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# Adapting fragmentation: changing borders in *Olive Kitteridge* (HBO 2014); *Case Histories*, (BBC 2011-2013); *Love and Friendship* (2016) and *Sanditon* (ITV 2019)

Armelle Parey

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- 1 Text and film are typically framed by liminal spaces or borders where the reader or viewer enters and/or leaves the narrative world, i.e. openings and endings. Generally speaking, openings introduce the reader to the narrative world,<sup>1</sup> while endings negotiate the separation with the reader or viewer (Hock 67). Narrative endings are particularly significant because they constitute the ultimate moment when the reader or viewer retrospectively takes stock of the whole work to assign meaning, where the text achieves its definitive shape. As Mariana Torgovnick puts it, “novels do have form and meanings, and endings are crucial in achieving them” (4). Moreover, not only is the genre of the work determined by its ending (Aristotle 1453a) but this final border also indicates the *zeitgeist* as well as the author's position regarding the literary conventions and ideology of the times, both in terms of form or aesthetics and content.<sup>2</sup> This explains why subsequent novelists or screenwriters may feel the need to go beyond the initial closure of well-known novels or classics through sequels in order to offer a new ending.<sup>3</sup> It also accounts for the significance of the adaptation of these endings to the screen as final chapters or scenes are rewritten, radically changing the end – as in Hitchcock and Selznick's 1940 adaptation of *Rebecca* that foregrounds the couple's reunion to satisfy the Hays code, in contrast to du Maurier's ending, described by the novelist herself as “a bit brief and a bit grim” (Forster 135) – or making obvious what was initially merely alluded to or left undecided (as in *The House of Mirth* where Terence Davies does away with the ambiguity regarding Lily Bart's death at the end of Edith Wharton's novel).<sup>4</sup>

- 2 Some novels, however, do not possess these marked endings, lacking some form of closure devised and penned by the author. Those unfinished novels deprived of an ending by their author's death can therefore be considered as “fortuitous fragments” (Moseley 5) of uncompleted wholes – and subsequent novelists or screenwriters may then seek to complete the fragment. Such is the case, for instance, of *Emma Brown* (2003), a fragment by Charlotte Brontë continued by Clare Boylan. Conversely, endings may be considered to be multiple when the text is deliberately made up of several narratives that visibly appear as fragments of a whole. Even if they are not “*militantly fragmentary novels*” (Moseley 8), this is the case for polyphonous epistolary novels, devoid of a unifying voice, or for short-story cycles which multiply stories – often in the same setting or with recurring characters – and thus (intermediary) endings, ultimately offering a fragmentary portrait. Whether accidental (due to the author's death) or deliberate, such texts are formally and thematically fragmented and fragmentary, that is to say marked by “incompleteness, discontinuity and heterogeneity” (Guignery and Drag xxi).
- 3 What happens to the sense of fragmentation, to these missing endings or multiple borders when the texts are adapted to the screen? What is the impact of having the borders of the text created or renegotiated when a fragment or a partially fragmentary text is adapted to the screen, be it as film or as TV mini-series, which both usually deliver narrative wholes and completed stories? On the one hand, generally speaking, fragments left by writers at their death do not generate the same interest as their completed works; on the other, said fragmentary writing does not necessarily enjoy the popularity of more classic linear writing. In both cases, this makes these texts less likely candidates for adaptation to the screen, unless they are given an ending or their fragmentation is toned down or adapted to a new narrative format to make them more pleasing and acceptable to a new and larger audience.
- 4 We shall first look at how fragmentation may be smoothed out to merge into a more comfortable (and generically coherent) whole through the example of two TV mini-series produced in the 2010s, each based on diversely fragmented yet successful source texts: Elizabeth Strout's Pulitzer Prize-winning short story cycle *Olive Kitteridge*, adapted by HBO (2014); and the novel-sequence centering on protagonist Jackson Brodie, created by the popular and critically acclaimed author Kate Atkinson, and adapted by the BBC as *Case Histories* (2011-2013). Our second part will examine the first adaptations of two of Jane Austen's texts that stand outside the Austenian canon and are both fragmentary for different reasons – her early epistolary novel *Lady Susan* and the unfinished *Sanditon* – and focus on their added or adapted endings. While Jane Austen's six completed novels have all been adapted to the screen with great fanfare, making Austen adaptations synonymous with a romantic happy ending that was initially discrete at best if not downright dubious (see Parey 2016), the situation appears to be different in Whit Stillmann's *Love and Friendship* (2016) and Andrew Davies's *Sanditon* (ITV 2019), suggesting that changing or adapting borders and endings can also free adaptation from the conventions of a (sub)genre and fixed expectations.
- 5 This article will thus focus on two different processes of adaptation: on the one hand, how the fragmented dimension of the source-text is ironed out into a new shape for new effects, and on the other, the closural dimension or ending added in film or TV adaptations of texts which are initially unfinished or fragmented in some way.

