must first understand what major events shaped or changed a culture to a point where it is recognised or remembered by an adequately large number of people to be called a culture. The age in which Gaskell and Dickens wrote shall be

described through events that particularly shaped the industrial environment, the differences in geographical culture, and the differences in the British class system.

Alexandra Köhler describes the changes of the Victorian period in such a way as leading to the main issues dealt with in this thesis, namely the difference in geographical culture and class culture:

> The Victorian age was an age of transition. England was transformed from a feudal and agricultural society into an industrial democracy. Nevertheless the process of the industrial revolution did not only create progress but also problems. One drawback was the hierarchy which was created in the British society leading to a division of people into distinctive social classes. (2)

Great Britain had been, as Köhler described, a country of rural societies, and the cities that were built under industrialisation were growing faster than they could control. Life in the countryside was becoming more difficult because those who lived off the land had trouble competing with the industrial innovations that were already replacing them. "To avoid their own destruction, many of the peasantry chose to move into the rapidly expanding towns." (Burke 215) These people that moved to the cities would form the working classes, and the men that would prosper as their masters and owners of the industrial enterprises would be known as the new middle classes. Adjusting came easily for those who had plenty of money and therefore independence, but those who had to work for their wages under tormenting conditions were usually far worse off. But there was a positive side to working in a factory which made it too tempting for many farmers not to change occupation: "Belated attempts were made to halt the drift from land into industrial areas … But families continued to leave; and few came back. Exploited as they might be, and squalid as the living conditions might be, they were still better off than in their country hovels … but in the brash new towns there were many stories of self-made mad climbing to the top." (Burke 227) With work in a factory came a certain independence that was unknown in the feudal system, and what was more, it meant that wages were now dependent on skill. A man or a woman who worked hard and excelled in that work had the chance to better their situation and accordingly, their station.

The English were leaders of industrialism and their workmen were renowned: "About 1840 a Lancashire cotton-printer called Thomson … remarked on 'the superior preserving energy of the English workman, whose untiring, savage industry surpasses that of every country I have visited". (Reader 16) The self-made man became an ideal to strive for and an example for others in the industrial city, because he represented independence and ambition. With this came the idea that each person is responsible for their own actions, and therefore

responsible for the situation, good or bad, they found themselves in. (Reader 23) The modern, rising middle classes and the working classes judged by this principle, even though many had no choice but to live as they did. "The moral virtue of work extended beyond the world of paid employment. Working-class and middle-class people bolstered their sense of worth by feeling contempt for the idle rich." (Köhler 262) The addition of the industrious middle classes to the aristocracy and inherited titles meant a change in the design of society; the new middle classes wished to become respectable like the old upper classes. The duality of not wanting to be idle like the rich, but wishing for the same treatment, became a recognisable quality of the middle classes: "Yet the highest social prestige was still attached to people and institutions that had nothing to do with industry or trade at all, and the upper classes of society had an outlook that belonged to the past rather than the future, to the country rather than the town." (Reader 51) Where the middle classes wished to distinguish themselves by alienating themselves from the upper classes, the upper classes did the same with the middle classes. The aristocracy and the gentry belonged to the old feudal system and the rise of ambitious men from the lower classes endangered their old, established ways. Yet, the middle classes became harder and harder to ignore, and their establishment became impossible to reject:

> They were quite ruthless about that the old social order *must* be modified – but, once modified, they wanted to inhabit it, not overthrow it, and the story of the middle classes in Victorian England is very much the story of a take-over bid for the established society. … They wanted to substitute it for a society in which those who had the ability might seize the prizes – and then enjoy them under a system of law which would still protect the rights of property. This new, competitive society was not at all to the liking of supporters of the old order. (Reader 146)

The Victorian period was marked by a division between the countryside and the cities, and between the lower, upper, and middle classes. Both disagreements can be said to be a consequence of the other, and if anything, they enforced each other in their hostility towards those who were thought to threaten or disagree with their understanding of society; in other words, those who belonged to another culture from theirs. The industrialisation in the north of England had become influential with supply from the 'Black Country': "The iron industry flourished where coal and iron could be found together. A 'Black Country' grew in the Midlands and there were dark concentrations in Yorkshire, Lancashire and South Wales." (Burke 223) The middle of the Victorian period, the 1850s, were the highpoint for these

manufacturing towns and their masters. “This powerful middle class, dominating the 1850s, was unlike any society that had existed before. Elements coming to it from the past were not entirely ignored and forgotten but radially modified.” (Priestley 28) Priestley enforces Burke’s point further by combining the middle classes with the Midland-men: “The upper class might still provide most of the Queen’s ministers, but a great deal of power now belonged to this middle class. And so did economic power. Here in this class were the manufacturers and the merchants, the hard-headed men in the Midlands and the North.” (Priestley 28)

The mid-Victorian period was a turbulent time in which Great Britain’s wealth and superiority was celebrated in a specific way with a rather outstanding result. “During the 1850s and 60s, Britain emerged from a depressed economy and experienced a level of political and social stability that made these decades the most prosperous of the century; the mid-Victorian period is now often regarded as a kind of high-water mark for Victorian culture.” (Black XXXIV) To celebrate the stability and the wealth of the time, Prince Albert’s ambition of showing all the riches and innovations from around the kingdom became reality in the Great Exhibition. “At the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London, Great Britain demonstrated her industrial, military, and economic superiority.” (Köhler 3) The architectural design of the Crystal Palace and all that it would exhibit were to be the milestones of modernity, and accordingly a representation of modern Victorian culture, or of the future, as it had arrived: “Quickly constructed from industrial materials, prefabricated glass and iron, it was architecturally completely modern. … Its collection of industrial objects have either been characterised as mechanical or referred to as commodified, both of which express the technological materialism of modernity.” (Purbrick 2) The Great Exhibition was an immense success, all the more so because it was accessible to all people: “But it was the shilling days, together with the elaborate railway-excursion arrangements, that guaranteed the popular appeal of the Exhibition. Many thousands of working people – and rural folk who had never travelled in a train before – found their way to it.” (Priestley 80) The Great Exhibition marked the time when people from all classes could begin to enjoy leisurely activities with the help a modern invention; the train. Modernity, accessibility, and entertainment joined together in Prince Albert’s celebrated project, and even the educational purpose was not lost here.

The Crimean War is not relevant to the novels discussed here, but it did play an important role in the media, as it was the first war to be so thoroughly documented in the press. “The Crimean War clearly demonstrated the increasing power of the press, which

helped create public opinion and then lent it a powerful voice. … The year 1854 is important, not only because the Crimean War was reported so fully, but also because it was the last full year in which the so-called tax on knowledge was imposed." (Priestley 162) This tax on knowledge prevented the spread of cheap newspapers, and in consequence it prevented the lower classes from accessing the same information and entertainment as those higher up. Once the tax was lifted the spread of knowledge, art, and pleasure through magazines and journals could now reach all, and it did. Many novelists, among whom Charles Dickens, published their work in instalments as part of a periodical, and gained many readers this way. It became part of the Victorian culture that many artists, scholars, and novelists believed it their purpose to educate their readers by holding up a mirror of society and nature. "For [George] Eliot, as for many of her contemporaries, the true, even "sacred" purpose of art was to present an objective representation of real life that reflected the habits, desires and aspirations of the readers. For many novelists, realism seemed to be the form best suited to this purpose." (Black LXIII) Much of the fiction written in the Victorian period revolves around the ordinary individual, their experiences, and their moral progress. (Black LXIII) At the same time, this individual is depicted as part of a larger picture:

> Many realist novels, such as those by … Dickens, and Eliot contain multiple plot lines and a range of characters across socio-economic strata, representing both the cohesiveness and the disintegration of various social communities in an industrialized, commercializing society. Detailed descriptions of landscapes, city streets, and domestic interiors and close attention to the emotionally complex motivations of characters – these too are characteristic of the realism of the Victorian novel. (Black LXIII)

Realism could thus be seen as the preserver of peace in the fast industrialising and often chaotic time of the Victorian period. "One explanation is that the revolutions of the nineteenth century created a climate in which people longed for a sense of verisimilitude in their literature in order to guide them through the changes and upheavals, both private and public, which they themselves faced." (Black LXIII) Dickens and Gaskell both used realism in their novels, and it clearly had a purpose: "such texts not only taught readers how to navigate the changes they were experiencing, but also how to imagine sympathetically the authenticity of other's experiences." (Black LXIII)

Our Mutual Friend was Charles Dickens' last completed novel and it is a much debated, large work. Dickens himself was a representation of his time and the industrious culture: "Dickens, who was quick to exploit the possibilities for the work of literary art in an

age of mechanical reproduction, was himself a one-man fiction industry, whose organization of his professional life and whose writing exemplify both a Victorian commitment to 'self-sufficiency through work', and the anxieties of modern authorship." (Pykett 2) In total, Dickens wrote and produced fourteen novels in his life time, and they were not humble in size, together with numerous essays, stories, and a quantity of sketches. (Pykett 2) Charles Dickens was not a man to sit idly by, and therefore he serves as the perfect example of the ambitious self-made man. He had a talent for understanding people and describing them, very often in a caricatural way. This also lead to a lot of criticism on his work: "One of the main problems that Dickens's fiction presented to nineteenth-century criticism was its failure to conform to the conceptions of aesthetic realism (and particular fictional realism) which gained ascendency during his career." (Pykett 7) In other words, Dickens was too fantastical in his imaginative descriptions. *Our Mutual Friend* was the limit case for many of Dickens's nineteenth-century reviewers, as it was said that Dickens' imagination had hallucinatory qualities. (Pykett 8) Those who supported Dickens, on the other hand, said it was a response to mechanical reproduction, or the process of reification and alienation in which people became things and things became people. (Pykett 8) In short, no matter what Dickens' true intentions were, nothing, or better said, nobody was too bizarre for his descriptions and representations.

Elizabeth Gaskell too wrote with the intention of depicting reality, although her characters and places are not so eccentric as those invented by Dickens. "Gaskell shows the turbulence, upheaval, and disruption in changing social conditions, all of which affect the mind in destabilizing ways." (Matus 35) Gaskell too, like Dickens, holds up a mirror for her readers while educating them on the opinions of 'others'. By representing both sides of the discussion on the qualities and value of people from the north and the south, equally good and bad in character, Gaskell is creating understanding. "Gaskell deliberately avoids pathologizing strong feelings and their effects, rather seeing the negotiation of painful feelings occasioned by love, death, and moral crisis as ordinary, even daily business." (Matus 35) Where Gaskell wishes to soften her reader's suffering or annoyance by educating them on these matters, Dickens teaches his readers by forcing them to look the suffering and annoyance in the eye. Whether one is better than the other remains a personal question, but it is the start to understanding the Victorians and their culture through the novels of Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell.

In conclusion, the Victorian period was marked by a rising middle class that came to its wealth and fame through industry, and this middle class formed on opposition to those

above and below it. The old feudal system in the country became largely inferior to the rapidly growing industrial cities and many people from the country moved to these cities in the hope of a better living. These growing industrial cities also meant prosperity for the middle classes and they became influential enough to create their own middle class culture. The intentional separation of culture created by the differences in the middle and higher classes caused a divide between the country and the city. However, modernity could not be halted and there were those who marvelled at the pace and proportion of progress. The Great Exhibition of 1851 was the embodiment of this Victorian modernity. The press, too, became an example of modernity, and many novelist, such as Gaskell and Dickens used the medium to spread their work through all classes. These novelists also felt a certain responsibility to educate their readers on morality and perspective in the tumultuous and extraordinary times called the Victorian era.

The following chapters will focus on the mobility of culture, their representation, and their influence on other cultures in the Victorian novels *North and South* and *Our Mutual Friend*. Identity is linked to culture and culture is linked to place: is it possible for a culture to move between places and still call itself an authentic culture? Mobility is journeying from one place to another, and "journeys are everywhere in the Victorian novel. Journeys on foot, by carriage, by rail and across the sea; within Britain, across the continent, and to the world beyond; journeys for pleasure and leisure, labour and necessity, health and wealth: in the pages of Victorian novels, journeys continually manifest in new, surprising and unexpected ways." (Mathieson 5) The transport revolution that took place in the nineteenth-century left Victorian novelist no other option but to embrace the "diverse possibilities of travel as a structural, thematic, and representation device." (Mathieson 5) Now the only thing left to do is find out how these novelists have used these devices, if they do at all, to move their characters between cultures.

Chapter 1

North and South and Cultural Mobility

> Elizabeth Gaskell's life was shaped by the places in which she lived and loved – places for which she longed, but also sometimes longed to leave. From her childhood in the pastoral idyll of Knutsford, to her busy life as wife, mother, and writer in the sooty world of industrial Manchester, to her various escapes to the seaside, the country, and the continent, Gaskell understood her identity in relation to the places she experienced. (Scholl 1)

It is this relation to place that is the foundation of Elizabeth Gaskell's novel *North and South* (1854). The characters identify themselves with particular geographical locations that are associated with divergent cultural conditions. Gaskell initiates a confrontation between the major characters in the novel, who represent the opposite geographical cultures in Victorian Great Britain, which will lead to the subjective process of misunderstanding, conflict, awareness, and lastly acceptance within these characters. This chapter will focus on Margaret Hale and John Thornton as representatives of the southern and northern cultures of Victorian Great Britain. Gaskell's description of these two characters shall be analysed together with their thoughts and actions to establish the differences and agreements of their opposite cultures. Furthermore, the influence the two main characters have on each other shall be analysed to establish the degree of cultural mobility experienced by Margaret Hale.

Stephen Greenblatt's ideas on the study of cultural mobility shall be used to guide the research on the novel *North and South* and the focus of this chapter will therefore be on the cultural mobility of Margaret. Moreover, this chapter is subdivided into several chronological sections to create transparency, beginning with Helstone, which deals with the Hale's first cultural mobility. This section is followed by Milton, which deals with the consequences of cultural mobility for Margaret and Thornton, and after that comes the section called Strike, which deals with the many confrontations between the main characters. The section Proposal shall deal with the major confrontation between Margaret and Thornton and the consequential shift in perspectives, followed by Looking South and North, which deals with the openly changed cultural values of both Margaret and Thornton. The last section of this chapter will be the conclusion. I argue that Margaret Hale undergoes cultural mobility as she moves from southern Helstone to northern Milton, and the change in culture transforms her from a girl clinging to pastoral tradition, to a perceptive woman with an ethical inclination. Rootedness, as Greenblatt describes the feeling of belonging somewhere and therefore feeling out of place

everywhere else to an often harmful degree, is lost to Margaret when she not only begins to understand the southern culture, but also appreciate those cultural aspects that are the foundations of southern pride. (252) John Thornton too is affected by cultural mobility, though rather not through his own movement, but through the contrasting presence of Margaret as an embodiment of the southern culture within his northern culture. Thus, the analysis of Margaret Hale and John Thornton in relation to cultural mobility can commence, for "in a good book the best is between the lines." (Swedish proverb)

Helstone

The awareness of rootedness in Margaret is present from the beginning of the novel as she reminisces about the time she spent in her aunt's house in London as a child: "Margaret looked round upon the nursery; the first room in that house with which she had become familiar nine years ago, when she was brought, all untamed from the forest, to share the home, the play, and the lessons of her cousin Edith." (Gaskell 8) This feeling of rootedness is provoked by Margaret's impending move from London back to Helstone. As becomes clear from the excerpt, Margaret was not accustomed to the refined, and strict atmosphere that ruled in her aunt's house when she first arrived there. Instead, Margaret grew up in Helstone with much freedom and solitude, and Helstone proves to be far less luxurious than London, although Margaret is not bothered by this. Gaskell thus describes Margaret as a girl of nineteen who relishes in southern independence and identifies herself with the southern culture, as there she can be truly herself. Furthermore, London is, in Greenblatt's words, a 'contact zone', as it is a place marked by inter-cultural contact. (251) London is where Margaret meets society for the first time and where she learns to be a lady. It can be said that Margaret of Helstone belongs to a different culture than the Margaret of London, as she herself appears to be behaving differently in these two places according to what is desired of her in London and according to the freedom she is accustomed to in Helstone.

When Margaret has a conversation about Helstone with one of her London acquaintances, Mr Henry Lennox, he asks her to describe Helstone for him. When she does, Mr Lennox comments on her description by saying that "it sounded like a village in a tale rather than in real life." (Gaskell 11) Mr Lennox does not acknowledge the rootedness presented by Margaret: "his comment shows his refusal to grant legitimacy to the attributes of a space in which Margaret has her roots." (Scholl 38) Margaret, being among London people, is the outsider here, and Mr Lennox shows behaviour similar to Margaret's own behaviour towards northerners later on; rejection of perspective from individuals because they are

different, or the 'other'. Margaret is a little annoyed, but answers Lennox honestly: "And so it is … Helstone is like a village in a poem – in one of Tennyson's poems." (Gaskell 11) Margaret has an unrealistically high opinion of Helstone because it has been the place of a happy youth, and as a consequence, only her good memories are exaggerated and overestimated, leaving no room for doubt or sorrow. Helstone is a place of expectation to Margaret, as later Milton will be too in the negative. "Representative of the south is, in the economy of the novel, Margaret's lost Helstone … Margaret's north and south are latitudes of the imagination – what she "thinks of it" – stronger, in a way, than any reality principle." (Dainatto 81) Margaret's opinion of Helstone and Milton is particularly shaped by her experiences in those places rather than by the places themselves as a result of her rootedness.