## I. Merging the text into a new narrative format: *Olive Kitteridge* (HBO 2014) and *Case Histories* (BBC 2011-2013)

- 6 Elizabeth Strout's Pulitzer-Prize winning *Olive Kitteridge* (2008) contains 13 stories, all set in an imaginary community in Maine. The character of Olive Kitteridge either appears as one of the protagonists or as a secondary character or a minor figure in the background of several independent unrelated stories with closed endings and a few recurring characters. Even though it tends to be marketed as a novel and a textual whole,<sup>5</sup> *Olive Kitteridge* is a non-linear volume which would be more accurately described as a composite novel – “a literary work composed of shorter texts that though individually complete and autonomous are interrelated in a coherent whole according to one or more organizing principles” (Dunn and Morris 2) – or a “short story cycle”, as defined by Susan Mann:

the stories are both self-sufficient and interrelated. On the one hand, the stories work independently of one another: the reader is capable of understanding each of them without going beyond the limits of the individual story. On the other hand, however, the stories work together, creating something that could not be achieved in a single story. [...] The ability of the story cycle to extend discussions – to work on a larger scale – resembles what is accomplished in the novel (15).<sup>6</sup>

- 7 Elizabeth Strout's work was adapted to the screen by HBO in 2014 with Frances McDormand as the title character.<sup>7</sup> With the change of format, the fragmented structure of Strout's book somewhat disappears in the HBO adaptation, as the short-story cycle is turned into a four-part miniseries whose aim is to form a whole, formally closed by an ending: “the seriality of a short-form adaptation exists in service to a pre-determined ending, a completed story” (Wells-Lassagne 31). First of all, the sense of a whole was conveyed by the release method, as summed up by Jodi Brooks: “Billed as ‘a film by Lisa Cholodenko’ in its opening credits and making its premiere at the Venice Film Festival in 2014, the four-episode mini-series, originally screened on HBO in two 2-hour blocks over two consecutive nights, falls somewhere between feature film and short-season television drama” (Brooks 944). Arguably, it is a sense of fragmentation rather than fragmentation itself that is conveyed through the four-part narrative format signaled by the heading of each episode with a title (picked from Strout's book) and through temporal ellipses. In fact, the adaptation performs a “(re-)interpretation and then (re-)creation” (Hutcheon 8), insofar as it refashions the stories into one major narrative centered around the character of Olive. It operates the usual and necessary adaptive simplification, with fewer characters and erased plotlines. Structural complexities are smoothed out, turning the adaptation into a more coherent, less fragmented whole than its source-text. Temporal linearity is reintroduced. For instance, Olive's attraction to her colleague Casey (Peter Mullan), her role as a teacher, and her interaction with the community, all elements that appear in different stories and make the reader go back and forth in time, are now all roped into a chronological narrative that unfolds in sequences that are clearly signaled (for instance, through occasional title cards indicating “One month later” and “Three weeks later”). Rather than adopting the multi-plot structure or format of the “modular narrative”<sup>8</sup> and following the multiple perspectives of the source-text, like the TV mini-series *The Slap*

(ABC, 2011),<sup>9</sup> the HBO mini-series focuses mostly on Olive's viewpoint and occasionally, on her husband Henry's.

- 8 The sense of a macro-narrative, of a whole to be completed, is introduced at the very beginning of the first episode, which opens with an old-looking Olive in the woods with a gun. As she closes her eyes, there is a cut to a black screen before what is clearly indicated as a flashback “twenty-five years earlier”, as intradiegetic music bridges the scenes. Closure at the macro-level is postponed to the end of the series as we do not return to images of old Olive in the woods at the end of episode 1. Delphine Letort thus “argue[s] that the extended narrative format of the miniseries allows a fully-fledged female character to be created that challenges stereotypical views on age and gender” (87). However, a sense of closure is achieved at a micro-level, i.e. at the level of each episode, possibly conveying the idea that we are watching a selection of episodes in Olive's life. On the diegetical and ideological level, the re-shaping of the narrative into a simple structure and its recentering on Olive enables a direct portrait of an ageing female protagonist that questions commonly-held views about older women. From a formal perspective, this re-shaping makes the new narrative fit, to some extent, in the new genre of “female-centred quality TV series” (see Brooks).

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- 9 *Case Histories* is the BBC adaptation of Kate Atkinson's four independent novels published between 2004 and 2011 featuring the character of Jackson Brodie, a private investigator in contemporary Britain. Two seasons of six episodes were released in 2011 and 2013 under the title of the first novel published. The first season adapted *Case Histories*, *One Good Turn* and *When Will There Be Good News?* in six one-hour episodes shown in increments of two one-hour episodes,<sup>10</sup> while the second season adapted Atkinson's then last Brodie novel, *Started Early, Took my Dog*,<sup>11</sup> as well as two original stories based on her character as three independent ninety-minute episodes. As I have argued elsewhere, Atkinson's set of novels forms a sequence rather than a series<sup>12</sup>. Indeed, in Steven Connor's words, “The novel-sequence, which follows through the experiences of a range of characters, sometimes in one setting and period [...] in a number of different, but interconnected novels, is an exercise in world-making” (136). The Brodie novels develop a coherent time progression from one individual book to the next, carefully taking on board what happened previously, which imposes a sense of continuity and of the passing of time as relationships develop and the narratives map the ageing of Jackson and the cast of recurring characters. The Brodie sequence, however, also gestures towards fragmentation because Atkinson's novels are multi-strand narratives that use diverse focalizers. As a result, they juxtapose other characters' perspectives and stories, which means that temporality is upset and the whole conveys a sense of fragmentation. Besides, both Brodie's centrality and function as detective are often challenged as other characters and plotlines develop. In Glenda Norquay's words, Brodie “fulfils the role of the detective but increasingly acts as catalyst for what appears as a series of unfortunate adventures” (135).
- 10 In a similar way to the adaptation of *Olive Kitteridge*, the BBC mini-series streamlines the plots, restores chronology<sup>13</sup> and clearly recenters the narratives around Jackson Brodie, whose detective role is emphasized. The TV adaptation really turns the sequence into a series with appropriate changes to make it fit into the format of the detective series.

Indeed, although Atkinson's four novels were mostly reviewed as “crime fiction”, reviewers always insist on how unlike detective fiction Atkinson's novels are.<sup>14</sup> Conversely, when adapting Atkinson's body of work to the screen, the show has taken pains to turn it into a recognizable detective story format. For instance, while Jackson Brodie no longer is a PI in Atkinson's second novel, its TV adaptation re-asserts his function, starting with Jackson trailing a wife for a jealous husband (as in the very first episode).

- 11 Moreover, reshaping the narrative into a clearly recognizable detective series implies conveying the clear sense of closure that is the hallmark of the genre, and which facilitates its successful reception with a TV audience that could otherwise be disorientated by Atkinson's hybrid or cross-generic creation.
- 12 Overall, Atkinson challenges the reader's expectations with regard to crime solving. Indeed, her novels may ostensibly multiply signs of closure, but they also deliberately leave a few loose ends. For instance, there is no knowing what happens to Caroline/ Michèle in *Case Histories* as she leaves with or without the reverend (374). Moreover, the reader may identify Lily-Rose as Tanya, Michèle's daughter, but the characters do not, and nothing comes of it. However, the TV detective format has other expectations in terms of endings, and the adaptation of Atkinson's novels offers closure on these two points. The timeline of that thread is developed so that Jackson traces Michèle in her new life as a reverend's wife. He also identifies Lily-Rose, and mother and daughter acknowledge each other in the distance. In the TV adaptation, the case is solved at the end of every episode. The initial sense of incompleteness and fragmentation has disappeared, as we are given a more unified narrative with a sense of closure at the end of each story, while the narrative arc of the series stretches over the whole, notably by fleshing out the romantic relationship with Louise and developing Jackson's family life.