The first time Margaret undergoes actual mobility is when she is traveling to Helstone from London with her father: "Margaret was once more in her morning dress, travelling quietly home with her father". (Gaskell 14) The move marks the end of one life and the start of another; Margaret's life with her aunt and cousin in London is over, and she is returning to her parents. However, even though Margaret is happy to return to Helstone, she also does not feel as she expected she would: "Margaret's heart felt more heavy than she could ever have thought it possible in going to her own dear home, the place and the life she had longer for for years". (Gaskell 15) The move back to Helstone has resulted in a change of feeling not immediately understandable to Margaret. Greenblatt would here speak of the idea that literal movement provokes metaphorical movement, or alteration, in people and ideas among other things. (250) Migrating to a different place with a different culture means being surrounded by other principles and perspectives and this can lead to alteration in the psychology of people, as is happening to Margaret although she cannot lay her finger on what is causing the change.

Once home, Gaskell describes Helstone through Margaret's eyes to make the reader understand how hard a separation from that place would be to Margaret: "She took pride in her forest. Its people were her people. She made hearty friend with them; learned and delighted in using their peculiar words; took up her freedom amongst them … Her out-of-doors life was perfect. Her indoors life had its drawbacks." (Gaskell 16) The excerpt clearly leaves no room for doubt that Margaret feels at home in Helstone. However, the last sentence indicates the fragility of Margaret's expectations. These imperfections in her recollection of Helstone life are a portent of the termination of that same life. Change is inevitable and moreover, Margaret has already been involuntarily altered by her London life. Margaret cannot resume her Helstone life without this alteration affecting her even though her

rootedness is leaving her ignorant of that fact: “Having lived in London for so long; her experiences in the city cannot be wholly removed from her new life in Helstone. She is not only older and more mature, her memories propel her forward.” (Scholl 99) Margaret has spent most of her adolescent years in London and she is thus shaped by London to a degree, even though her memory of Helstone has been a happy companion all these years. This memory is, however, not able to live up to reality, which will introduce Margaret to a feeling of dissatisfaction only moving away from Helstone can remedy. Discreetly, Gaskell has prepared Margaret for a transition into modern society, where the rhythm of life moves its inhabitants faster and with more commotion than in the South: “Although she speaks of having tired of riding in Aunt Shaw’s carriage as a reason for why she enjoys walking in Helstone … her walking suggests a level of restlessness and compulsion for movement”. (Scholl 99) Margaret’s intention of living happily in Helstone is already disrupted by her previous experience with cultural mobility in London, or as Greenblatt would describe it, the disruption of a fixed path through the encounters of different cultures. (252)

When Henry Lennox comes to visit Helstone with the purpose of proposing to Margaret, he ignites the same kind of motion as described above: “the tension between individual agency and structural constraint”. (Greenblatt 252) Greenblatt proposes that the meeting of different cultures can lead to the disruption of “seemingly fixed paths” by “strategic acts of individual agents”. (251-252) In other words, the assumed course of a person’s life can be disrupted by a meeting between this person’s culture with another. The meeting can be between this person and another who intentionally wishes to change their course of life, as Mr Lennox wishes to do by making Margaret his wife, or by “unexpected, unplanned, entirely contingent between different cultures.” (Greenblatt 252) Margaret Hale is unaware of Mr Lennox’s intentions and her answer to his proposal shows her reluctance to be seen as a woman worthy of or ready for sexual attention: “I was startled. I did not know that you cared for me in that way. I have always thought of you as a friend; and, please, I would rather go on thinking of you so. I don’t like to be spoken to as you have been doing”. (Gaskell 27) Mr Lennox proposes not only marriage but also maturity to Margaret, which is something she is not prepared for and which visibly frightens her. However, as Scholl explains in *Place and Progress in the Works of Elizabeth Gaskell*, it is Gaskell’s intention to spur Margaret on: “While her dislocation is the result of a combination of factors … it is also, crucially a deliberate decision by Gaskell to displace her onto spaces that are conductive to establishing the ideal domesticity for Margaret.” (38) Mr Lennox serves almost a crowbar to

disengage Margaret from Helstone, as the place is now spoiled by the proposal and all it suggested.

When Mr Hale names Milton-Northern as their future home because of a religious matter, Margaret is again shocked and wishes to know why they are to move so far away from Helstone. Mr Hale replies: "Because there I can earn bread for my family. Because I know no one there, and no one knows Helstone, or can ever talk to me about it." (Gaskell 34) The memory of their beloved Helstone would be too painful for remembering, and Margaret understands this. "Discordant as it was – with almost a detestation for all she had ever heard of the North of England, the manufacturers, the people, the wild and bleak country – there was this one recommendation – it would be different from Helstone, and could never remind them of that beloved place." (Gaskell 36) Margaret is against the northern culture, as it presents itself as quite different from her southern culture. A move to Milton would propose another problem; it would mean reduced circumstances. Not only does Margaret disagree with the place of relocation, but she also thinks herself and her family to dignified for such a place, as the reaction to Mr Hale's intention shows: "A private tutor! … What in the world do manufacturers want with the classics, or literature, or the accomplishments of a gentleman?" (Gaskell 36) Mr Hale was a gentleman in Helstone because he was clergyman, and as a consequence, his family was part of the gentry. "Church of England clergy, barristers, members of Parliament, and military officials were gentlemen owing to their profession." (Köhler 269) As explained in the introduction, the rising middle classes of the manufacturing towns were an impudent lot according to the traditional, southern higher classes. Margaret acknowledges this when she discusses the subject with her mother. She clearly wishes to remain unacquainted with those people who have made money by actual work: "Well, mamma, I give up the cotton-spinners; I am not standing up for them, any more than for any other tradespeople. Only we shall have little enough to do with them." (Gaskell 43) However, as Lambert says, the modern world in the form of cotton-spinners and tradespeople is impossible to ignore forever, and this will also mean the certain end of Helstone as Margaret knows it: "Margaret's idealised view of Helstone as a home which provides an assured sense of place is undermined by the disruptions and demands of modern society which make constant change inevitable." (Lambert 43) The departure from the idyllic Helstone "suggests the lack of power Margaret has over change." (Scholl 99) The industrialised world is already catching up with Margaret and it is this idea that makes her so hostile towards the north: it is the northern industrial culture that proposes a threat to her southern culture.

Milton

The move to the north takes the Hales first through London again, then to Heston, a town by the seaside, and lastly to Milton. Gaskell describes the literal mobility grimly: "Railroad time inexorable wrenched them away from lovely, beloved Helstone … They were gone; they had seen the last of the long low parsonage home, half-covered with China-roses and pyracanthus – more homelike than ever in the morning sun that glittered on its window, each belonging to some well-loved room." (Gaskell 52-53) Margaret believes that the attributes she associated with her southern culture, freedom, solitude, respectability, elegance, gentility, and idleness, will not follow her to the places she moves to. Thus the seaside town of Heston is doomed in Margaret's opinion, even though this is a small town with similar characteristics to Helstone: "everything looked more 'purposelike' … The colours looked greyer – more enduring, not so gay and pretty. There were no smock-frocks … they retarded motion, and were apt to catch on machinery, and so the habit of wearing them had died out". (Gaskell 54-55) The rootedness that is the agent for Margaret noting the differences with more emphasis between Helstone and any other place, is also the cause of those differences turning negative. What also becomes clear from this excerpt is that the modern world has already caught up with even a trifling town like Heston, as the smock-frock is no more in use simply because it got easily caught in machinery; it is evidence of the rural worker's inability, who originally wore that type of garment, to compete with machinery. Once the Hales arrive in Milton, nothing Margaret sees can carry a sign of happiness anymore: "Quickly they were whirled over long, straight, hopeless streets of regularly-built houses, all small and of brick. Here and there a great oblong many-windowed factory stood up … puffing out black 'unparliamentary' smoke, and sufficiently accounting for the cloud which Margaret had taken to foretell rain." (Gaskell 55) 'Unparliamentary' smoke refers to the "legislation which required mill owners to construct furnaces to burn smoke before it would be discharged into the city's air", and it helps set the scene, as a dark cloud agrees with Margaret's mood. (Kuhlman)

At Margaret and Mr Thornton's initial meeting, something distinctive happens. Gaskell describes it as follows: "Mr Thornton was in the habit of authority himself, but she [Margaret] seemed to assume some kind of rule over him at once." (58) Mr Thornton's reaction to Margaret can have two possible causes, if they are not at work together. One, Mr Thornton is immediately struck with love, a feeling which he has never experienced before or in such magnitude, and it leaves the poor man overwhelmed. Or two, Margaret Hale immediately establishes her believed superiority over Mr Thornton, and he, not being accustomed to southerners and their haughty ways, simply complies. A stronger case for the

latter can be made from the following excerpt: “Mr Thornton had thought that the house in Crampton was really just the thing; but now that he saw Margaret, with her superb ways of moving and looking, he began to feel ashamed of having imagined that it would do very well for the Hales, in spite of a certain vulgarity in it which had struck him at the time of his looking it over.” (Gaskell 58) Mr Thornton is so impressed by Margaret’s person that even his initial apprehension of her character cannot persevere. The meeting is veiled in prejudice from both side, but where Mr Thornton adjusts his preconceptions, Margaret is ruled by hers and has no intention of wavering. When she describes Mr Thornton to her mother, Margaret’s animosity is apparent: “About thirty – with a face that is neither exactly plain, nor yet handsome, nothing remarkable – not quite a gentleman; but that was hardly to be expected. … Altogether a man who seems to be made for his niche, mamma; sagacious, and strong, as becomes a great tradesman.” (Gaskell 60) Margaret insults Mr Thornton two times: by calling him “not quite a gentleman” and by calling him a “tradesman”, although the later might not sound offensive to Thornton. The mid-Victorian definition of a gentleman was in dispute, as the middle classes were beginning to use the word for their own purposes, which had a different origin from what the aristocracy and gentry understood by it. “But in general this [middle class] society moved closer to its social superiors. To prove it was climbing, it looked down from a great height on the class – or classes – below it … Probably the terms ‘gentleman’ and ‘gentlemanly’ were never more freely used than by this middle class.” (Priestley 29) However, as is proven in the character of Mr Thornton, something began to shift in the minds of rich manufacturers and tradesmen: “To be a merchant prince was a far finer thing than to be a gentleman,” for they were too proud to be gentleman, “but by the 1840s all this was becoming old-fashioned. The younger generation was determined to push – and buy – its way into the upper classes”. (Mathieson 185) Gaskell explains Mr Thornton’s belated wish for education as a compensation for the lack of it in his youth: Mr Thornton acknowledges his interest in and ignorance of literature, art, and philosophy, which Gaskell uses as a hint to his fine mind. “So most of the manufacturers placed their sons in sucking situations [job suitable for youngsters] at fourteen or fifteen years of age, unsparingly cutting away all offshoots in the direction of literature or high mental cultivation, in hopes of throwing the whole strength and vigour of the plant into commerce.” (Gaskell 64) Thus Gaskell places the cultural opposites of the southern ‘cultivated, idle mind’ against the ‘practical, lucrative attitude’ of the north. The difference in the definitions of a gentleman show the controversy between the north and south.

After some time in Milton, a change occurs in Mr Hale: “After a quiet life in a country parsonage for more than twenty years, there was something dazzling to Mr Hale in the energy which conquered immense difficulties with ease; the power of machinery of Milton, the power of the men in Milton, impressed him with a sense of grandeur, which he yielded to without caring to inquire into the details of its exercise.” (Gaskell 65) Mr Hale is fascinated by the strength that seems to rule Milton in its modern achievements without asking for the cost of these achievements. Margaret does not share her father’s enthusiasm: “But Margaret went less abroad, among machinery and men; saw less of power in its public effect, and, as it happened, she was thrown with one or two of those who, in all measures affecting masses of people, must be acute sufferers for the good of many.” (Gaskell 65) Their move has brought about, as Greenblatt describes, the movement of ideas as well, and Margaret and Mr Hale are initially affected differently. (250) While Mr Hale does not inquire into the details of factory business, he is willing to accept the environment around him and understand it as a positive atmosphere.

Margaret, on the other hand, is still obstinately rejecting the new environment, and her repudiation is enforced when she makes friends of the factory workman Nicolas Higgins and his daughter Bessy. Their lower class circumstances are a harsh reality to her, and Margaret uses the injustice of their situation as another reason to dislike the northern culture and particularly northern factory owners. Margaret also mistakes the shameless, and frank behaviour of the workmen from Milton for impudence and vulgarity. When Margaret walks through the town, she meets with the factory workmen who are going towards or leaving their work, and they comment on her beauty while passing: “She, who had hitherto felt that the most refined remark on her personal appearance was an impertinence, had to endure undisguised admiration from these outspoken men. But the very outspokenness marked their innocence of any intention to hurt her delicacy, as she would have perceived if she had been less frightened by the disorderly tumult.” (Gaskell 67) In Margaret’s eyes, a gentleman would never comment on a woman’s appearance so openly because it is too delicate a matter, but these northern men seem to lack the delicacy required to understand Margaret, as she lacks the experience to understand their innocence. Their remarks also remind Margaret of her maturity, as Mr Lennox’s proposal had done. Although having left Helstone behind, Margaret cannot shake the fact she is entering into adulthood and with that she must carry responsibility for her words and actions.

When Mr Thornton comes to have tea with Mr Hale and Margaret one evening, the conversation quickly turns into a spirited discussion on modern machinery and it importance. The discussion is mainly between Margaret and Mr Thornton:

> It is no boast of mine … it is plain-matter-of-fact. I won't deny that I am proud of belonging to a town – or perhaps I should rather say a district – the necessities of which give birth to such grandeur of conception. I would rather be a man toiling, suffering – nay, failing and successless – here, than lead a dull prosperous life in the old worn grooves of what you call more aristocratic society down in the South, with their slow days of careless ease. One may be clogged with honey and unable to rise and fly. (Gaskell 76)

Mr Thornton celebrates modernity, and what is more, he celebrates the north because it is the place where this modernity originated from and still thrives in. Mr Thornton despises the idleness that he associates with the south and its gentry because his character is based on the Manchester manufacturers: "Not surprisingly, Manchester businessmen disliked prestige without achievement: they resented fundamental criticism and frustrating external control … They suspected, even if they were not always completely impervious to, the values and virtues of the gentry, which were taken for granted in most parts of England". (Briggs 104) In the same way, Mr Thornton accuses the southerners of having the means for progress within their grasp, and yet being too reluctant to accept change and become part of the undeniable, modern future. Margaret highly disagrees:

> You do not know anything about the South. If there is less adventure or less progress – I suppose I must not say less excitement – from the gambling spirit of trade, which seems requisite to force out these wonderful inventions, there is less suffering also. … Now, in the South we have our poor, but there is not that terrible expression in their countenances of a sullen sense of injustice I see here. (Gaskell 76-77)

The feeling of rootedness from both sides causes Margaret and Mr Thornton to defend their own culture and condemn the other. The north is too selfish and greedy, which leads to excessive suffering, while the south is too dull and cowardly, which leads to nothing. "'And may I say you do not know the North?' asked he, with an inexpressible gentleness in his tone, as he saw he had really hurt her. She continued resolutely silent". (Gaskell 77) Elizabeth Gaskell shows the willingness on Thornton's side to please due to his admiration for Margaret, and Margaret's stubbornness due to ignorance. It is possible to say that if Mr Thornton had not admired Margaret so passionately, there could have never been any peace

between their two characters or their respective cultures, but then again, Gaskell wrote them to unite them, and Mr Thornton must be the first to give up his pride.

Strike

Major conflict between Margaret and John Thornton must occur for the characters to overcome their obstacles and eventually obtain acceptance and happiness, and Gaskell proposes this conflict in the form of a strike by Thornton's workmen. After Margaret has befriended Nicolas Higgins and his daughter, her suspicions of the powerless situation of the workman in comparison to that of the factory owner, are confirmed. When she confronts Thornton on the subject, he answers her bitterly: "You are just like all strangers who don't understand the working of our system, Miss Hale … You suppose that our men are puppets of dough, ready to be moulded into any amiable form we please." (Gaskell 116) Margaret assumes to understand the relation between a factory master and his men, but the situation was an ambiguous one, as Briggs explains:

> It seemed just as dangerous to bury individual character and effort in collective organization as to overlook character and effort altogether. … Manchester businessmen, therefore, always had to defend – at first is seemed like an attack – on two fronts. Judgements about them depend upon the angle of vision and upon the generation of the judge. That they could be stereotyped was a tribute to their acknowledged importance. (104-105)

John Thornton is suspicious of the 'union' of his men, because this means their combined strength against the masters, and Thornton is also suspicious of individual workmen, as they are just as ready to rebel if not in numbers. It is, however, a northern characteristic to feel pride in independence, and as such, neither the master nor the workman feels responsible for the other, although they are dependent on each other. This conversation is an example of small conflict between Thornton and Margaret as representatives of different cultural perspectives. The meeting of their cultures here leads to the disruption of the life courses of both Margaret and John, as Greenblatt would say. (252)

The first time Margaret admits to any unfavourable characteristics belonging to Helstone is when she is comforting her sick friend Bessy Higgins. After Bessy heard Margaret talking of Helstone several times, she believes it must be heaven on earth. Margaret contradicts her: "There's a deal to bear there … There are sorrows to bear everywhere. There is very hard bodily labour to be gone through, with very little food to give strength." (Gaskell 125) When Bessy intervenes by saying that the work is out of doors at least, Margaret

weakens her argument again: “It’s sometimes heavy in rain, and sometimes in bitter cold. A young person can stand it; but an old man gets racked with rheumatism, and bent and withered before his time; yet he must just work on the same, or else go to the workhouse.” (Gaskell 125) Bessy again intervenes by saying she believed that Margaret was fond of the south. “So I am … I only mean, Bessy, there’s good and bad in everything in this world; and as you felt the bad up here, I thought it was but fair you should know the bad down there.” (Gaskell 125) Helstone becomes more remote through Bessy’s association with the place: “During Margaret’s stay in Milton, Helstone is recalled in contrast, by allusion and recollection. Bessy Higgins sees it in imagination from Margaret’s descriptions, and connects in in her mind with the Heavenly Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. Thus Helstone becomes more remote and idealized, even though Margaret occasionally acknowledges its drawbacks”. (Craik 115) This admittance is fundamental to Margaret’s progress as a character, for this changes Helstone from reality to an unreachable dream. Margaret had to be taken away from Helstone to see with different eyes and accept the difference: “Margaret, who starts her journey with arrogance and prejudice, exacerbated by her enforced expulsion from the paradise of Helstone, learns to tolerate difference and to accept change.” (Lambert 105) Once Margaret abandons her original opinion of Helstone and its southern culture, room is created for acceptance of Milton and its northerners.

When Mr Hale is invited to dinner with other Milton-masters at the Thornton’s, Margaret takes the place of her ill mother and goes with her father. There, Margaret is struck by Thornton’s authority and prominence over his fellow masters: “Margaret thought she had never seen him to so much advantage … There was no need to struggle for respect. He had it, and he knew it; and the security of this gave a fine grand quietness to his voice and ways which Margaret had missed before.” (Gaskell 152) It becomes clear that, until now, Margaret has not felt true respect for Thornton, as it takes the image of him amongst those who are like-minded for her to see that Thornton is a respected man in Milton. Margaret has based her opinion of Thornton on her relationship with him in which he did not have the benefit of the majority, and as a consequence, Margaret is surprised to see him as anything else than the stubborn, and cruel master. “After all, these were the world’s workshop men, who in the 1850s, with their narrow dark clothes and black elongated ‘stove-pipe’ hats, dressed almost to look like steam engines … They had a strongly conscious dislike and fear, almost amounting to horror, of whatever seemed to them ruinously wasteful, distracting businesslike attention, recklessly consuming energy.” (Priestley 30) The confrontation with this ruling class of Milton men, with their bold determination, has forced Margaret out of her own secure world

within Milton. There is conspicuous as well as hidden movement happening while Margaret is obliged to admit she cannot remain hostile towards the Milton environment and Milton people if she wishes to become part of its society. While the dinner party progresses, Margaret begins to notice positive characteristics in the northern men: "At any rate, they talked in desperate earnest, - not in the used-up style that wearied her so in the old London parties … It might be rather rampant in its display, and savour boasting; but still they seemed to defy the old limits of possibility, in a kind of fine intoxication, caused by the recollection of what had been achieved, and what yet should be." (Gaskell 152-153) Margaret begins to admit that their sense of success and pride is not completely unjustified, and even though they are blunt and hard in their behaviour and words, they are honest. When Margaret has a conversation with Mr Thornton on the character of an another person, she asks him if he can be counted as a gentleman. Mr Thornton answers he cannot judge whether he is a gentleman, but that he believes him to be "no true man". (Gaskell 153) Margaret answers that her "gentleman" must include Thornton's "true man", eliciting from Thornton the response: "And a great deal more, you would imply. I differ from you. A man is to me a higher and a completer being than a gentleman." (Gaskell 153) When Margaret answers that they must understand the word differently, Mr Thornton gives his definition of the word: "I take it that "gentlemen" is a term that only describes a person in his relation to others; but when we speak of him as "a man", we consider him not merely with regard to his fellow men, but in relation to himself, - to life – to time – to eternity". (Gaskell 153) Mr Thornton opposes and rejects Margaret's traditional, and southern, idea of a gentleman. He also validates the idea that the term is used too freely and wrongfully in their modern society, as was mentioned above: "I am rather weary of this word "gentlemanly", which seems to me to be often inappropriately used, an often too with such exaggerated distortion of meaning … that I am induced to class it with the cant of the day." (Gaskell 153-154)

When Mr Hale and Margaret walk home afterwards, they discuss the evening and Mr Hale points out that Margaret is prejudiced against Mr Thornton. Margaret excuses herself by saying he is the first manufacturer she has ever met and therefore she must be allowed to judge him as she does. But what is more curious and to the contrary of what Mr Hale, and most likely Mr Thornton too believe, is that Margaret declares she likes Thornton and other manufacturers: "I know he is good of his kind, and by and by I shall like the kind. I rather think I am already beginning to do so." (Gaskell 156)

The time of the strike happens to be at exactly the same time as when Margaret comes to visit Marlborough Mills. Margaret demands that Thornton listens to the complaints of

these desperate men and once he is outside Margaret runs outside and uses herself as a shield to protect Thornton. When Margaret is hit with a rock she passes out, and the whole spectacle is observed by the workers and by Mrs Thornton, her daughter, and her servants. To them, Margaret's behaviour can only mean that she is in love with Mr Thornton. Mr Thornton is encouraged by the situation and is determined to make Margaret a proposal of marriage. As Bodenheimer explains, Margaret has placed herself in a predominantly male situation, and she must now face the consequences: "Margaret violates a traditional idea about her place as a woman and commits perjury in a good cause." (295-296) The yet unacknowledged feeling of love for Thornton is also making Margaret self-conscious, and she is faced with the idea that the "north" is of greater interest to her than her traditional opinion can as yet recognise.

Proposal

There is little time to reflect, as Thornton visits Margaret the next day with the question of marriage. Margaret rejects him by saying she is offended by his presumptuous tone: "I do feel offended; and, I think, justly. You seem to fancy that my conduct yesterday … was a personal act between you and me … instead of perceiving as a gentleman would – yes! a gentleman … that any woman … would come forward to shield, with her reverenced helplessness, a man in danger from the violence of numbers." (Gaskell 182) Margaret tries to re-establish her definition of a "gentleman" to evade the reality of her true motives. Thornton replies by invoking his definition of a "man": "And a gentleman thus rescued is forbidden the relief of thanks! … I am a man. I claim the right of expressing my feelings." (Gaskell 182) Thornton adds another justification for his speaking by using the noun 'man' as his masculine right of speech, even if the listener has no wish to hear him. Mr Thornton is hurt, as he cannot understand Margaret's sudden alteration in behaviour: "I know you despise me; allow me to say, it is because you do not understand me." (Gaskell 182) Margaret acts on self-defence and repeated impulse when she replies: "I do not care to understand". (Gaskell 182) When Mr Thornton accuses her of being unfair and unjust, Margaret has no reply. When Mr Thornton leaves, Margaret tries to justify her words by saying she never liked him. (Gaskell 183) This, however, is a contradiction to what she had admitted earlier to her father, and the truth of it is therefore rather questionable. The repeated conflict serves to emphasise the different cultural perspectives of Margaret and Thornton, and it illustrates that the obstacle of misunderstanding needs to be overcome by both before either can develop as a character: "The story of Margaret and Thornton is strong for the same reasons that animate the social

conflicts [in the novel]: because it is an account of the deep confusion in a time of personal change and revision." (Bodenheimer 293)

Mr Thornton makes a strange decision after he has left Margaret. He gets on a passing omnibus, goes on a one-day journey to a small country town and walks around like in a daze: "so he mounted upon it, and was borne away, - past long rows of houses – then past detached villas with trim gardens, till they came to real country hedgerows, and by and by, to a small country town." (Gaskell 192) Gaskell is using modern technology in the form of an omnibus to send Mr Thornton back into the "past", as the small town is much later revealed to be Helstone. Mr Thornton afterwards professes to having gone to Helstone because he wished to understand Margaret and her south. Unknowingly to Margaret, Mr Thornton is the opposite of Henry Lennox in his intentions, as Thornton came to the south to see through Margaret's eyes instead of judging her fantastical opinion. Literal mobility is here used by Gaskell to represent the sense of despair and hopelessness in change, and also to represent consolation found in the past and its distinct culture.

Margaret's feeling of unhappiness is worsened when she receives a letter from her married cousin Edith, in which she describes her new life. Margaret shows signs of escapism, as she wishes to have Edith's life instead of her own: "Margaret did long for a day in Edith's life – her freedom from care, her cheerful home, her sunny skies … She yearned for the strength which such a change would give, - even for a few hours to be in the midst of that bright life, and to feel young again." (Gaskell 218) Since Mr Lennox came to Helstone, Margaret's life has been turned upside down and she has been forced to make many choices in the spur of the moment. "The predominant sense of Margaret's life – one which makes it an unusual account of a Victorian heroine – is that of a person forced continually into making decisions, alone and under pressure." (Bodenheimer 293) Margaret wishes to return to her careless youth, but the move to Milton also marked her move away from childhood and she cannot become a child again, just as much as she cannot return to Milton. Cultural mobility has affected Margaret, just as it had affected her when she went from London to Helstone, so now too Margaret cannot return to Helstone without Milton having changed her to some degree, and such a move would then be unsatisfactory.

Later that evening Mrs Hale comments on Margaret's use of Milton factory slang: "But, Margaret, don't get to use these horrid Milton words. "Slack of work:" it is a provincialism." (Gaskell 219) Margaret explains herself by saying it is only natural to use the vocabulary of the region: "And if I live in a factory town, I must speak factory language when I want it." (Gaskell 219) The fact that Mrs Hale is calling the use of Margaret's words

vulgar while Margaret does not, means that Margaret is, after all, getting used to the Milton environment and even adjusting to it. As became evident in the Helstone chapter, Margaret also used Helstone vocabulary when she was among the southern people: "[she] learned and delighted in using their peculiar words". (Gaskell 16) Margaret is affected by the Milton friends and acquaintances she has, and it demonstrates that even though Margaret is having difficulty with adapting, she is eventually adjusting.

When Mrs Hale is on her deathbed, she wishes to see her outlaw son, Frederick, and when he comes to Milton everything must be done in secret. During that time Frederick tells Margaret and Mr Hale that a man came by the house, and he describes him as "not a little man – a great powerful fellow", who turns out to be Mr Thornton. (Gaskell 237) Margaret is surprised to hear that Thornton is still visiting them at all, and a little wounded by her brother's misunderstanding of Thornton's character: "Oh, only … I fancied you meant someone of a different class, not a gentleman; somebody come on an errand." (Gaskell 237) The discrepancy with the previous statement on the "gentlemanliness" of Mr Thornton is evident in Margaret's remark. Since Thornton's proposal, Margaret's opinion of Thornton has changed as she indirectly calls him a gentleman. When Frederick answers her by saying he believed him to be a "shopman" and not a "manufacturer", Margaret recalls her own initial prejudice on and ignorance of Thornton's character. (Gaskell 237) "It was but a natural impression that was made upon him, and yet she was a little annoyed by it." (Gaskell 238) Gaskell makes it clear that Margaret is uncomfortable with her brother's reluctance to understand the northern Thornton, even though she herself showed the same reluctance when she first came to Milton. Margaret begins to admits to her initial prejudice against the south and Thornton, and her error therein.

Looking South and North

Higgins asks Mr Hale for work in the south after he cannot find work in Milton. Nicolas Higgins, like Bessy before him, has heard Margaret speak often of her beloved south and as a logical consequence believes there is better work for him to be found there. However, Margaret contradicts him quickly: "You would not bear the dullness of life … it would eat you away like rust. Those that have lived there all their lives are used to soaking in the stagnant waters … The hard spadework robs their brain of life, the sameness of their toil deadens their imagination; they don't care to meet to talk over thoughts and speculations, even of the weakest, wildest kind." (Gaskell 283-284) There is an important transformation in Margaret's understanding of the southern and northern culture: she makes a distinction

between the kind of labour exercised in the north and the south, linked to the mental capacity or development of the southern labourer in contrast to the northern 'hand'. The southern labourers work in and with nature, and not among filthy streets and air pollution, but their work is monotonous and requires little cultural education if it requires any at all. Underlying this, is the idea that the northern industry redefined the concept of labour with several negative consequences, but the change also necessitated intellectual progress as well as social progress. Alternatively, the construction of southern society asks for no such progress, and it is this realisation that prompts Margaret to advise Higgins against the south.

When Mr Bell, Margaret's godfather, tries to enter into a discussion with Mr Thornton in the presence of Mr Hale and Margaret, he claims to be a representative of Oxford and the joy and beauty it offers. Mr Thornton, annoyed by the superior tone of Mr Bell, takes his side as representative of Milton. Mr Bell asks Thornton when he and his northern fellows 'intend to live', with which he means when the Milton manufacturers will start to use their power and wealth for their leisurely enjoyment, for they "are all striving for money" but not using it. (Gaskell 308) Mr Thornton answers him by saying that does not know when the manufacturers intend to spend their money, but that money is not what he strives for. (Gaskell 308) Mr Thornton continues: "Our glory and our beauty arise out of our inward strength, which makes us victorious over material resistance, and over greater difficulties still. We are Teutonic up here in Darkshire in another way … We wish people would allow us to right ourselves, instead of continually meddling, with their imperfect legislation." (Gaskell 309) Mr Thornton is criticising both the old hierarchical class system and Mr Bell. Once more, he emphasises the independence that marks the northern culture and which disapproves of mindless obedience. The discussion Mr Bell wishes to have is in its rudimental form about the new versus the old, as Mr Thornton makes clear by another statement: "If we do not reverence in the past as you do in Oxford it is because we want something which can apply to the present more directly." (Gaskell 309) But if Thornton and Bell's argumentation is weighed against Margaret's previous understanding of the difference in culture, both the southern submissive and the northern rebellious nature are natural results of circumstances. Margaret's role as intermediary becomes obvious now, as she has and is still experiences both sides and has chosen to occupy a position in between where both cultures have their advantages and disadvantages. This placement between cultures is part of Margaret development as a character: "Margaret's *Bildung* coincides with the realization that divisions are, after all, the fruit of mere prejudices." (Matus 79)

When Mr Hale and Mrs Hale have both passed away, Margaret's aunt comes to Milton to take Margaret with her back to London. The aunt cannot stand Milton, and Margaret despondently tries to convince her otherwise: "It is sometimes very pretty – in summer; you can't judge by what it is now. I have been very happy here." (Gaskell 338) But it is remarkable that after Margaret has made her farewell visit to Mrs Thornton and Mr Thornton, her tone is completely changed: "Oh! let us go. I cannot be patient here. I shall not get well here. I want to forget." (Gaskell 343) Margaret wishes to run from unpleasant memories as she had done before when she wishes to leave Helstone in memory of Mr Lennox. Now Milton is stained by the loss of her parents, and the loss of Mr Thornton, and Margaret's natural reaction is to flee and move away literally: Margaret wishes for cultural mobility as a way to satisfy her need for escapism.