## II. Freeing the adaptation from the pressures of genre? Whit Stillmann's *Love and Friendship* (2016) and *Sanditon* (ITV 2019)

- 13 All six novels by Jane Austen have been adapted to the TV and/or cinema screen, once or several times. Adaptations of Austen's comedies of manners often close the borders of the text in the sense that they add more closural signs than are initially present in the source text, notably by reinforcing the romantic happy ending. As Kathryn Sutherland pointed out in 2011, “[c]urrent adaptations are part of the rebranding of Jane Austen as the godmother of twenty-first-century romance” (219-220). Deborah Kaplan devised the concept of “harlequinization” thinking of Jane Austen adaptations whose “focus is on a hero or heroine’s courtship at the expense of other characters” (178).
- 14 Recently, there has been an “expansion of Jane Austen sources beyond the six novels” (Speidel). An early novella in epistolary form, *Lady Susan* is generally believed to have been written in 1793-1794<sup>15</sup>; it was adapted under the title *Love and Friendship* by Whit Stillman, while an adaptation of the fragment *Sanditon*, left unfinished at the writer's death in 1817 and published in Chapman's *Minor Works* in 1925 (Halperin 191)<sup>16</sup> was released by ITV in 2019. Although the texts benefit from Jane Austen's aura, they nevertheless stand apart from the canon, possibly because of their fragmentary nature,



and are not considered,<sup>17</sup> which is significant for their adaptation. Indeed, whilst expectations of fidelity run high for classics, adaptations of *Lady Susan* and *Sanditon* are relatively free from this burden. In Susan Speidel's words, "canonical peripherality invites addition and change" (Speidel), to which we might add that the fragmentary dimension of these texts could be seen as an invitation to change too; both of these elements might account for what may (wrongly) appear to the viewer as un-Austenian endings in these two adaptations.

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- 15 As an epistolary novella, *Lady Susan* is by nature a discontinuous and heterogeneous text in which the reader follows various characters' points of view and narratives of events. The eponymous heroine with whom the novella opens can be summed up as a villain insofar as she connives to further her own interest at the expense of almost everyone around her, including her own child, Frederica. However, Lady Susan is more than that: she is also a young widow who rebels against her circumstances and conventions and mischievously points to society's hypocrisies. Austen's epistolary novella does not end with a letter but with a "conclusion" by a sarcastic extradiegetic narrator who takes over and sums up the final events: by playing along with Lady Susan's apparent solicitude for her daughter, Mrs Vernon manages to secure the return of Frederica at Churchill. Frederica's prospective union with her beloved Reginald, despite his own unrequited love for Lady Susan, is then hinted at in less than romantic terms: "Frederica was [...] fixed in the family of her uncle and aunt till such time as Reginald de Courcy could be talked, flattered and finessed into an affection for her" (Austen 272). If the fragmentary dimension of *Lady Susan* disappears with the letters and is replaced by a narrator, the latter nonetheless fails to introduce a unifying viewpoint, instead mischievously reporting on the deeds of the characters. Interestingly, this "abruptly patched ending" (to use Kathlyn Sutherland's words) is expanded and developed in Whit Stillmann's film adaptation, which adds a scene in order to end on the very wedding that the novel does not describe (between Reginald and Lady Susan's daughter). The visual development of a wedding that is only mentioned, as in Ang Lee's *Sense and Sensibility*, is part of what Kaplan calls the "harlequinization" of Jane Austen's works. Yet it may play a different role in Stillman's adaptation. The wedding is the narrative device by which all the main characters are gathered at the end and the final state of things is established. At the end of Austen's novella,<sup>18</sup> Lady Susan is married to Sir James Martin and the narrator remains vague as to her happiness. The narrator's reserve disappears in the adaptation, which asserts Lady Susan's triumph as she gets out of her carriage to attend her daughter's wedding with her husband and her lover (by whom she is pregnant). The final shots show her framed by these two men, in command of both of them. These alternate with shots of the happy newly-weds and the not so newly-weds whose marriage rests on imbalance and disparity. The brief dialogue between the two slightly ridiculous men, Mr Vernon and Mr de Courcy, about how to refer to Frederica and her singing, may indeed echo an earlier exchange, with Sir Reginald exclaiming, "I find it incomprehensible that so brilliant a woman could marry such a pea-brain or pea's brain" to which Mrs Vernon confidently replies "it happens all the time" as the camera shows his smiling wife. The various types of marriages are thus played against each other, putting that of the newly-weds in perspective. Finally, it is significant that the actual last shot is not of the