Once in London, Margaret is reluctant to call the house her home: "And she felt that is was almost ungrateful in her to have a secret feeling that the Helstone vicarage – nay, even the poor little house at Milton, with her anxious father and her invalid mother, and all the small household cares of comparative poverty, composed her idea of home." (Gaskell 344) Fundamental about this excerpt is that the feeling of rootedness shows itself here to Margaret as belonging to people, rather than a particular place. Gaskell set Margaret on several journeys to learn about life, and now, by the end of one journey, Margaret has learned to disassociate the idea of home from the materialistic. What is more, Margaret herself is affected by the northern characteristic of activity; the idea that idleness leads to restlessness and vice versa. When everyone in the London house is engaged with society, Margaret reflects on her Milton life and the difference between that and her present: "She was getting surfeited of the eventless ease in which no struggle or endeavour was required. She was afraid lest she should even become sleepily deadened into forgetfulness of anything beyond the life which was lapping her round with luxury." (Gaskell 345) Milton has affected Margaret in that she believes modernisation has indeed resulted in a start of progress: "Margaret's willingness to adapt to life in the North speaks to her recognition of the spirit of the age … To be standing (or lying) still leads to extinction; thus the drive for progress is necessary to survival." (Scholl 104)

Mr Bell comes to visit Margaret in London and proposes to take her to Helstone on a small trip. The literal movement by carriage is a relief to Margaret: "and she breathed freely and happily at length, seated in the carriage opposite to Mr Bell, and whirling away past the well-known stations; seeing the old south-country towns and hamlets sleeping in the warm light of the pure sun, which gave a yet ruddier colour to their tiled roofs, so different to the

cold slates of the north." (Gaskell 356) The trip takes Margaret away from her thoughts on Milton and it takes her away from London life. However, once in her old home in Helstone, it becomes apparent that there too many things have changed. A younger parson now lives there with his wife and many children and the house has been completely altered. What strikes Margaret is that it "was not like the same place." (Gaskell 363) Gaskell uses Margaret's return to Milton as a show of her maturation: "through Margaret's now mature vision, Helstone has changed, both to reveal the changes in Margaret that make her see it now with a wiser perception, and in itself, so that it demonstrates its author's constant theme, the operation of time. … The nostalgia remains of rural enchantment … but it is nostalgia firmly put in its place." (Craik 115-116) It takes the actual journey and sight of Helstone for Margaret to put everything into perspective: "A few days afterwards … she … decided that she was very glad to have been there, and that she had seen it again, and that to her it would always be the prettiest spot in the world, but that it was so full of associations with former days … that if it were all to come over again, she should shrink back from such another visit". (Gaskell 371)

After Mr Bell dies too, Margaret makes another trip to Cromer, a small sea-side town. Here, Margaret spends many hours staring out at the sea or at the people around her, and it is soothing her and strengthening her body and mind. (Gaskell 382) Again, Gaskell describes Margaret's maturation as a result of changing perspectives due to cultural mobility; London, Helstone, Milton and now Cromer, though insignificant as it may sound, all serve the purpose of adding to experience and creating a complex, judicious character. What is more, Gaskell makes Margaret demonstrate her found development: "When they returned to town, Margaret fulfilled one of her sea-side resolves, and took her life into her own hands … But she had learnt, in those solemn hours of thought, that she herself must one day answer for her own life, and what she had done with it". (Gaskell 385) From the child Margaret was when she still lived in London to the woman she has become after having been familiarised with several cultures and their classes across a country, Margaret can now be described as a sensible and independent person. The cultural mobility of Margaret Hale has resulted in a change of principles and in conflict between cultures which led to understanding and acceptance.

Back in Milton, Mr Thornton too has changed on a social level. Since Thornton employed Nicolas Higgins, he has become better acquainted with his workers and from this arose mutual respect. Mr Thornton is amazed by the extent of his commitment to his workers: "until now, he had never recognised how much and how deep was the interest he had grown

of late to feel in his position as manufacturer, simply because it led him into such close contact, and gave him the opportunity of so much power, among a race of people strange, shrewd, ignorant; but, above all, full of character and strong human feeling." (Gaskell 388) Thornton no longer fears his rebellious workers, but respects them for their innovative and understanding minds. Margaret's intermediary hand is visible here, as she was the one who brought Higgins and Thornton together both literally and symbolically. Margaret has been the one who gave Higgins a voice with Thornton and the other way around, and she pressed Higgins to ask for work at Thornton's Mill. "By bringing together Thornton and Higgins, Margaret effectively mediates the animosity between the two classes in the North … In this sense, Margaret's personal cultural adaptation is crucial to the progress of the entire community." (Matus103) It took Margaret's understanding of both Higgins' and Thornton's view on work to unite them; if Margaret had not learned there are always two sides to a story, there might never have been any understanding between the two sides, for she was the one telling their stories. There is also a rootedness in Thornton's argument, as he feels proud to belong to men who distinguish themselves by their work and strong character. The attempts at unity between masters and men in Milton is cause for more pride in Thornton's case. He has even become revolutionary: "I have arrived at the conviction that no mere institutions, however wise, and however much thought may have been required to organise and arrange them, can attach class to class as they should be attached, unless the working out of such institutions brings the individuals of the different classes into actual contact." (Gaskell 398-399) Where Thornton first believed that his workers were independent from him and completely responsible for themselves, he now sees that communication and dependency are what make a good relationship between a master and his men. The introduction of something like 'southern charity' in the form of Margaret's opinions has affected Mr Thornton considerably. Thornton adds to this by saying in a discussion on the relationship between masters and workers: "We should understand each other better, and I'll venture to say we should like each other more." (Gaskell 399) The accusation Thornton made after his proposal, of Margaret not liking him because she did not know him, has reference here as Thornton makes a statement among the same lines. Mr Thornton means to emphasise that prejudice can often be regarded as foolishness or ignorance once individuals, of whatever character or background, learn about each other through acquaintance beyond mere familiarity. The lessons Margaret learned about "new culture" because of her acquaintance with the northern Mr Thornton, Thornton learned about "old culture" through his

acquaintance with the southern Margaret. Cultural mobility has once again brought these characters closer together.

When Margaret and Thornton meet again after more than a year, they have changed and grown as characters, and now both wish to spend their lives together. "The story thus becomes, at an almost explicit level, an allegorical marriage of north and south, at a symbolic level, by the wedding between southern Margaret and northern Thornton." (Matus 80) Through the meeting of different cultures understanding has been created after obstacles have been concurred and principles have been altered or duplicated. Margaret's primary mobility between Helstone and Milton necessitated the acceptance of 'the other' culture which lead to compromises, and thus the foundation of progress: "More significantly, while Gaskell's novels are set in different places – the industrial North, the pastoral village, the working seaside town – together they are about importance of place itself and specifically, they are about the phenomenon of moving between places as a means of progress – culturally, intellectually, and often economically." (Scholl 2)

Conclusion

To begin, Margaret Hale represents the southern culture because she grew up in Helstone, an imaginary village based on Gaskell's own experiences of the country. (Scholl 1) In *North and South* the reader first gets an impression of Helstone through Margaret's memory; Helstone is Margaret's "true home" and the southern culture that belongs to it is what Margaret wishes to return to. Margaret is, however, already affected by previous cultural mobility. Her youth was spent in the pastoral Helstone and for her education Margaret found herself in London amongst the highest of society. Margaret is shaped by a sense a freedom, idleness, elegance, superiority, and naivety, and thus she represents these characteristics as a person. Greenblatt's literal mobility takes Margaret to Helstone, and her idea of the place clashes with the reality of it. (250) In memory, Helstone was a place like in a dream, or like "a village in a poem" as Margaret describes it to Mr Lennox. (Gaskell 11) However, the fragility of homely peace is what Margaret is unprepared for and it blemishes the idea that Margaret has of Helstone. On top of that, Mr Lennox's proposal awakens in Margaret the fear that her childhood is over. Mr Lennox could be said to belong to another culture, as his priorities are based on economy and status, and he cannot accept nor understand that which Margaret values as important. Their meeting of cultures and the consequential clash are what Greenblatt describes as the disruption of a seemingly fixed path by the strategic act of an individual agent, and it serves to blemish the memory of Helstone to Margaret even more.

(252) Margaret still represent the southern culture of freedom, idleness, elegance, superiority and naivety, but now also a degree of poverty and unwanted responsibility belonging to adulthood.

Margaret is convinced that the Milton culture and the inhabitants who represent it are the exact opposite of her own culture, and this makes her very prejudiced against Mr Thornton when they first meet. Because of their different backgrounds, Margaret and Mr Thornton are yet unable to understand each other properly. Margaret assumes an immediate superiority over Mr Thornton because in her eyes he is just a "man of trade", and her rootedness, or adamant attachment to the south, thus immediately condemns him. Margaret also does not see Mr Thornton as a gentleman because he was not educated in any of the arts or shows any signs of gentility or elegance. However, Mr Thornton has shown an interest in the education required for a gentleman, as he seeks lessons from Mr Hale. Mr Thornton grew up in poverty, and was taught self-denial and a lucrative attitude, which means Gaskell has placed the cultural opposites of northern practicality, independence, and business against southern high culture and idleness. In discussions between Margaret and Thornton it becomes obvious they are both proud of their culture and dislike characteristics in the culture of the other because they are contradictory. Both character show rootedness, though Margaret's rootedness had undergone literal mobility, while Thornton moved through classes in the same culture. Thornton disagrees with the lifestyle he describes as "a dull prosperous life in the old worn grooves of what you call more aristocratic society", while Margaret despises "the gambling spirit of trade" which causes useless suffering. (Gaskell 76-77) Mr Thornton represents modernity, while Margaret represents the past, and both characters blame each other for not understanding their reasons of pride in their culture.

These discussions are not fruitless however, as they enlighten Margaret and Mr Thornton on each other's opinion. The first time that Margaret openly speaks against Helstone, and therefore her southern culture, is when she talks to her friend Bessy. Margaret admits there is equal suffering in the south as there is in the north, and it is an indication of what Greenblatt would call the movement of ideas as a result of literal movement between cultures. (251) At the same time, Margaret begins to admire the Milton manufacturers for their blunt honesty as she compares it to the southern wearisome "used-up style". (Gaskell 152-153) Margaret is affected by the people she is surrounded by and she cannot help but look through their eyes at her southern culture. She cannot let go of her southern identity all together and when she and Mr Thornton have a discussion on the definition of a "gentleman", their opinions clash because Margaret believes that the definition is shaped by old status and

idleness, while Thornton cannot stand the word because of Margaret's belief. Again Mr Thornton and Margaret represent the northern and southern culture as a new versus old society system.

After Thornton proposed marriage, Margaret is forced to see that there are likeable qualities to be found in the northern culture. Margaret begins to make a distinction between the origins of the southern and northern culture based on the circumstances of progress. The industrial revolution that has its foundations in the north created factory work with all its inhumane consequences, but it also meant people could form alliances and groups with whom they could demand importance and think about progress. The southern circumstances of manual labour left the people exhausted and broken, which meant they did not have the strength to bring about change by themselves so easily. With this understanding, Margaret goes from only being a representative of southern culture, to being a representative of the northern culture as well: she became the intermediary with the task of uniting the two cultures. Once Margaret has left Milton, Thornton too shows he is affected by his connection to Margaret, as he becomes interested in the wellbeing of his workers and the idea of steering the future towards progress for masters and men. Margaret herself realises in London that a home is not defined by place but by people and she longs for the purpose-like attitude of the northerners. Margaret is at last represented as having matured after having combined the positive characteristics of the south and the north to form an identity for herself. She was affected by Mr Thornton's pride in modernity and independence. Mr Thornton is represented in the end as a revolutionary and engaged character, changed by Margaret in that he believes dependency between an employer and his workers is of great importance. Margaret has let go of her rootedness to Helstone, and instead made Helstone the place of happy childhood memories, and no more. Mr Thornton seems to show a degree of stronger rootedness to Milton, as he feels a pride that is now better founded and more justified in his fellow men and their achievements because of his acquaintance with Margaret. Both characters have developed their ideas and persons, and while the beginning of the novel was marked by disagreement, the end of the novel is marked by unity.

Chapter 2

Our Mutual Friend and Cultural Mobility

> Of course, in every book that Dickens writes, there must be many characters and scenes that could originate with no one else – much rich and fanciful appropriate detail founded on the close observation of nature that no one else could give us, and a hearty sympathy with the right, and hatred and cruelty of oppression. These will all be found in *Our Mutual Friend*. The portrait gallery that we owe to Dickens is enlarged by the never-to-be-forgotten pair, Mr. and Mrs. Boffin [..]. (Grass 243)

The honest and kind Mr and Mrs Boffin are exemplary characters in *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) and Dickens uses their cultural move up the social ladder to emphasise the representation of their virtuous persistence. Charles Dickens places low opposite high class characters in this novel and they represent the cultural values and characteristics belonging to the contradictory classes. The cultural mobility that drives several of the major characters will be the main focus of this chapter, namely the Boffins and Bella Wilfer, as they represent the working class and the lower middle class. These characters shall be analysed on their representation of class culture and the differences in culture their experience during their cultural mobility.

Again, Stephen Greenblatt's theories on the study of cultural mobility shall be used as a guide through the novel *Our Mutual Friend*. The focus of the research shall mainly be distributed between Mr Boffin and Bella Wilfer, as these are the characters who are the most affected by their cultural mobility. This chapter shall, like the previous chapter, be subdivided into several separate sections to make the reading of it easier and more understandable, beginning with Going in for Money. This section shall deal with the initial cultural mobility of the Boffins and Bella Wilfer, followed by Moving Up, which will deal with the confrontation between the representative cultures. Then comes The Ways of a Miser and the Consequences, which deals with Mr Boffin's pretended alteration due to cultural mobility, and the conclusion will form the last section of this chapter. My hypothesis is that Dickens clearly uses Mr Boffin, and Mrs Boffin to some extent, as examples of characters who feel rooted in their original culture. However, this rootedness is not a negative consequence, in contrary to what Greenblatt suggests: "Mobility often is perceived as a threat – a force by which traditions rituals, expressions, beliefs are decentered, thinned out, decontextualizes, lost. In response to this perceived threat, many groups and individuals have attempted to wall

themselves of from the world or, alternatively, they have resorted to violence." (252) The rootedness demonstrated by Mr and Mrs Boffin as a result of cultural mobility is what protects them from the mercenary characteristics of high class culture, and can therefore be seen as a positive trait, which will be shown later. Bella Wilfer will also be affected by cultural mobility, although, unlike with the Boffins, it will make her a 'different' person altogether. Where the Boffins rely on themselves to understand and manage their move through different cultures, Bella Wilfer will need the help of others to make the process productive.

Going in for Money

Dickens introduces the Wilfer family in their full glory, though they have not much glory to speak of: "Reginald Wilfer is a name with rather a grand sound, suggesting, on first acquaintance, brasses in country churches, scrolls in stained-glass windows … But, the Reginald Wilfer family were of such commonplace extracation and pursuits, that their forefathers had for generations modestly subsided on the Docks, the Excise Office, and the Custom House". (Dickens 30) Mr Wilfer is a simple clerk and therefore his daughter, Bella, too belongs to the lower middle class, which is highly unpleasant to the girl. Dickens uses the description to set the stage for Bella's entrance into the novel a little later. The reader finds her: "a girl of about nineteen, with an exceedingly pretty figure and face, but with an impatient and petulant expression both in her face and in her shoulders (which in her sex and at her age are very expressive of discontent)". (Dickens 32) As it appears, Bella Wilfer is a very pretty young woman with a somewhat spoiled character. Her marriage to the unknown John Harmon would have involved a large sum of money and therefore make her a rich wife, but as John Harmon died before ever setting eyes on his fiancée, Bella is forced to mourn over an alien loss. Bella says to herself: "I am one of the most unfortunate girls that ever lived. You know how poor we are … and what a glimpse of wealth I had, and how it melted away, and how I am here in this ridiculous mourning … a kind of a widow who never married." (Dickens 34) Bella Wilfer also has a superficial character, as becomes clear when she contemplates what married life could have been like: "Those ridiculous points would have been smoothed away by the money, for I love money, and want money – want it dreadfully. I hate to be poor, and we are degradingly poor, offensively poor, miserably poor, beastly poor." (Dickens 35) Bella will not accept her position and is therefore determined to marry another very rich man. What is more, in order for Bella to accept the Boffin's charity when they wish to take her in, Bella must accept the fact that she is a 'widow': "The passing-

away of her future husband forces her unwillingly to wed death in order to obtain money as she must depend on her status as pseudo-widow to receive her footing in the Boffin household [..].” (Scoggin 111) For Bella Wilfer to enter into the higher classes of society, she must leave the lower culture behind and mourn publicly for the loss of her prosperity, or, in the eyes of outsiders for the loss of a husband.

The reader first meets Mr Boffin as he is trying to hire Silas Wegg as his “literary man” with “a wooden leg”. (Dickens 47) Boffin describes his situation as follows: “I’m retired from business. Me and Mrs Boffin … we live on a compittance, under the will of a diseased governor.” (Dickens 47) Boffin has received the money from the Harmon inheritance, and as he has the time, he wishes to make up for his neglected education. “Now, it’s too late for me to begin shovelling and sifting at alphabeds and grammarbooks … But I want some reading – some fine bold reading,” and as it turns out, Boffin wishes Mr Wegg to read to him and his wife. (Dickens 47-48) Dickens depicts Boffin as a hardworking man from the lowest classes, especially because he worked in waste, or ‘dust’ as it was called and Mr Boffin is therefore a ‘dustman’. What is remarkable about Mr Boffin is the fact that he does not immediately spend or uses his money to gain a more advantageous social status, as was clearly the trend in mid-Victorian period: “the struggle for social development, like that for wealth, was not limited to merchants and manufacturers … that entire unfixedness in the social position of individuals – that treading upon the heels of one another – that habitual dissatisfaction of each with the position he occupies, and the eager desire to push himself into the next above”. (Mathieson 186) Mr Boffin seems content as a lower class citizen, and although he later does buy a large villa and all that belongs to one of the richest men in London, he has as yet no scheming plans for social superiority. Mr Boffin shows a rootedness before actually undergoing cultural mobility, as the prospect of wealth already creates a notable distance between Mr Boffin and his current lower class culture. Or in other words, Mr Boffin has become a man of “great expectations”, and his rootedness is the result of an unwillingness to make the cultural move up as yet. (West)

When Silas Wegg visits Boffin’s house for the first reading, he is surprised by the strange mix of decoration and furniture in the humble residence: “They were garish in taste and colour, but were expensive articles of drawing-room furniture, that had a very odd look beside the settles and the flaring gaslight pendant from the ceiling.” (Dickens 52) Mr Boffin explains the unusual combination: “These arrangements is made by mutual consent between Mrs Boffin and me. Mrs Boffin, as I’ve mentioned, is a high-flier at Fashion: at present I am not. I don’t go higher than comfort, and comfort of that sort that I’m equal to the enjoyment

of." (Dickens 53) Mrs Boffin has the intention of giving fully in to 'Fashion', which she is now able to do with the Harmon money, while Mr Boffin does not see the use of 'Fashion' when there is such a thing as simple comfort. Both characters respect the other's wishes and are given room to exercise their own principles. Mr Boffin even shows a rootedness connected to his unpretentious home: "This is a charming spot, is the Bower, but you must get to appreciate it by degrees. It's a spot to find out the merits of, little by little, and a new 'un every day." (Dickens 53) Mr and Mrs Boffin differ in their reaction to their change in wealth, as Mrs Boffin does not show the same rootedness as Mr Boffin, though she does not seem unhappy in her current situation. Where Mr Boffin hides in his rootedness of their lower class culture, Mrs Boffin seeks to move away from it and willingly encourages cultural mobility.

The moment of actually mobility for Mr Boffin occurs when his lawyer, Mr Lightwood, officially declares the inherited money in possession of the Boffins. Lightwood's way of dealing with the situation shows the complex and even pompous language that was associated with being rich, and Dickens satirises the situation not only through Lightwood's words, but also through Mr Boffin's obvious difficulty in understanding Mr Lightwood afterwards: "will of Harmon deceased having been proved, death of Harmon next inheriting having been proved, &c. and so forth, he, Mr Lightwood, had now the great gratification, honour, and happiness, again &c. and so forth, of congratulating Mr Boffin on coming into possession … of upwards of one hundred thousand pounds". (Dickens 83) It must be understood from this excerpt that the possession of money was a business in itself and poor Mr Boffin is overwhelmed, "I don't know what to say about it, I am sure. I was a'most as well as I was. It's a great lot to take care of." (Dickens 83) Rather than being pleased with now having the means for distinguishing himself, Mr Boffin sees the money as a burden, an obstacle put in the way of his comfortable and simple life. When Lightwood and Boffin discuss the potential purpose of the money, Lightwood suggests making Boffin's burden lighter by literally spending all the money. Mr Boffin replies that is not satisfactory at all, to which Mr Lightwood replies with the philosophical question: "Is anything satisfactory?" (Dickens 84) Mr Boffin answers with a hint of regret and a cautionary attitude: "I used to find it so … While I was foreman at the Bower … I considered the business very satisfactory … It's a'most a pity … that he [Mr Harmon] even went and made so much money. It would have been better for him if he hadn't so given himself up to it. You may depend upon it … that he found it a great lot to take care of!" (Dickens 84) Mr Boffin shows a particular rootedness in his ordinary life as a workman, and the prospect of money does not make him

joyous. As Greenblatt explains, rootedness cannot possibly be understood without also "understanding the glacial weight of what appears bounded and static." (252) Mr Boffin has spent all of his life as a working man, and now at a seasoned age has the means to change his position. However, he is reluctant to do so because over time, as Greenblatt explains, he has become bound to his position. Boffin adds a piece of morality which contradicts anything a society obsessed with wealth stands for: "And speaking of satisfactory … why, Lord save us! When we come to take it to pieces, bit by bit, where's the satisfactoriness of the money as yet?" (Dickens 84) This statement underlines Boffin unwillingness to make the immediate cultural move towards the highest classes.

When a young man by the name of Rokesmith offers himself as a secretary to Mr and Mrs Boffin, the couple is at a loss to what a secretary exactly is and does. However, Mr Rokesmith makes a strong case for himself by valuing Mr and Mrs Boffin on their natural characters. He explains it thus: "what emboldens me, I answer, I have been strongly assured that you are a man of rectitude and plain dealing, with the soundest of sound hearts, and that you are blessed in a wife distinguished by the same qualities … When I add, I can discern for myself what the general tongue says of you – that you are quite unspoiled by Fortune, and not uplifted". (Dickens 90) Mr Rokesmith sees Mr Boffin's rootedness to his lower class life as a positive quality, for it depicts Boffin as a sober man. Mr Rokesmith makes a further implication about Mr and Mrs Boffin, "You will probably change your manner of living … in your changed circumstances." (Dickens 90) Whether Mr and Mrs Boffin had thought of moving to a larger house before is not quite specified, but once the idea is put in the mind of Mrs Boffin, there is no turning back. "I want Society" is Mrs Boffin's statement, to which her husband replies, "Fashionable Society, my dear?" (Dicken 93) Mrs Boffin declares that there is no use for her to sit idly in their humble home among all their fine things, "When we worked like the neighbours, we suited another. Now we have left work off, we have left suiting one another …We have come into a great fortune, and we must do what's right by our fortune; we must act up to it." (Dickens 93) Unlike Mr Boffin, Mrs Boffin believes it is important to change their style of living and it can be said that Mrs Boffin wishes to join the upper class culture because she has the means to do so. Thus Mrs Boffin is demonstrating behaviour similar to that of high class people Dickens is clearly mocking. Mrs Boffin is clearly persuaded by the fact that it is expected of those with money to live according to their wealth: "*I* say, a good house in a good neighbourhood, good things about us, good living, and good society. *I* say, live like our means, without extravagance, and be happy." (Dickens 93-94) The fact that Mrs Boffin names the conditions of her wish with the words "without

extravagance" is evidence of a good nature. Dickens emphasises the modest kindness of the Boffins with the following excerpt to save Mrs Boffin and consequently Mr Boffin from a pretentious and self-serving fate:

> These two ignorant and unpolished people had guided themselves, so far on in their journey of life, by a religious sense of duty and desire to do right. Ten thousand weaknesses and absurdities might have been detected in the breast of both; ten thousand vanities additional, possibly, in the breast of the woman. But the hard, wrathful, and sordid nature that had wrung as much work out of them as could be got in their best days, for as little money as could be paid to hurry in their worst, had never been so warped but that it knew their moral straightness and respected it. … For, Evil often stops short at itself, and dies with the doer of it; but Good never. (Dickens 95)

Dickens explains that the good nature of these people is the result of their lower class life. The rootedness particularly obvious in Mr Boffin, and even to some extent in Mrs Boffin, is evidence of Dickens' intentions to have Mr and Mrs Boffin as examples in *Our Mutual Friend* of good moral behaviour under difficult cultural conditions in contrast to the extravagant selfish cultural conditions of the higher classes.

When Mr and Mrs Boffin visit the Wilfer family to tell them of their plans, they are received with suspicion, for it is apparently highly unlikely for rich people to show such charity. But Mr Boffin points his honesty out to Mrs Wilfer, "Mrs Boffin and me, ma'am, are plain people, and we don't want to pretend to anything, nor yet go round and round at anything; because there's always a straight way to everything." (Dickens 101) This statement shows the Boffins' opposition against pretence and they clearly wish to retain this quality when they move up. When the Boffins leave, Bella's younger sister points out Bella's spoiled nature and her own jealousy. "There, Bella! At last I hope you have got your wishes realised – by your Boffins. You'll be rich enough now – with your Boffins. You can have as much flirting as you like – at your Boffins'." (Dickens 106) Greenblatt would speak of how Bella's "fixed path" of poor widowhood was "disrupted by the strategic act" of the Boffin; the Boffin are offering cultural mobility to Bella and she gladly accepts. (252) Bella will rather prove to be willing to show such pretence at first once she is among the higher classes, as will become obvious later.

To understand the Boffin's reluctance to enter into the higher classes, Dickens describes the superficiality and obsession with wealth at the cost of happiness of high class society. Dickens mocks a society consumed by money and the wish to become ever richer

and more pretentious: “As is well known to the wise in their generation, traffic in Shares is the one thing to have to do with in this world. … Where does he come from? Shares. Where is he going to? Shares. What are his tastes? Shares.” (Dickens 107) When Dickens describes the events of a high class society party, the snobbery of the attendants is unmistakable. Mr Podsnap is the epitome of vain pretentiousness. Podsnap asks a foreign gentleman after his experiences of London life and cannot help putting emphasis on the importance of his own words. “Enormously Rich, We say … Our English adverbs do not terminate in Mong, and We Pronounce the “ch” as if there were a “t” before it. We say Ritch. … And Do You Find, Sir … Many Evidences that Strike You of our British Constitution in the Streets Of The World’s Metropolis, London, Londres, London?” (Dickens 124) Podsnap is constantly correcting the foreign gentleman, and continues with specifying his superiority. “We Englishmen are Very Proud of our Constitution, Sir. It Was Bestowed upon Us By Providence. No Other Country is so Favoured as This Country.” (Dickens 126) In a later discussion on the poor, Mr Podsnap claims that there is no other country in the world that cares so well for its poor. (Dickens 132) Dickens is using Mr Podsnap as an example: here is a man with money enough for charity or for funding progress, but he would rather bask in his own arrogance and use his money for show. Opposite of this we have Mr and Mrs Boffin, who use their money to help others. Mr Podsnap adds to his claim: “I have also said that, if they do occur (not that I admit it), the fault lies with the sufferers themselves. It is not for *me* … to impugn the workings of Providence.” (Dickens 133) Podsnap thinks that the poor are to blame for their own poverty. He clearly wishes to have no responsibility or association with any person from the lower classes. Mr Boffin will serve as the contradictory example of an expected high class gentleman with a charitable heart and no snobbery to speak of. Mr Boffin, as Fulweiler explains, serves as an illustration of how *Our Mutual Friend* is “Dickens’s way of breaking down class barriers” as Boffin makes no distinction between high or low class culture in people, as do other exemplary characters in the novel. (54-55)

Mr Boffin soon informs Mr Rokesmith of the house he and Mrs Boffin have bought. “I mentioned to you … Mrs Boffin’s inclinations was setting in the way of Fashion, but that I didn’t know how fashionable we might or might not grow. Well! Mrs Boffin has carried the day, and we’re going in neck and crop for Fashion!” (Dickens 171) Once again, it becomes obvious that Boffin had no immediate intention of living in a bigger, or as it turns out, one of the biggest houses in London when they inherited the fortune. Mr Rokesmith, however, assumed they would have sooner or later, as he is more experienced in the ways of the world. “I rather inferred that, sir … from the scale on which your new establishment is to be

maintained." (Dickens 171) Mr Boffin adds that he went to look at the house with Mrs Boffin, and although they decided on it because it looked "Eminently Aristocratic" to them, it also was a "triffle high and dull, which, after all, may be part of the same thing." (Dickens 171) Mr and Mrs Boffin do not yet fully understand the fashion of high society, even if they wish to accumulate it, as is evident from their choice of house even though it is not exactly to their tastes. Later, Mr and Mrs Boffin inform Mr Rokesmith of their wish to adopt an orphan and Mrs Boffin and Rokesmith go to visit a poor, old woman who has a great-grand child without parents. The old woman, with the name Betty Higden, shows an independence and pride that could rival the arrogance of the rich. Betty despises the poor houses, though this is exactly the kind of care Mr Podsnap was speaking of when he mentioned how Great Britain provided for its poor: "Kill me sooner than take me there. …Do I never read how they grow heart-sick of it, and give it up, after having let themselves drop so low, and how they after all die out for want of help?" (Dickens 188) Dickens goes even further by addressing the rich in between Betty's declarations, as if the reader is a part of this rich, higher society. "A surprising spirit in this lonely woman, after so many years of hard working and hard living, my Lords and Gentleman and Honourable Boards! … Absolutely impossible, my Lords and Gentleman and Honourable Boards, by any stretch of legislative wisdom, to set these perverse people right in their logic?" (Dickens 188) These words underlines the snobbish behaviour of many rich people and it must have been a direct attack for some of its Victorian readers: "The omniscient power of … the transindividual mind within the novel has become an amoral and inhuman force made up of words that are cut off from feelings and experience because individual human beings decline to acknowledge their responsibility for them." (Kennedy 165-166) All this is done to make the contrast between the lower and higher classes represented in the novel and their cultural values even more conflicting. This gives Mr and Mrs Boffin good reason to be somewhat apprehensive of higher class culture and therefore establish themselves within their feeling of rootedness.

When it becomes clear that Betty will accept no charity for herself, Mrs Boffin tries to help her: "Yes, but there are some little comforts that you wouldn't be the worse for … Bless ye, I wasn't born a lady any more than you." (Dickens 191) Mrs Boffin is trying to say that she understands Bessy's situation and that she would gladly make her life a little easier. Bessy answers her kindly, "It seems to me … that you were born a lady, and a true one, or there never was a lady born. … I never did take anything from anyone. It ain't that I'm not grateful, but I love to earn it better." (Dickens 191) Betty emphasises that the making of a true lady is not measured by her wealth but by her heart. Furthermore, where the rich

described before wished to the make money without actually doing something, Bessy explains she wishes to earn her living by hard work rather than charity. Mrs Boffin relates to the rootedness of the earning of wages belonging to a lower class life.

Bella Wilfer shows her face again, or rather is seen by the love-struck Mr Rokesmith, while she is reading a book. Rokesmith inquires whether it is a love story, and Bella answers him: "Oh dear no, or I shouldn't be reading it. It's more about money than anything else." (Dickens 193) Bella is rooted in her intention to become rich, and she seems to be interested in nothing else. Rokesmith is perceptive and he exaggerates their situation at the Boffins to demonstrate Bella's greed: "But my position there as Secretary will be very different from yours as guest. You will know little or nothing about me. I shall transact the business; you will transact the pleasure. I shall have my salary to earn; you will have nothing to do but to enjoy and attract." (Dickens 193) Mr Rokesmith addresses a point made earlier by Dickens, namely the difference between the higher and lower classes, their relation to working and the earning of money, as mentioned above. Bella is moving into the highest class of society and will therefore be among its culture. She is already displaying the greedy character of that culture, and as it turns out, it will become Mr Rokesmith's objective to educate Bella Wilfer on the cultural values of high society by letting her experience it's immoral character. Mr Rokesmith is therefore, as Greenblatt would say, intentionally disrupting Bella's path in her cultural mobility. (252)

Moving Up

Mr and Mrs Boffin move into to their new residence with Bella and the secretary Rokesmith with ridiculous consequences: "And now, in the blooming summer days, behold Mr and Mrs Boffin established in the eminently aristocratic family mansion, and behold all manner of crawling, creeping, fluttering, and buzzing creatures, attracted by the gold-dust of the Golden Dustman!" (Dickens 196) The Boffins have made the literal move from the lower classes to high society, and they are immediately confronted with the greedy character of the class they have moved into; people come to them to ask for money in every way and form possibly imaginable. The description of these greedy characters is more than a page long and serves to mock as well as caution its contemporary readers: "A colourful anthology of complaint about mid-Victorian London could be collected without difficulty." (Briggs 320) Chapter xvii, *A Dismal Swamp*, is a satire on the selfishness of Victorian people, the none deservedness of their wealth, and the unwillingness to help others while naturally assuming others will help them. Dickens emphasises the immorality by having some conscientious characters showing

the same corrupt behaviour: “Even the characters who are finally redeemed in *Our Mutual Friend* are deeply involved in the self-seeking world of individual advantage.” (Fulweiler 60) Bella Wilfer is the biggest example of this, and she will at first seem to adapt perfectly to this selfish way of life. Primarily, cultural mobility leads the Boffin and Bella into a world of treacherous extravagance.

Mr Boffin has the need to give in to his feeling of rootedness now and then: “There were occasions, however, when Mr Boffin, seeking a brief refuge from the blandishments of fashion, would present himself at the Bower after dark, to anticipate the next sallying forth of Wegg, and would there, on the old settle, pursue the downward fortunes of those enervated and corrupted masters of the world who were by this time on their last legs.” (Dickens 278) Boffin literally returns to his original home to be read to by Silas Wegg, as he did when he had just received the inheritance, and when he had only thought of improving himself a little, instead of improving his entire living conditions. It is obvious that Mr Boffin has difficulty with adapting to his new high class life.