young couple but of the party, a typical strategy to signal the film's ending, “a final zooming-out of the fictional world creates distance between the characters and the audience” (Hock 71-72). The final medium long shot features Lady Susan in the background but nevertheless almost at the centre of the screen. In Stillmann's adapted ending to *Lady Susan*, the wedding shown at the end does not so much signify unity and play up the (very limited) romantic dimension of the novel as it playfully points to dysfunctional couples and society's hypocrisy, since nothing in sight dampens Lady Susan's success in securing material security without renouncing her lover.

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- 16 Another text that remains on the margins of the Jane Austen canon is *Sanditon*, left unfinished at the writer's death. When transferred to the screen, it seems that fragments or unfinished novels are rarely if ever adapted as such but are usually given an ending. Examples include Elizabeth Gaskell's *Wives and Daughters* (1864) in the screenplay by Andrew Davies (BBC 1999), Harold Pinter's scenario for Elia Kazan's 1976 adaptation of Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon* (1941), and – possibly the most famous unfinished novel – Charles Dickens's *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870), which was given a resolution by Gwyneth Hughes in the 2012 BBC adaptation.<sup>19</sup>
- 17 Jane Austen's *Sanditon* is no exception, as this unfinished piece of 12 chapters and about 24,000 words was expanded by Andrew Davies into a screenplay that offered material for eight one-hour episodes. The fragment left by Austen<sup>20</sup> suits all the requirements of a film according to Georges Justice: “With its focus on the exterior, dialogue, and strong characterization, *Sanditon* might provide the basis for an excellent motion picture” (162).<sup>21</sup> *Sanditon* is the title given by Austen's brother, who acted as her literary executor. Initially entitled “The Brothers”, this fragment introduces a rather large cast of characters in the context of the potential development of a bathing spa, a town in the process of reaching its shape, seen through the eyes of Charlotte Heywood. Austen's piece is unfinished in terms of the unfolding of the story but also of the fleshing out of the characters. This unfinished status raises several interesting questions in terms of its adaptation. The TV series develops the beginnings of Charlotte and other characters introduced by Austen into what Gérard Genette calls a “proleptic continuation” (177), which imposes a coherence with the existing text: “the hypertext must constantly remain continuous with its hypotext, which it must merely bring to its prescribed and appropriate conclusion” (162). But it is also constrained by another dimension: for John Ellis, as a rule, “[t]he adaptation trades upon the memory of the novel, a memory that can derive from actual reading or, as is more likely with a classic of literature, a generally circulated cultural memory” (3). *Sanditon*, however, is less well-known and does not enjoy the same popularity as Austen's finished novels<sup>22</sup> and the text is therefore not really part of the “generally circulated cultural memory” Ellis mentions. It nevertheless benefits from Austen's aura, whilst clearly conflating adaptation and creation, intertextuality and intermediality, since Austen's text provides actual material only for the first half of one of the eight one-hour-long episodes. In fact, Andrew Davies's adaptation of *Sanditon* takes its place in a long line of screenplays by the same screenwriter and is duly inspired by other Austen novels and adaptations. If “[t]he process of recall is [...] to the fore when a classic adaptation is offered to the audience” (Geraghty 16), *Sanditon*'s references are to previous adaptations as much as