Mr Rokesmith becomes a lodger at the Wilfer household because he has a motive to stay close to Bella, but she finds him rather unnerving. “That pa’s daughter should be so contemptuous of pa’s lodger was odd; but there were odder anomalies than that in the mind of the spoilt girl: the doubly-spoilt girl: spoilt first by poverty, and then by wealth.” (Dickens 290) Bella is contemplating money again, and Dickens explains that Bella is spoiled unintentionally. The poverty of her parents has always made her wish to she was richer and her parents never contradicted her; as a consequence, she became spoiled by discontent. When Bella does become rich, she becomes spoiled by the actual wealth, and therefore she is doubly spoiled. Mr Rokesmith has noticed Bella’s spoiled behaviour, but he cannot help falling in love with her. However, Rokesmith believes Bella is not showing her true character and together with Mr and Mrs Boffin he devises a plan to humble Bella: “with the help of the Boffin’s faithful understanding of themselves as mere stewards in this world, Harmon (as Rokesmith) decides to occupy a haunting role in the Boffin home and reform Bella’s perception of the limits of earthly possession.” (Scoggin 112) Rokesmith hangs around Bella while she lives with the Boffin as their secretary. He starts his quest by reminding Bella of her family and her old home. “You never charge me, Miss Wilfer … with commissions for home.” (Dickens 292) Bella asks him what he means, to which Mr Rokesmith replies “By Home? I mean your father’s house at Holloway.” (Dickens 292) Bella becomes clearly ashamed: “She coloured under the retort – so skilfully thrust, that the words seemed to be merely a plain answer, given in plain good faith”. (Dickens 292) Bella shows behaviour the

opposite of rootedness because she avoids talking or thinking of her old home. This too can be the effect of cultural mobility in the sense that the person undergoing the mobility rather clings to the new culture in a form of escapism than withdrawing with a feeling of rootedness in their original culture. However, Bella does seem aware of her own immoral behaviour and apologises for it to her father when they are alone. "Indeed, I am afraid I have shown a wretched temper, pa. I am afraid I have been very complaining, and very capricious. I seldom or never thought of it before. But when I sat in the carriage just now, and saw you coming along the pavement, I reproached myself." (Dickens 300) It often takes the perspective of an outsider for people to see their own faults or failings, even when they themselves become the outsider. This is exactly what happened to Bella when she looked on her old home and her family with new eyes after having been away for a while. Not only did she notice the extreme difference between her old living conditions and her present one, but she was also confronted with her own behaviour. The cultural move created awareness in Bella, but it was also the instigator of her mercenary thoughts, as she explains to her father: "When I was at home, and only knew what it was to be poor, I grumbled, but didn't so much mind … But when I had been disappointed of my splendid fortune, and came to see it from day to day in other hands, and to have before my eyes what it could really do, then I became the mercenary little wretch that I am." (Dickens 303) There is almost a hint of rootedness in Bella's words too, as she refers to the days when she was not yet so occupied with the possession of money. But for now, Bella is a walking contradiction, because despite all her claims of loving and wanting money, she gladly gives her father the money she possesses so he can buy presents with for the rest of the family, pay his bill, and buy himself some new, decent clothes. (Dickens 303)

After Bella has lived with the Boffins for a while, she begins more and more to notice how Mr Rokesmith hangs around her. One night she becomes bold enough to speak to him about it, and she tells him it is dishonourable of him to admire her. (Dickens 355) Not much later, Bella puts her true feelings into words: "And was it not enough that I should have been willed away like a horse, or a dog, or a bird; but must you, too, begin to dispose of me in your mind, and speculate in me, as soon as I had ceased to be the talk and the laugh of the town? Am I forever to be made the property of strangers?" (Dickens 357) Firstly, Bella refers here to her arranged marriage to John Harmon, whom she does not know is none other than John Rokesmith. Secondly, Bella refers to the idea that Rokesmith in aware of her wealth and wishes to marry her because of that, just after the mourning process is somewhat over. Farrel explains why Bella is so against Mr Rokesmith's proposal even though she will only later admit the reasoning behind it: "She has been marketed like a commodity in old Harmon's

will, but in her dialogues with her mirrored image and her ballet with her father, Bella effects her own release from objectification." (789) Bella wishes to escape this objectification by renouncing her old culture in which she was the arranged bride. Instead, she finds freedom in her new, high class culture, where she can choose a husband for herself. Bella cannot accept Mr Rokesmith, because in her eyes, he too has forced himself upon her without her consent, rather than being the lover of her choice.

When Rokesmith's scheme of transforming Bella is well under way, Bella has another trip with her beloved father in which she tells him she has become even more mercenary. "I am not improved at all, pa … On the contrary, I am worse … I make so many calculations, how much a year I must have when I marry, and what is the least I can manage to do with, that I am beginning to get wrinkles over my nose." (Dickens 435) However, in the same conversations she mentions how she sees Mr Boffin changed because of his money: "But Mr Boffin is being spoilt by prosperity, and is changing every day … Before my eyes he grows suspicious, capricious, hard, tyrannical, unjust … And yet I have money always in my thoughts and my desires." (Dickens 435) Bella is beginning to see how greed can change a person for the worse, and it is affecting her. The cultural move to the higher classes is showing itself as having a bad influence on Mr Boffin and it will do the same to Bella if she does not change her objectives.

The Ways of a Miser and the Consequences

Mr Boffin plays the miser well and Fulweiler points out the intention: "It is a wonderful apt irony that the test set for Bella … by Noddy Boffin should involve his pretended mania on the subject of misers, their miserable deaths and their wills." (65). Mr Boffin takes Bella to many bookshops, where she must look for titles on misers, for that seems to be his sole interest recently. (Dickens 441) During these trips and at all other times, it seems that Boffin can only talk of money to Bella, and how one should use it and keep it. "Poverty and pride don't go at all well together. Mind that. How can they go well together? Why, it stands to reason. A man, being poor, has nothing to be proud of. It's nonsense." (Dickens 437) Greenblatt would here speak of cultural mobility altering people's ideas and opinions, as Mr Boffin seems to have changed his whole outlook on life. (250) Once a person is continually exposed to a new culture that is different from their original one, it often affects the way this person thinks or feels. Greenblatt explains that this begins with the literal movement, and then from there "it is possible to move to more metaphorical notions of hiddenness", or in other words, those movements that occur within a person, such are their

changed opinion on something. Mr Boffin proves his cruel behaviour by making a comparison of Mr Rokesmith to a sheep: “If I pay for a sheep, I buy him out and out. Similarly, if I pay for a secretary, I buy *him* out and out.” (Dickens 437) Mr Rokesmith, who is present to undergo Boffin’s scandalous treatment before the eyes of Bella, confirms that Boffin therefore owns him entirely. When Mrs Boffin comments on her husband’s behaviour by saying that he did not seem his old self, Mr Boffin spiritedly answers her: “Our old selves wouldn’t do here, old lady. Haven’t you found that out yet? Our old selves would be fit for nothing, here but to be robbed and imposed upon. Our old selves weren’t people of fortune; our new selves are; it’s a great difference.” (Dickens 438) Mr Boffin is showing the same rejection of rootedness Bella has been showing as a way to be better accepted among the highest classes, but now it is proving to results differently from what Bella imagined. Boffin also uses the same technique as Rokesmith did before of using Bella’s conduct as an example of her own immoral behaviour: “But I think it’s very creditable in you, at your age, to be so well up with the pace of the world, and to what to go in for … Go in for money, my love. Money’s the article … That’s the state to live and die in! … R-r-rich!” (Dickens 439-440) When Bella is alone she has a discussion with herself on whether she should excuse Mr Boffin or not. (Dickens 440) Shuman explains that Bella is a good character with a bad outward appearance: “Rather than learning goodness, the novel suggests, Bella simply needs to unlearn the surface knowledge that interferes with what she already knows. Bella’s final triumph, for example, is throughout a triumph of ignorance.” (168)

While Bella sees Mr Rokesmith being abused by Mr Boffin, she is affected by the situation and she begins to act more responsibly. When Betty Higden is found dying by a young woman named Lizzie Hexam, both Rokesmith and Bella are intrigued. Rokesmith asks Bella to talk to Lizzie on the subject after Betty’s funeral, for they both feel she may be troubled by it, and Bella gladly complies. “I shall be happy, Mr Rokesmith [..] to be of the least use; for I feel, after the serious scene of today, that I am useless enough in this world.” (Dickens 492) When they come to the subject of Mr Boffin’s treatment of Rokesmith, the need arises for Bella to admit the injustice of the situation: “I see it with pain … and it often makes me miserable. Miserable, because I cannot bear to be supposed to approve of it, or have any indirect share in it. Miserable, because I cannot bear to be forced to admit to myself that Fortune is spoiling Mr Boffin.” (Dickens 493) Mr Boffin’s performance as an old miser is having the wanted effect, which becomes clear from Rokesmith’s answer: “Miss Wilfer … if you could know with what delight I make the discovery that Fortune is not spoiling *you*,

you would know how that it more than compensates me for any slight at any other hand." (Dickens 493)

When Bella goes to visit Lizzie Hexam, Lizzie is somewhat ashamed of her poor dwelling, "I am afraid it is a poor room for you". (Dickens 495) Bella's answer is proof of the fact that she no longer ignores her poor history. "Not so poor as you think, my dear … if you knew all." (Dickens 495) The subject of rootedness is now no longer taboo for Bella as she is learning the difference between higher and lower class cultures. It may even be said that Bella no longer uses a rootedness in her new culture as escapism, but rather uses the feeling of rootedness to become less vulnerable to the circumstances that seems to have changed Mr Boffin. Bella has undergone an alteration of ideas and principles because of her cultural mobility to high class society. Now this same cultural mobility is causing a second alteration of ideas and principles through the workings of the Boffins and Rokesmith. Lizzie Hexam can already see Bella's true character, as Boffin and John Rokesmith have, and she comments on it to prove its existence to Bella. "A heart well worth winning, and well won. A heart that, once won, goes through fire and water for the winner, and never changes, and is never daunted." (Dickens 501) Lizzie puts emphasise on Bella's heart; according to Dickens it is Bella's love on which her true worth depends. This is the last notion Bella must acknowledge before she can reject her greedy ways. Bella is in Dickens' intention a good character, and therefore her triumph over high class greediness is self-evident, but she must learn to deal with wealth appropriately: "Bella, of course, passes the test in rejecting Boffin in his disguise as a selfish miser. As always is the case with Dickens, the material goods of this world are never the problem. One may inherit money without harm, but inheriting the trait of seeking only one's own advantage is a lethal flaw that does not in the long produce an appropriate evolution." (Fulweiler 68)

One day, Mr Boffin calls Bella to him and she finds him with Mrs Boffin waiting for her. Mr Boffin has learned of Mr Rokesmith's affection for Bella, and he seems very angry about it. "How dare you, sir … tamper, unknown to me, with this young lady? How dare you come out of your station, and your place in my house, to pester this young lady with your impudent addresses?" (Dickens 557) Boffin clearly makes a distinction between the class Rokesmith belongs to, and the one Bella now belongs to after moving in with the Boffins; they are to remain completely separate, because Rokesmith as a working man is not worthy of Bella. "This young lady was far above *you*. This young lady was no match for *you*. This young lady was lying in wait (as she was qualified to do) for money, and you had no money." (Dickens 557) Boffin again emphasises the impossibility of the match due to class difference,

and also once more confronts Bella with her own greedy behaviour. Hearing the truth from the mouth of another makes Bella very miserable, and she finally succeeds in forsaking her mercenary ways: “You wrong me, wrong me!” (Dickens 558) Mr Boffin claims that there is no worth in the love Mr Rokesmith has for Bella, as there is no money to be gained from Rokesmith, and love alone is worth nothing. Bella, by now, is stamping her pretty feet and rising up with passion. Finally, she speaks: “I have heard you with shame … for myself and with shame for you … The best wish I can wish you is … that you had not one single farthing in the world.” (Dickens 565) Bella rises to the challenge and unmasks not only Mr Boffin as “hard-hearted Miser” but also herself, and thus, with the unmasking, Bella becomes herself, just as she will find out later, Mr Boffin can. (Dickens 566) Bella apologises to Mr Rokesmith for any harm she may have done him and she admits she has been ignorant and led by selfishness. The test consists of one last part, and that is the idea that once Bella leaves the Boffins, they will not give her any money anymore. “You mustn’t expect … that I’m a-going to settle money on you if you leave us like this, because I am not.” (Dickens 568) This is Boffin’s final threat, and if Bella can resist this, she has completed the test successfully. Her answer is simple: “Expect! … Do you think that any power on earth could make me take it if you did, sir?” (Dickens 568) Bella has now successfully changed her opinion on money as a result of cultural mobility, as her move into high class culture has exposed her to the dishonest behaviour of its inhabitants.

Bella has given up not only the prospect of wealth, but also her present wealth, as she leaves all her fine clothes and possessions behind. She walks to her father at his work, but she does not explain why she is there in her old dress, and Mr Wilfer does not ask about it. Suddenly, Mr Rokesmith barges in and takes Bella in his arms and they profess their love. Mr Rokesmith proves that the change in Bella is remarkable, “Bella takes me, though I have no fortune, even no present occupation; nothing but what I can get in the life before us. Bella takes me!” (Dickens 574) Mr Wilfer is shocked, but pleased, because he can see that Bella is truly happy. When Bella is with her father, back home in Holloway, Bella tells him what her prospects are: “It won’t be a large fortune, because, if the lovely woman’s Intended gets a certain appointment that he hopes to get soon, she will marry on a hundred and fifty pound a year. But that’s at first, and even if it should never be more, the lovely woman will make it quite enough.” (Dickens 583-584) Bella is content with being poor again, as she has now made her cultural movement back to her original state. Bella is content with the prospect of her lower class life, as she now has love. Literal cultural mobility thus happens twice in Bella Wilfer’s case with the result of forcing Bella to show and be her true self.

In the meantime, Mr and Mrs Boffin are still dealing with all the creeping and crawling creatures around them who wish to have a share in their fortune. Among those people are Mr and Mrs Lammle, a selfish couple who married each other under the false expectation that the other had money. Finding out after marriage that neither possessed anything, they went looking for ways to make money of other people, usually through mean schemes. The Lammles have tried Mr and Mrs Boffin but the Boffins have proven impervious to their trickery. What is more, Mr and Mrs Boffin remain true to their nature and prove their positive rootedness to their lower class habits by even being kind to the Lammles when they send them away. Mrs Lammle comments on the situation: "Mr and Mrs Boffin … there are not many people, I think, who, under the circumstances, would have been so considerate and sparing as you have been to me just now. Do you care to be thanked?" (Dickens 615) Mrs Boffin answers her by saying that thanks are always worth having, and Mrs Lammle thanks them both. Mr Lammle, being of a worse character than Mrs Lammle, asks his wife mockingly if she is becoming sentimental. Mr Boffin comes to her rescue: "Well, well, my good sir … it's a very good thing to think well of another person, and it's a very good thing to be thought well of *by* another person. Mrs Lammle will be none the worse for it if she is." (Dickens 615) Mr and Mrs Boffin are the example of people using their wealth justly and charitably, and against characters such as the Lammle, the contrast between those obsessed with profit at all costs and those who are not, becomes even greater: "*Our Mutual Friend* is filled not only with predators but with characters who demonstrate moral responsibility, human affection, and charity". (Fulweiler 69) Mr and Mrs Boffin are the

Literal movement occurs when Bella and her father sneak away from Holloway one morning: "Behold Bella tripping along the streets, the dearest girls afoot under the summer sun! Behold pa waiting for Bella behind a pump, at least three miles from the parental roof-tree! Behold Bella and pa aboard an early steamboat bound for Greenwich!" (Dickens 628) This is the day Bella becomes Mrs Rokesmith, or actually Mrs Harmon, though still unknown to her. Bella is aware that this marriage also means her acceptance of a lower class life, or in other words, the acceptance of the poverty she knew as her reality for life. However, Bella must now pass another test of her husband's making. In their new home, "a modest little cottage, but a bright and a fresh," Bella must prove to be a good, economical, diligent, but above all, a faithful wife. It is even Bella who introduces the idea of John evaluating her value. "I want to be something so much worthier than the doll in the doll's house … so much worthier as I hope you may someday find me! Try me through some reverse, John – try me through some trial – and tell them after *that* what you think of me." (Dickens 642) A page

later, John begins his test: “I was thinking whether you wouldn’t like me to be rich? … I mean, really rich. Say, as rich as Mr Boffin. You would like that?” (Dickens 643) Bella answers him that she is afraid for what might happen if she was rich again after what happened to Mr Boffin. John Rokesmith answers her, “you would have a great power of doing good to others.” (Dickens 643) Bella speculates on whether she would exercise that power, while at the same time having the power to harm herself. Bella was sufficiently impressed by Boffin’s miserly performance and has become cautious about wishing to be rich again.

While John is away working, Bella wishes to improve herself as a housewife: “Such weighing and mixing and chopping and grating … and, above all, such severe study! For Mrs JR, who had never been wont to do too much at home as Miss BW, was under constant necessity of referring for advice and support to a sage volume entitled The Complete British Family Housewife.” (Dickens 645) Bella is becoming the perfect Victorian wife, bettering herself when the husband is away, so she can demonstrate her improvement when her returns. However, after Bella’s previous pursuit of fighting the objectification of her person, her sudden willingness to conform to a Victorian housewife dissatisfies modern contemporary readers: “Twenty-first century readers tend to be disappointed by the transformation of the independent Bella into “the doll in the doll’s house” at Blackheath … doing scholarly research into cookery books and living in true wifely ignorance of her husband’s City job. But this process is also one in which middle-class domesticity itself is first parodied, then shown to be artificially constructed, and finally rendered irrelevant.” (Shuman 158) Dickens makes it apparent that Bella is not a perfect housewife by nature, but again she is affected by her cultural move as it changes her ideas and opinions and wishes to learn to be a housewife as quickly as possible. Cultural mobility has transformed Bella from an independent woman to a pleasing Victorian example of womanhood.