to Austen's novels. As Deborah Cartmell notes, "Since it came out, every cultural reference to Jane Austen, and every adaptation, has had as much to do with Andrew Davies as it does with Austen" (Barber). Indeed, Davies' *Sanditon* seems to be teasingly referring to his BBC *Pride and Prejudice* when he has Sidney Parker emerge naked from the sea in front of Charlotte Heywood, echoing Mr Darcy's encounter with Elizabeth Bennet after a swim. In *Sanditon*, there is no ending to adapt but all the other borders are crossed as the TV series can be seen as a mashup of all Austen's novels and adaptations: like Catherine Morland, Charlotte in Austen's *Sanditon* belongs to a loving but numerous family and is invited to a resort. The relationship between the main couple (Charlotte Heywood and Sidney Parker) in Davies's version is based on that of Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet. In her cast of characters, Austen included a rich West Indian heiress "about seventeen, half Mulatto, chilly and tender" (Austen 373) but one also notes echoes of "the 1990s adaptation of *Mansfield Park* [that] envisions the Jane Austen novel 'through' postcolonial critique à la Said" (Stam 42) in the clear statements about slavery and British wealth acquired in the West Indies through colonization. In the end, Sidney Parker marries for wealth and against his heart, like Willoughby in *Sense and Sensibility* (but Sidney Parker is redeemed in a way that Willoughby is not, insofar as he gets engaged to a rich heiress in order to save his brother from bankruptcy). This adaptation is thus definitely palimpsestuous and intermedial, with other adaptations forming the various layers.

- 18 To some of the audience's dismay, the TV series features no happy ending this time, and a petition was launched on change.org because "The finale of *Sanditon* (series 1) was unfair, unjust, and unsatisfying. It doesn't end like a true Austen adaptation – it feels like it's ended halfway through the series."<sup>23</sup> The reference to "true Austen adaptation" confirms the notion that the "knowing" audience (Hutcheon) may be one that is familiar with previous Austen adaptations that favored "harlequinization" (Kaplan) at least as much as with the source-texts and introduces the idea of the Austen adaptation subgenre.
- 19 Endings are a sign of the times and this non-romantic ending in *Sanditon* could be the sign of a new way of reading Austen, at least on behalf of film-makers. Greenfield and Troost have indeed hinted at a change in Austen adaptations, pointing to the vlog *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* and other situation-comedy-style appropriations like the web series *Emma Approved* (2013) but also to Stillman's *Love and Friendship*, "that captured a satiric Austen, an Austen the nineteenth century would have recognized". Greenfield and Troost conclude: "Admittedly, the audience for snarky Austen is still smaller than that for romantic Austen", but there is a "tendency for some of the popular media today to acknowledge her complexity – as romantic but also as satiric". (Granted, the screenwriter and producers of ITV's *Sanditon* had actually planned to expand their adaptation into a "season 2".) The earlier-mentioned expectations of fidelity regarding classics that "undermine the possibility of creating a follow-up" (Joseph and Letort 112) thus seemingly do not apply to Austen's fragment, possibly because, as mentioned above, it is located in the margins of the Austen canon. However, the liberty afforded to screenwriters and producers by this status was not meant to lead to an iconoclastic ending but to more hours of television. *Sanditon* was left ending-less, which makes the possibilities for continuation endless...until the expected ending is reached. Ironically, the result is that ITV's 2019 *Sanditon* is *de facto* open-ended, original, and truly Austenian, hinting at a dark reality in which economic necessities are not eventually

smoothed out by romantic unions, a reality closer to Austen's world than to her own representations of it.

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- 20 When adapted to the screen, the fragmentation and inherent heterogeneity that may characterize the source text tends to be flattened or, in the case of “fortuitous” fragments, texts without endings, to be filled in and completed. The conventions of genre are paramount to the process of adaptation for the latter to find its audience – and keep it in the form of a series. The fragmentary nature of a source-text can thus be smoothed out or displaced to fit into a genre on screen. Both *Olive Kitteridge* and *Case Histories* illustrate how adaptation may mean displacing or cancelling borders to fit the narratives into a simpler and unified format and/or an accepted genre, with the overall re-centering on an individual protagonist.
- 21 Adaptations as products may have their own genre conventions as well. Indeed, a romantic ending is generally considered to be the hallmark of a Jane Austen adaptation: *Love and Friendship* and *Sanditon*, both by virtue of their being on the borders of the Austen canon and of their fragmentary nature, diverge from the norm and offer refreshing perspectives on the novelist's work, whose deep irony and awareness of economics in the affairs of the heart, for once, is not toned down at the end. All examples confirm the centrality of the question of the ending in the interpretation of a work.

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## NOTES

1. See Andrea Del Lungo's work on openings in novels.
2. In Guy Larroux's words, "If it is true that convention determines a novel's conclusion, it is also true that this is undoubtedly the part of the novel where we can best observe the novelist's opposition to conventional models, and where we best recognize the impact of the author's time." ["S'il est vrai que la convention gouverne les dénouements romanesques, il n'en reste pas moins que c'est probablement aussi la

partie du livre où l'on aperçoit le mieux le travail de contestation (des modèles convenus précisément), et où l'on saisit le mieux le signe des temps.” (Larroux, 9). Author’s translation.]

3. See, for instance, Emma Tennant's *Pemberley, or Pride and Prejudice Continued* (1993) and *Emma in Love* (1996), P.D. James's *Death Comes to Pemberley* (2011), Susan Hill's *Mrs de Winter* (1993), a sequel to Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*, or John Banville's *Mrs Osmond* (2017) that recounts the life of Henry James's Isabel Archer in *Portrait of a Lady*.

4. On the particular issue of the adaptation of endings, see the essays collected in *Adapting Endings from Books to Screen* (2020), edited by Armelle Parey and Shannon Wells-Lassagne.

5. For instance, the back cover to my edition foregrounds the role of Olive and refers only to “the story of Olive Kitteridge”.

6. Merritt Moseley calls the phenomenon a “mosaic” and looks at it from the opposite perspective, using the term “to describe a novel composed of fragments each of which is a narrative effectively complete in itself (Moseley in Guignery and Drag 13).

7. The four-episode series was directed by Lisa Cholodenko and received 8 Prime time Emmy Awards.

8. “The modular narrative, in its anthology form, consists of a series of shorter tales which are apparently disconnected but turn out to share the same diegetic space” (Cameron 14). Examples include Jim Jarmush's *Mystery Train* (1989), Robert Altman's *Short Cuts* (1993) and Paul Thomas Anderson's *Magnolia* (1999).

9. The mini-series is based on Australian writer Christos Tsiolkas's *The Slap* (2008).

10. The TV series, which relocates the narratives in Edinburgh and its vicinity, won the BAFTA Scotland for Television Drama in 2011.

11. Atkinson has since added *Big Sky* to the Brodie Sequence (2019).

12. See Armelle Parey, *Kate Atkinson*, Routledge, forthcoming)

13. For instance, *When Will There Be Good News?* opens with the triple murder committed by Andrew Jones whereas the TV series has Brodie narrate the murder to Reggie afterwards.

14. Philip Oakes's review of *Case Histories* in the crime fiction section of *Literary Review* (Sept 2004) is a case in point: “Welcome to the most original, engaging private eye to perk up in British crime fiction for many a year [...] *Case Histories* is light years away from your average crime novel”.

15. It is not particularly well-regarded by critics, notably being described as “a discontinued short novel in letters [...] with an abruptly patched ending” (Kathryn Sutherland).

16. It had appeared earlier, in 1871, but “in a truncated form” (Southam 55).

17. Halperin tells us that *Sanditon* was mostly ignored by critics.

18. “Whether Lady Susan was, or was not happy in her second Choice – I do not see how it can ever be ascertained – for who would take her assurance of it, on either side of the question? She had nothing against her, but her Husband, and her Conscience” (Austen 272).

19. Though *Wives and Daughters* is technically unfinished, “little remains to be added to it” according to the *Cornhill* editor (Gaskell 648).