John Rokesmith is of the opinion that Bella must trust him completely and ask no questions about his strange behaviour before her can reveal himself as John Harmon. When John asks her why Bella is not inquiring into his secrets, she replies: “I should dearly like to know, of course … but I wait until you can tell me of your own free will. You asked me if I could have perfect faith in you, and I said yes, and I meant it.” (Dickens 718) Bella has now entered into the Victorian culture of ‘wifedom’, which can be said, is a separate culture from the lower middle class culture she also inhabits. This culture teaches Bella she must put her husband above all other things and follow him unconditionally. Shuman emphasises the irrelevance of Bella actually being a good housewife, but rather presenting herself as one:

"Bella accomplishes her husband's triumph not through the adaptation of domesticity, but through the placing of that domesticity in a pedagogical framework, not by becoming a good bourgeois wife, but by passing a test as a good bourgeois wife." (Shuman 159) As a married woman, Bella is content as a person from the lower classes, therefore accepting the corresponding culture, and Bella is content as a wife, thus also accepting 'wifedom' and its corresponding culture.

Another literal movement marks the end of John and Bella's journey through the novel. John has informed Bella that they are to move to a larger house and what is more, he will show her the place the next morning: "they took coach and drove westward. Not only drove westward, but drove into that particular westward division which Bella had seen last when she turned her face from Mr Boffin's door. Not only drove into that particular division, but drove at last into that very street. Not only drove into that very street, but stopped at last at that very house." (Dickens 726) Now Bella will be once more reunited with Mr and Mrs Boffin, and their whole scheme shall be explained to her. Once Bella hears of Mr Boffin's pretence, she realises he is a good man with good intentions. "When you say what a greedy little wretch you were the patron of, you determined to show her how much misused and misprized riches could do, and often had done, to spoil people, did you? Not caring what she thought of you … you showed her, in yourself, the most detestable sides of wealth". (Dickens 733) Mr and Mrs Boffin now have within their home the children they wished for, and a grandchild who can grow up among their kindness and wisdom. Mr Boffin can continue the education he gave Bella and thus fulfil the purpose of his cultural move: "Although – as often in Dickens - the "good father" of the novel is a man with no biological children, Boffin's legacy of human decency is the "fittest" trait to be inherited for an appropriate human evolution." (Fulweiler 68-69)

Conclusion

Bella Wilfer is introduced to the reader as a pretty, but dissatisfied young woman with spoiled tendencies. Bella is represented in her original culture as a lower middle class woman with no expectation of becoming rich. Mr and Mrs Boffin are represented as people from a lower class than Bella Wilfer, as both Mr and Mrs Boffin are working people now retired. Dickens describes Mr Boffin as a simple man with a wish to broaden his educations. When Mr and Mrs Boffin come into money by inheriting the wealth initially meant for Bella, they are somewhat at a loss what to do with so large an amount, or comfortable with the amount: "It's a great lot to take care of … where's the satisfactoriness of the money as yet?" (Dickens

83-84) The Boffins are unpretentious people and wish to remain so, and money of such a sum makes them equal to the richest people in London, if only on paper. They belong to a lower class culture where hard work was a necessity for life and they are defined by it. Mr and Mrs Boffin are thus initially represented as simple people with no large intentions towards wealth, even though it can be said they are eventually forced into "society" by society itself: it is expected of people with money to act like people with money, and Mrs Boffin is persuaded by this notion to move to a larger residence. "We have come into a great fortune, and we must do what's right by our fortune; we must act up to it." (Dickens 93)

Both Mr and Mrs Boffin show rootedness in their original culture even before they have moved to a much larger house in a far more luxurious part of London. The Boffins wish to remain unpretentious, and this is a rather odd quality for rich people as it turns out: "Mrs Boffin and me, ma'am, are plain people, and we don't want to pretend to anything, not yet go round and round at anything". (Dickens 101) Dickens' description of high society members leaves them arrogant and selfish, both qualities the Boffins lack. When the Boffins wish to have Bella move in with them so she can share in their fortune it results in a disruption of Bella's natural cultural path, for now she is suddenly rich. It becomes obvious that once the Boffins and Bella have moved, the difference between them and the rest of high society culture, is even greater. Before, Mr and Mrs Boffin did not have the money to be particularly charitable, but once they do, they think of all kinds of ways to help others. An example of a high class gentleman, called Podsnap, shows that the characteristic inclination of rich people is to be greedy and completely uncharitable: "the fault lies with the sufferers [the poor] themselves. It is not for *me* … to impugn the workings of Providence." (Dickens 133) When Mrs Boffin meets the poor elderly woman Betty Higden, it becomes obvious that Betty forms the opposite side of the class scale, namely the poorest of the poor. Dickens describes her as strong, stubborn, and honest, which are qualities the Boffin can relate too, but which are utterly lost in the other representations of high class people. Mr Boffin even show a rootedness that is something like escapism, as he sometimes returns to his old home so he can be away from "fashionable society". "There were occasions, however, when Mr Boffin, seeking a brief refuge from the blandishments of society, would present himself at the Bower after dark". (Dickens 278)

Bella proves to fit in perfectly with Dickens' representation of a high class member, for she wishes to be richer and richer. Bella is constantly scheming and thinking of ways to get the money, and to spend the money, which makes her a superficial and mercenary character: "But when I had been disappointed of my splendid fortune, and came to see it from

day to day in other hands, and to have before my eyes what it could really do, then I became the mercenary little wretch that I am." (Dickens 303) This changes, however, when Mr Rokesmith comes to the rescue with a plan of helping her return to her natural character, which is caring and kind. Mr and Mrs Boffin are in on the plan and slowly they change Bella's ways. Bella is not to blame for her greedy character according to Dickens, for she was first spoiled by non-contentedness and secondly by actual wealth. Bella also shows a contradictory attitude towards rootedness, because she would rather ignore her history and therefore her original character in order to progress faster into high society. Despite her constant thoughts on money, Bella becomes somewhat aware of her own immoral behaviour, which should be prove of her natural good character deep within her. Meanwhile, Mr Boffin is playing the mercenary miser spoiled by money with such great conviction that Bella can only be affected by his behaviour and judge her own as a consequence: "This young lady was lying in wait (as she was qualified to do) for money … we all three know that it's Money she makes a stand for – money, money, money". (Dickens 558, 564) Cultural mobility has caused in Bella first an alteration of ideas and principles towards egotistical intentions, and then secondly, under the influence of the Boffins and Rokesmith, and alteration towards self-analysis and decency. Literal movement takes Bella again into the culture of the lower middle classes when she marries Mr Rokesmith and moves to a small house with him. Bella has accepted her relative poverty and is satisfied as thus. When she is reunited with Mr and Mrs Boffin, and she and Mr Rokesmith, also known as John Harmon, move back in with them, Bella has learned to be content with what she has and can know use her wealth and power in high class culture for good.

It can be said that Mr and Mrs Boffin have been consistent as characters throughout the novel. They have remained true to their original personalities, which were shaped by lower, working class culture. They are representatives of this culture in opposition to the high class culture which Dickens described as immoral and greedy. Bella Wilfer is portrayed as more changeable, even though the change is not to her fault. Bella is influenced by every cultural move she makes, first up society's ladder, then down society's ladder, to finally go way up and remain up that ladder. The idea that Bella Wilfer was a character with a good and sensible personality deep within her all along, can be used as an argument for identifying Bella as belonging to the same type of character symbolised by Mr and Mrs Boffin. The Boffins and Bella Wilfer are representative of lower class people coming into money and using it for good, in comparison to the high class member Dickens is clearly mocking and criticising in *Our Mutual Friend.*

Chapter 3

The Adaptations and Cultural Mobility

Audiences today are still showing an enthusiastic interest in adaptions of classical novels, such as those by Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell, and McFarlane gives us a possible explanation for the enduring fascination: "Constantly creating their [audience's] own mental images of the world of the novel and its people, they are interested in comparing their images with those created by the film-maker." (7) Readers have the natural desire to compare their visualisation of characters and places of a novel with the visualisations of others, and an adaptation in the form of a film or television series is a medium that is very suitable for that purpose. The following chapter will serve to examine of this fascination, but it will not, deal with fidelity criticism. This chapter shall discuss the representation of cultural mobility in the adaptations of *North and South* (2004), directed by Brian Percival and *Our Mutual Friend* (1998), directed by Julian Farino. Both adaptations are television series consisting of four episodes. The main focus shall be on the visuals rather than the dialogues, in contrast to the novels. There will be no comparison between the original novel and its adaptation on the basis of fidelity, because the representation of cultural mobility is central to the analysation of these adaptations rather than the representation of the novel on film. On the other hand, comparison between the novel and the adaptation on cultural mobility and the depiction thereof, will be part of the research. This research will be conducted to understand the differences and the similarities between the medium of novel and that of film, and the different techniques or styles they use to represent cultural mobility. The representation of cultural mobility in the adaptations *North and South* (2004) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1998) shall be examined with the purpose of determining whether modern contemporary culture has affected the representation in any way and, if so, how. This chapter shall be subdivided into sections according to the episode numbers, beginning with *North and South*, followed by *Our Mutual Friend*. The guidelines by Stephen Greenblatt that were used in the chapters on the novels shall also be used to analyse their adaptations.

North and South: Episode One

The first episode of the *North and South* series opens with a rather meaningful representation of cultural mobility, namely a train moving across a green landscape. Inside the train sits a contemplative Margaret holding a yellow flower. The train literally represents the revolutionary Victorian technology that is taking Margaret and her family from Helstone to

Milton. The green landscape the train is crossing and the representation of the sunny Helstone, will form a stark contrast to Milton. In this first sequence, the possibilities of film in comparison to the possibilities of a novel become apparent, namely in the use of colour. Research done by Valdez and Mehrabian discusses the effect of different colours on people. Generally, the colours blue and green were considered good colours, the colour red was strong and active, while black was bad and strong, and grey was considered a bad, and weak colour. (Valdez 397) On top of that, colours that are bright were considered positive, while potency was associated with darkness, and colour (in contrast to no colour) was associated strongly with activity. (Valdez 397) Where a book must rely on the imagination of its readers, film can intentionally manipulate the feelings of the viewer with the use of colour.

The episode moves on to the scene of the London wedding party of Margaret's cousin. The scene is filmed in fast moving shots with close-ups of people, creating the idea that the room is busy and full of people. The culture represented by the partying crowd in London is that of high society and it is distinctly different from the following depiction of Margaret in Helstone. She is alone, lying in green grass surrounded by tall green trees and blue skies. The positive colour scheme is apparent here and it should show the viewer the Helstone the way Margaret describes it in *North and South*: "like a village in a poem." (Gaskell 11) The entire visualisation of Helstone is covered in a soft, yellow-coloured hue to represent warm sunlight. This hue disappears the moment the Hale family is seen traveling in the train that was shown in the opening scene. When the train stops in Milton, the people in the shots are covered in shadows and occasional darkness: the viewer should associate Milton with bad emotions. Valdez and Mehrabian also associated dark colours with activity, and there is also a lot of activity in Milton. (397) These depictions serve to make the viewer understand the negative feelings the characters are experiencing while undergoing cultural mobility: "The North is placed at the centre of the film narrative, and it is codified chromatically through the use of colours and of colour transitions which evoke Margaret's feelings in response to change … Black dominates in this new place were dark-coloured clothing is in perfect tune with personality". (Salis 132)

The first time Margaret meets John Thornton is when she goes to his house to speak to him about renting a residence in Milton. When she cannot find him inside, she goes into his factory and here lies a possibility which a film adaptation can utilise where the original novel could not. When Margaret is in the factory she sees the large number of people working there; the way they work, under what conditions they work, and most significantly, the noise in which they work. Film can give an impression of factory life within a scene

through sound, colour, movement, and angles where a novel must depend on its description. What is more, Margaret does not go into the factory in the original novel, this act is only present in this specific adaptation and is thus the intentional work of the creators of the adaptation. The idea that a Victorian lady, as Margaret perceives and bears herself in the novel, should go wandering around in a factory in a place she does not know, would have been outrageous to contemporary readers of Gaskell. The series' makers added this scene to make the cultural differences explicit and Margaret is therefore free to experience that which creates that difference between the north and the south in its most absolute form.

The adaptation uses the part in the novel where Margaret is walking through Milton while the factory bells ring and all the workers come out into the streets to emphasise the hostility Margaret is feeling towards Milton and its culture. The scene begins with Margaret walking alone down a set of stairs enclosed by grim walls. The stairs are covered in darkness and the major lighting is coming from behind Margaret at the opening of the stairs. Suddenly men and woman appear at the top of the stairs, they are loud, aggressive, and impudent and Margaret is overwhelmed. The colours of the scene are bleak, the clothing of the workers is bleak and dirty, and their behaviour is unlike anything Margaret has experienced. The cultural difference between the north and the south, or the difference in representation between dark, coarse Milton and the green, sunny Helstone as shown before, is distinct.

North and South: Episode Two

In the second episode of the miniseries the Thorntons are giving a dinner party and Margaret Hale and her father are invited. The party is the complete opposite of the London party that was shown in the first episode. The colours used in the interior of the Thornton residence are sober and the clothes worn by the partygoers are mainly dark, as all the men wear black jackets and the women limit themselves to plain colours. The lighting within the house, by candles, is also gloomy in comparison to London where there were candles everywhere and the overall light was warm and glowing. The visualisation of Milton has the deliberate effect of being less inviting, less casual, and less familiar to the viewer than the visualisation of Helstone or London. Clearly the viewer must experience Milton as Gaskell first describes it through from Margaret's eyes: "whirled over long, straight, hopeless streets of regularly-built houses". (Gaskell 55) The fact that the story is mostly located in Milton has an influence on how much of the industrial town the viewer sees. Milton is present in the novel in the descriptions of the street environment and in that of several house interiors, but in the series Milton is constantly present as the background for more than three quarters of all the series.

The viewer is constantly reminded of the grim surroundings in which the characters live. This is evidence of a difference in possibilities between novel and film. Again, the novel has to rely on the reader's imagination, where film must rely on predetermined images: "it is ruled that, among other things, novels are verbal and use words while films are visual and rely on images … cinema and television rely on realism while literature requires the reader's imagination." (Geraghty 1-2) The Hale's move towards Milton has brought about an obvious change in environment and culture as represented in the series. The literal movement has resulted in despondency for Margaret especially.

North and South: Episode Three

Margaret visits the Great Exhibition with her aunt and cousin in the television series. The Great Exhibition is not featured in the novel, but the series uses it to take Margaret away from Milton in order to gain perspective, as an opportunity to bring about another confrontation between Margaret and John Thornton, and to show that industrialisation is a good thing. As Salis argues, the addition of a location such as the Great Exhibition serves as a recognition point for viewers as they associate the place with the height of Victorianism: "Though added, this scene does not disrupt the politics of the author: set in 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, it translates and remediates Gaskell's tale for a contemporary audience, suggesting the possibility of a different and equal dialectic between men and women." (141) What is more, as Salis points out, the meeting of Margaret and Thornton at the Exhibition creates equality. Both characters have their cultural roots in a different place and are therefore meeting on neutral ground. Scholl reinforces the idea that the Great Exhibition serves as a recognisable and familiar historical space if the series wishes to be fully accessible to a modern audience: "Significant scenes in *North and South* occur in areas visually recognizable as Victorian; the mill, the slums, the parlour, and the Great Exhibition allow for recreation of the concerns of Gaskell's novel that do not alter the twenty-first-century audience's expectations." (210) The location of the Great Exhibition in the series serves as a contact zone, which according to Greenblatt is marked by "inter-cultural contact". (251) This is evident in the meeting of southern Margaret and northern Thornton. The intention of the Great Exhibition was to show its visitors the world that was known as "the Empire" and its conquests and progress, which means it clearly had the intention of being a contact-zone. But for Margaret the Exhibition is a contact-zone because it serves an experience that will widen her perspective as she is confronted with the wonders of the world, such as "bears and

elephants, and exotic people, and inventions from all over the Empire", but also with the clashing opinions of Henry Lennox and Mr Thornton. (Percival, Episode Three)

The Great Exhibition scene is not long, but the colours of the exhibits are indeed "exotic", as Aunt Shaw calls it. (Percival, Episode Three) The lighting is bright, as can be expected within a building made of glass, but it gives the scene a luminous appearance, and the contrast with the scenes in Milton that come before and after that of the Great Exhibition is therefore even greater. The representation of different cultures through location is used in episode three of *North and South* to create contrast, perhaps even to take the viewer away from the ever constant Milton. The addition of the Great Exhibition as a location is a modern addition that serves to create a position of equality for John Thornton and Margaret Hale. Modern viewers may feel a greater need for equality between male and female characters than their Victorian counterparts and the Great Exhibition presents the viewer with an opportunity for this equality.

North and South: Episode Four

The last episode of the series is marked by Margaret's return to London and later to Helstone after her father dies. The viewer is taken from icy Milton to the large London residence of her aunt. Margaret travels to Helstone with Mr Bell and there the sun shines and it must at least be spring because everything is in full bloom. Within a minute the series goes through the seasons and moves the characters through three different cultures. The colours in the scenes from Milton to London to Helstone become successively lighter and more vivid starting with dark Milton and ending with radiant Helstone. The scenes should give the viewer the overall impression that they are moving to a better place, but Margaret puts into words that she feels the opposite, as was Gaskell's intention. The series shows the "reality", whereas the novel can influence the reader's feelings on and visualisation of both Helstone and London through description: the series has chosen to keep the representation of Milton, London, and Helstone the same even after Margaret has lost her idolisation of Helstone. The cultural change that Margaret undergoes, being among the northern culture now, is thus not visible through actual visualisation or representation of place in the series, but through words and opinions of characters.