20. The word “fragment” was actually used on the title page of the first edition of the text (Justice 153).

21. ITV's is not exactly the first screen adaptation of *Sanditon*. A two-hour film by Chris Brindle was released in 2014 based on Anna Lefroy's continuation to her aunt's manuscript. Mention can also be made of a project (announced in 2016) based on Marie Dobbs's completion of *Sanditon*. See Mary Gaither Marshall.

22. It has nevertheless enticed several writers to imagine a continuation.

23. “Renew it for series 2, which the writing and production team obviously desires given the cliffhanger ending to series.

We have a series of requests:

- Give Charlotte and Sidney their happily ever after(s).

- Give us more Esther and Babington happy moments following their marriage.”

<https://www.change.org/p/itv-give-us-sanditon-series-2>

Fans eventually got their way as the series was revived for two more seasons, premiering in March 2022.

## ABSTRACTS

Text and film are typically framed by liminal spaces or borders where the reader or viewer enters or leaves the narrative world. Some novels, however, do not possess these traditional borders. Endings may be missing. Such is the case of unfinished novels interrupted by their author's death. Conversely, borders may be multiple when the text is fragmentary, i.e. made up of several others, as in an epistolary novel devoid of a unifying voice or a short-story cycle which multiplies (intermediary) borders. What happens when these texts are adapted to the screen? The questions pursued in this paper are to what extent and with what effects the borders of the text are set up or renegotiated when a fragment or a partially fragmentary text is adapted to the screen in formats that usually deliver narrative wholes and completed stories. We shall first look at how fragmentation may be smoothed out to merge into a more comfortable whole that fits into a genre through the example of two TV mini-series based on diversely fragmentary source texts, one being a short-story cycle and the other a novel-sequence (*Olive Kitteridge*, HBO 2014; *Case Histories*, BBC 2011-2013). Secondly, considering two adaptations of Jane Austen's early *Lady Susan* and the unfinished *Sanditon*, which do not deliver the usual romantic happy ending, we shall see how changing the borders can also free adaptation from a (sub)genre and fixed expectations (*Love and Friendship* by Whit Stillmann, 2016 and *Sanditon*, ITV 2019).

Textes et films sont encadrés de seuils et de limites que traverse le lecteur ou le spectateur pour entrer ou sortir de l'univers diégétique. Certains romans ne possèdent cependant pas ce bornage traditionnel. Il peut manquer une fin comme dans le cas des romans laissés inachevés par la mort de leur auteur. À l'inverse, les seuils peuvent être multiples quand le texte est fragmenté, c'est-à-dire constitué de plusieurs textes comme dans un roman épistolaire dépourvu d'une voix unificatrice ou dans un cycle de nouvelles qui multiplie les limites. Que se passe-t-il quand ces textes sont adaptés à l'écran? Dans quelle mesure et à quels fins les seuils sont-ils posés et renégociés quand un fragment ou un texte fragmenté est adapté à l'écran dans un format qui repose normalement sur l'existence d'un exemple complet avec une fin? Cet article examine



d'abord la façon dont la fragmentation peut être lissée pour faire place à un ensemble confortable qui entre dans un genre par le biais de deux mini-series télévisées adaptées l'une d'un cycle de nouvelles (*Olive Kitteridge*, HBO 2014) et l'autre d'un cycle de romans (*Case Histories*, BBC 2011-2013). Ensuite, l'étude des adaptations de *Lady Susan* et de *Sanditon*, tous deux de Jane Austen, qui ne fournissent ni l'un ni l'autre de fin heureuse romantique permettra de voir comment la modification des seuils peut au contraire libérer l'adaptation des conventions et attentes (*Love and Friendship* by Whit Stillmann, 2016 and *Sanditon*, ITV 2019).

## INDEX

**Keywords:** endings, closure, borders, fragmentation, adaptation, genre, Olive Kitteridge, Case Histories, Love and Friendship, Sanditon

**Mots-clés:** fin, clôture, limite, fragmentation, adaptation, genre, Olive Kitteridge, Case Histories, Love and Friendship, Sanditon

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