When Margaret hears of Thornton's bankruptcy in the series, she goes to visit Milton and she is seen wandering through his deserted factory. The series has once again chosen to place Margaret on a factory floor where male authority is rule, in contrast to the original novel. The loss of work in the factory represents the loss of the northern industrial culture as

the culture cannot prosper or live without the support of a conscientious master. The scene is interchanged with images from the time when the factory was working successfully to emphasise the difference. Not only do the different images of success and failure demonstrate the contrast, but so does the silence that rules the closed factory interchanged with the sound of a multitude of working machines, even though the sound and imaginary last a few seconds. Geragthy explains that "all adaptations have to make decisions about how to make changes from the original source" and this can be related to "social factors outside the text." (26) In the case of the 2004 series, the factor of male and female equality plays a role in the representation of culture, and Margaret's presence in the Victorian factory is the major instrument in creating this equality. Furthermore, cultural mobility is represented through Margaret's return to Milton where she visits an empty factory and is there confronted with the possible loss of the northern culture, which is bad: the disappearance of industrialism from this factory suggest the disappearance of the culture that belongs to it and Margaret is made aware of this by traveling from London to Milton, thus undergoing literal movement.

The *North and South* series ends with a scene where Margaret and Thornton are traveling by train. The scene resembles the opening scene of the series in the first episode where Margaret is seen traveling by train with her family. Salis explains that it was the idea of the series' writer to move away from the social conventions of the original novel: "Welch follows Gaskell's circular narrative pattern but shifts the emphasis from the social conventions in the novel to the railway and its significance in terms of cultural change and its impact on the characters' private lives." (131) A modern audience is not opposed to intimacy between characters on screen, in contrast to the original novel where Gaskell subtly refers to "some time of delicious silence", in which the reader is free to draw their own conclusions. (Gaskell 403) The modern adaptation is therefore free to end with the scenes between Margaret and Thornton, where they embrace and kiss, and here lies another difference between the Victorian novel and its adaptation. The train also represents progress, or as Salis states, "a symbol of mobility and mutability". (131) The series uses the train to enable movement and facilitate contact between the north and the south, and change is here thus often associated with a journey by train. (Salis 132) Train travel literally represents cultural mobility, first in the Hale's movement from the south to the north, and finally in Margaret's movement back to Milton as she has accepted the northern culture and wishes to adopt it as her own. Another important detail to note is the fact that Margaret and Thornton meet at the train station half way between Helstone and Milton: this represents an equal alteration of

opinion and values for Margaret and Thornton, and it signifies that neither place, and thus neither the southern nor the northern culture, is superior

Our Mutual Friend: Episode One

The "dust" heaps that surround Mr Boffin's house, called the Bower, set the scene for Mr and Mrs Boffin's entrance into the series *Our Mutual Friend* (1998). The colours of the scene are mostly grey, as the waste is grey, the colours in the workers' clothes are mostly grey, the house is grey, and the sky is grey. As Valdez and Mehrabian explained, the colour grey is regarded as bad and therefore the scene can be said to be associated with miserable circumstances. (397) The scene afterwards, inside the Bower where Mr and Mrs Boffin hear of their new acquired fortune, is cast in shadows and the dark colours are furthermore accentuated by the black clothes of the three people present. The working class culture to which Mr and Mrs Boffin belong as represented through their living conditions seems at first glance hostile and harsh. The scene that introduces the culture to which Bella Wilfer belongs is cast in the same darkness that overshadowed the Boffin's scene. However, the Wilfer house, in contrast to the Bower, is illuminated by daylight coming through large windows in several corners of the house. This lighting results in darkness covering the front of the shots and light coming from behind the significant dark objects and subjects in the form of furniture and people. It is as if the light represents hope in the scenes and it can therefore be said that the lower middle class culture to which Bella belongs has hope embedded in it. The lower middle class culture is thus represented as more favourable than the working class culture.

Our Mutual Friend: Episode Two

It becomes obvious that the Boffins and Bella Wilfer have moved into a new, luxurious house through a garden party scene. The scene is full of rich people in colourful clothes and it is daylight. The colours in the interior of the house are not dark, in comparison to both Mr Boffin and Bella's previous homes, but mostly white with colourful decorations. The contrast between the representation of lower class and that of the high class culture is compelling. High class culture society is represented as colourful to a lavish extent and there are always people who are eating. This may seem like a minor consequence, but underlying this small gesture is the idea that the rich indulge themselves excessively and even more in the company of others for show and out of greed, as Dickens described them in the novel.

There is no sign of literal movement from either the Boffins or Bella until Bella goes to visit her father. They travel in a fancy coach from Mr Wilfer's office, which is situated within a small shared office building in a simple street, to several places amongst which are a villa with a symmetrical garden and an elegant restaurant near the riverside of the Thames. The scenes in which Bella and her father spend a day sightseeing are underscored by cheerful music and are intended to give the viewer a pleasing feeling. The shots are full of movement as Bella and her father are seen walking, running, joking, and observing their surroundings without hardly any conversation. These scenes can be said to represent a certain limbo for Bella Wilfer: she uses her high class culture to bring her and her father from place to place in the form of a coach and money to pay for such traveling, but she also spends the day with her father, who is a representative of his lower middle class culture and who provides simple and free entertainment. As Greenblatt would say, there is a meeting of different cultures here and it disrupts the presumed cultural path of Bella Wilfer: after this day with her father she is sad to leave him and she begins to change her ideas on her position and her behaviour: Bella begins to doubt the cultural values of high class society. (252) The day thus leads to movement in ideas and opinions as well, as Greenblatt mentions, and the strength of the scenes with Bella and her father lies in the silence of the characters which forces the viewer to focus on Bella's show of emotion. (250) Visualisation instead of conversation is used to create understanding of and development in a character and it thus marks the change that cultural mobility has brought about in Bella Wilfer. Geraghty explains that the omission of narrative does not threaten the legitimacy of the adaptation, as the visuals are linked to a character's motif rather than to narrative, and this even reinforces the "quintessence of Dickensness", or his description of characters and places that have made him so famous. (26) Culture is represented through visuals instead of through words and the difference between novel and film becomes clear here. However, as Geragthy said, the work of Dickens is filled with descriptions of characters and locations, and hence the film has a rich, but also established source to draw from.

Our Mutual Friend: Episode Three and Four

Voigts-Virchow indicates the adaptation's symbolical equating of the characters' emotions and mental states with the sets of the series. (144) He continues by saying: "This is particularly evident in the serial's treatment of space in combination with lighting techniques". (Voigts-Virchow 114) This use of lighting and space has become obvious through the analysis of the previous episodes, but it is very cleverly done in one of the scenes

where Mr Boffin deliberately degrades Mr Rokesmith in front of Bella. The scene is set in a room in the Boffin residence, fully decorated, and in the middle of the room stands a dark wooden desk behind which Mr Boffin is seated. Rokesmith stands with his back to the viewer on the other side of the desk, opposite of Mr Boffin. When Mr Boffin stands up, both men are seen on either side of the frame with the desk in between them, behind which is an open door. The wall behind Mr Rokesmith is lit by a window, while the wall behind Mr Boffin is darker in colour because natural light reaches that corner with difficulty. In this manner Mr Boffin and Mr Rokesmith are situated like a painting where good and evil face each other. The scene must represent Bella's feelings while she observes the humiliating situation unfolding itself. The high class culture represented here in Mr Boffin is thus depicted as unpleasant and even malevolent, while Mr Rokesmith, who represents the lower middle class, is represented as oppressed but enduring. Mr Boffin proves himself to be changed by cultural mobility and it reflects poorly on him.

The first time Bella openly proves that she is changing her opinion on wealth and on Mr Boffin's conduct towards Mr Rokesmith is when she and Rokesmith are wandering by a bridge somewhere in a green landscape. The trees are in bloom and the water beneath the bridge can be heard and seen. The cultural mobility of metaphorical notions, or in other words the shift in ideas and opinions, of Bella is represented as a positive consequence through the depiction of mostly green colours. (Greenblatt 250-251) Valdez explained that the colour green, like the colour blue, is associated with good, and therefore it can be said that cultural mobility now has a positive effect on Bella Wilfer. (397) The same use of a natural, green background to indicate positive cultural mobility happens when Bella has married Mr Rokesmith and they visit the park together with her father. Like the previous sequence with Mr Wilfer in episode two, the scene is without conversation, and the trio wanders, jokes, and rests happily in a green park. Bella has made the cultural move back towards the lower middle class and it can be concluded from the representation of this cultural mobility that it is a positive move.

Another literal movement occurs when Bella is finally taken back to the Boffin's to reveal the humbling scheme she was subjected to. The coach in which Bella and Rokesmith are seated is seen approaching the Boffin residence, and a little later Bella and Rokesmith are seen walking through the house. The weather is clear and sunny, and the colours of the house interior are bright. Bella has now undergone her final cultural move back into the higher classes. The representation of the move is positive in colour and lighting, and this confirms the idea that Bella's cultural mobility is at an end and she is in her rightful place.

Conclusion

Cultural mobility is mainly represented in the adaptations *North and South* (2004) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1998) through the use of colour in background and scenery, and through the use of particular lighting to change the time of day or location, or to accentuate characters or moods. Colour and lighting are used to represent a place as hostile, for example in the outdoor stairs scene in *North and South* and in first the representation of the Bower in *Our Mutual Friend*, or as place that represents safety and happiness, such as in the representation of Helstone in *North and South* and in the representation of the Boffin manor in *Our Mutual Friend.* The major difference between novel and film becomes apparent through this use of visuals, namely the fact that novels must be interpreted by the reader through their imagination, while film will show the viewer a distinct interpretation of the novel, thus leaving little room for imagination. However, film can easily influence a viewer through visuals, because that which is seen can be characterised in such a way as to almost control a viewer's feelings while watching it. A novel must describe the characters and their feelings, or the locations, and assume the reader will interpret the words in the desired way. The visual representation of cultural mobility in the discussed adaptations thus depends primarily on colour and lighting schemes of the scenes: light colours indicating pleasant culture or positive mobility within culture or from one culture to another, and dark colours suggest harmful culture or movement towards or in bad culture.

In the *North and South* series, the influence of modern contemporary culture is more present through visualisation than in *Our Mutual Friend*, where no significant modern change could be detected. Margaret's presence within the factory in Milton symbolises a certain equality between her and John Thornton. The addition of scenes that depict equality in *North and South* (2004) derive from the twenty-first century attitude towards equality between men and women. The scenes located at the Great Exhibition should be seen as having the same effect because the location functions as a neutral place where Margaret and John are equal in cultural advantage, or rather disadvantage, as both characters associate themselves with another culture than the one which is most prevalent in London. *Our Mutual Friend* (1998) does not include gender issues in the same way as *North and South* (2004), which may be the result of a difference in time: there is nearly a ten-year difference between the adaptations and this may lead to the emphasising of different cultural issues. The visual representation of cultural mobility is also less obvious in the adaptation of *Our Mutual Friend* (1998) in comparison to the adaptation of *North and South* (2004). There is little literal movement to which the characters can react, or where the visuals can change to indicate the move, and the

cultural mobility is only seen once the characters have already undergone the transition. This leads to a less elaborate representation of cultural mobility through visualisation, and what is more, the major difference in representation of class culture in *Our Mutual Friend* (1998) is seen through the comparison of all characters and locations in the series. Rachel Carroll points out that the adaptation chose realism over the many caricatural descriptions of Dickens, which lead to a depiction of Victorian life that is much darker and naturalistic than in the novel: the adaptation "emphasizes realism at the expense of the more carnivalesque aspects of Dickens's prose … which represents a darker, more realist Dickens, focusing on the gloomier aspects of Dickens's world and foregoing the wildly caricatured characters and absurdity of Dickens's imagination for a bleaker, more naturalistic representation of the period." (118) To understand culture in *Our Mutual Friend* one would do better to compare all the characters of the adaptation and their representation of culture to one another: however, this research would rather entail cultural representation instead of the representation of cultural mobility.

General Conclusion

The main research question of this thesis was as follow: How do the main characters in the novels *North and South* (1854) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) represent the opposite cultures belonging to the north and the south, and to high and low class, and how are the cultures of the mobile characters affected by the cultures they move into? The result of the research gave an insight into cultural differences in mid-Victorian Great Britain mainly through the depiction of class. The issues in both the novels that derive from cultural differences can be based on class distinction. The idea that, in *North and South*, the south represents the "old" and the north represents "modernity" is established through associating the south with old class distinctions while the north is associated with new class distinctions. For example, the northern culture finds independence and diligence more important than how much wealth a person has, while the southern culture puts emphasis on the idea that idleness is a trait belonging to the aristocracy and therefore good. It can be said that in *North and South*, Margaret Hale represents the south as an idle, elegant, and privileged culture, while John Thornton represents the north as a practical, independent, and industrious culture. Margaret's southern culture is affected by Thornton's northern culture through confrontation with lucrative thinking, modern technology, and progressive conflict, leaving Margaret completely altered in a way that symbolises her acceptance and adoption of the honest and diligent northern culture while retaining the charitable and moralistic characteristics of her southern culture.

In *Our Mutual Friend* the question of class does not depend on "old" or "new", but rather on "good" and "bad" class distinction. The lower working classes are placed opposite of the highest classes of society, and the characteristics of both class cultures are weighed against each other. Mr and Mrs Boffin represent the honest, simple, and virtuous lower working class culture, even after their move into high society, while Bella Wilfer represents high class culture, first as selfish and greedy, but later too as honest, and ethical. Mr and Mrs Boffin are relatively unchanged by their cultural mobility, as they retain all the characteristics of their beneficial working class culture, without adopting particular characteristics of high class culture besides living grander, or according to their means. Bella Wilfer, on the other hand, is altered by high class culture because initially it indulges her materialism. When she is confronted with the depraved consequences of materialism in Mr Boffin's character, the alteration is complete and she renounces the high class culture to symbolise the transmission of low class cultural values from the Boffins to Bella Wilfer as a result of cultural mobility.

The representation of cultural mobility in the adaptations was analysed with the use of visuals of culture rather than through words, and thus in the case of the adaptations, not through the conversations or dialogues of the major characters. Cultural mobility in the adaptations *North and South* (2004) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1998) is represented through the use of bright or light colours for positive mobility, and dark or bleak colours to indicate negative mobility or negative consequences of mobility. Lighting is also used to represent cultural mobility, and the viewer must associate dark, shadow-covered scenes with the bad influence of cultural mobility, while sunny and illuminated scenes are to be associated with the positive influence of cultural mobility or its consequences. Modern contemporary culture has had an influence on the depiction of gender in *North and South* (2004) as the equality between Margaret Hale and John Thornton is made more visible through the use of locations that were not present in the novel, namely the inside of Thornton's factory and the Great Exhibition. Both places carry cultural representation, and the addition of these locations leads to cultural mobility that concerns itself with equality issues.

The stories *North and South* and *Our Mutual Friend* have in common that cultural mobility is represented in both as good: cultural mobility is the foundation of personal progress in characters and their better understanding of the "other", as well as resulting in a moral attitude towards deserving others which leads to improvement of society as a whole. Both stories also concern themselves with the debate on how wealth and authority should be properly used, and cultural mobility facilitates not only the different perspectives on this, but also the eventual moralistic combination of favourable cultural characteristics, as the merging of cultures has a positive outcome. Lastly, as mentioned before, *North and South* and *Our Mutual Friend* have in common that the cultural differences are the result of class distinctions and definitions. The stories differ in their form of cultural mobility, as *North and South* is concerned with geographical differences, or mobility through place, while *Our Mutual Friend* is concerned with difference in station and thus has mobility through class. They also differ in their representation of culture, as *North and South* does not make a particular distinction between good and bad cultures: both represented cultures are equal in their positive and negative characteristics, where as *Our Mutual Friend* does: the lower class culture is clearly represented as superior over high class culture through comparison of characteristics. Lastly, cultural mobility causes alteration in the mobile culture and as well the stationary culture in *North and South*, while the mobile culture in *Our Mutual Friend* is only partly altered. It is even possible to say, however, that this is not the case as Charles Dickens

clearly indicates that Bella Wilfer, who represents the altered culture, did not undergo alteration but rather returned to her true identity and thus the culture belonging to it.

For further research, I would suggest the analysation of how the northern industrial culture is represented over time to understand where and how the common opinion changed and turned from seeing the culture as lucrative and harsh to seeing the culture as positive and superior over the traditional southern culture, if this happened at all. *North and South* is already about the discussion on cultural values and the consequences of industrialism, but it would be interesting to find more material, particularly novels, that represent the shift in representation.

In the end, the message that the novels *North and South* (1854) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) and their adaptations purvey, is that cultural mobility is not a bad thing, and neither is adapting to a new culture, as long as our morals do not suffer for it.

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