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**“They Called me Matilda, and I Came to be Known as
Matilda”**

**A Study of the Concept of Identity in Lloyd Jones’ *Mr. Pip* and
Andrew Adamson’s Film Adaptation**

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Abstract

In a Bougainville war setting, the last white man of a village, Mr. Watts, becomes the new teacher of the school. It is through Mr. Watts and his reading of the Victorian English novel *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, that Matilda, the narrator and main protagonist of the novel, discovers a new imaginary world which will affect her persona in many different ways. This paper discusses the role that *Great Expectations* and its main character Pip play in shaping Matilda's and Mr. Watts' identities. Taking Matilda and her neighbors as the representation of the Melanesian culture and Mr. Watts and *Great Expectations* of the Western's, the postcolonial discourse is set. Firstly, this paper aims to demonstrate that Matilda and Mr. Watts cross-cultural relations have an effect on both characters' identities which become hybridized. Secondly, through a deep analysis of Jones' novel and Adamson's movie adaptation, this TFG is a means to demonstrate that Adamson's adaptation keeps the essence of the book and even contributes to a better understanding of the concept of identity and the importance of the storytelling.

Key words: Identity, Hybridity, Homi Bhabha, *Mr. Pip*, Lloyd Jones, Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Andrew Adamson

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature as a powerful social tool is a well-known and extensively studied fact. The teaching of English literature in the colonies is mostly described as an imperialistic cultural and linguistic imposition. The character of Mr. Watts, the only white man left on Bougainville during the Civil War¹ in Lloyd Jones' novel *Mr. Pip*, has been interpreted by some critics and scholars as a colonizer who tries to impose Western ideals on the Bougainville islanders. (Nakatsume, 2013, Walker, 2006) The teachers of the island have fled so Mr. Watts is asked to become the teacher of the school and he decides to start reading to the children Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*, a 'canonical English text'. However, Mr. Watts reading of *Great Expectations* can also be interpreted as a way of offering the children of Bougainville an opportunity to escape from the brutalities of the war through the power of literature and their imagination.

The new imaginary Victorian world especially captivates a young local girl named Matilda, who ends up believing that she really knows the fictitious hero of Dickens' novel, the orphan Pip. Matilda assimilates her life into Pip's and little by little *Great Expectations* influences Matilda's persona. However, Mr. Watts also has a story on his back and the story of the orphan Pip parallels not only with Matilda's story, but also with Mr. Watts' own.

First of all, this TFG tries to answer the question how *Great Expectations* and its main character Pip affect Matilda's and Mr. Watts lives and identities. This question

¹ Bougainville is an island in Papua New Guinea. In 1988 a Civil War broke out between PNG and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) which lasted 10 years. Bougainville wanted to be independent and there were tensions over their copper mine which was the world's largest one at that time. When Francis Ona, a local Bougainvillean leader, decided to sabotage the mine, the conflict broke out, Bougainville was blockaded and more than 20.000 people died.

leads us to, on the one hand, ask ourselves how much of an impact Western culture has on Matilda, and on the other hand, how Mr. Watts is affected by his Bougainvillean wife Grace and the islanders. Concurrently, this TFG aims to demonstrate how Homi Bhabha's theory of hybridity and his ideas regarding identity are represented in both Lloyd Jones novel *Mr. Pip* and its film adaptation adapted by the director and scriptwriter Andrew Adamson. Finally, by comparing passages from the novel *Mr. Pip* with scenes of its film adaptation, this TFG is a means to show that Adamson makes an adaptation that does justice to the book and even contributes to a better understanding of the main concepts studied in this paper; identity and the importance of literature.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Mr. Pip has been labeled both as a postmodern and/or also as a postcolonial novel. Several critics have discussed the differences and similarities between postmodernism and postcolonialism and whether or not *Mr. Pip* is a postcolonial or a postmodern novel is a question that remains open. However, despite this disagreement, the present study will hold on to the similarities of both movements, in particular to the concept of identity. The concept of identity has always been a matter of concern and subject of study especially in the branch of humanities. Nevertheless, currently it has gained importance and it has become a relevant concept studied by numerous scholars. This study follows Homi Bhabha's theory of cultural hybridity, a theory that takes on the merging of postmodernist and postcolonialist differences and creates connections between globalism and colonialism. Bhabha challenges the poststructuralist idea of stable identities based on fixed factors such as gender, education or race and states that individuals should be described through cultural hybridity. This term, hybridity, makes reference to the influence of different cultural interchanges which shape people's identities. In Rutherford's interview with Bhabha, he claims that "all forms of culture

are continually in a process of hybridity” while he also emphasizes that for him “hybridity is the ‘third space’ which enables other positions to emerge” (1990: 211). For Bhabha this third space is a site of “the in-between” (1994: 38), a space that helps the subjects elaborate their own selfhood. These neologisms developed by Bhabha are especially relevant in contemporary postcolonial studies and they will be pertinent and will appear repeatedly in this paper. According to Bhabha our identity, in this current postcolonial world, is built from a mixture of cultures. This theory helps us understand how in *Mr. Pip*, *Great Expectations* becomes part of Matilda’s life despite it being a book written in the Victorian period one hundred years before Matilda was born.

Besides this view towards identity, it is necessary to mention that this study will embrace two meanings, or rather, two levels of the term identity which we should differentiate between self-built identity and cultural identity or selfhood. Avoiding any in depth theoretical analysis, the former might be defined as an identity that is chiefly a choice made by the subject, whereas cultural identity represents those values that the subjects internalize from their environment and the community. (Schwartz, Zamboanga, Weisskirch, 2008).

3. THE INFLUENCE OF *GREAT EXPECTATIONS* IN *MR. PIP*

3.1 Why *Great Expectations*?

As previously mentioned, the book which Mr. Watts decides to teach to the Bougainvillean children when he becomes the new teacher of the school is Charles Dickens’ *Great Expectations*. Why does Lloyd Jones decide to choose *Great Expectations* and not another Dickens book or another canonical English text? There is no specific answer for this question, but there are some reasons that should be put on the table; “If you’re from a migrant society, it’s easy to see the orphan and the migrant as

interchangeable. For both, the past is at best a fading photograph.”(Bedell, 2007) These words were uttered by Jones in the *The Guardian*’s interview by Bedell when he was about to win the *Man Booker Prize* with *Mr. Pip*. Both in the interview, and also in the novel, Jones compares the orphan with the migrant, since both may have a blurred and difficult past, as well as the two migrants in *Mr. Pip*: Mr. Watts and also Matilda when she leaves Bougainville and settles into a new life in Australia with her father. This parallelism may be one of the main reasons why Jones chose *Great Expectations* instead of any other western canonical book. Moreover, the answer to why Jones did not choose any other Dickens’ novel about orphans or children with a complicated childhood such as *Oliver Twist* or *David Copperfield* is probably because *Great Expectations* was the first adult book that introduced him to the world of literature when he was a young man.

Dickens's novel was the first adult book that Lloyd Jones read and, like Matilda, he experienced it first as an enchantment, an adventure story, and only later came to understand its wider resonance. (Bedell, 2007).

Despite this discussion, the obvious cannot be denied, and it is noticeable that there are more than a few parallelisms between Charles Dickens’ and Lloyd Jones’ novels that are worth studying. The most relevant parallelism, and the one that this TFG pays special attention to, can be found in the two main characters of both *Great Expectations* and *Mr. Pip*: Pip and Matilda.

3.2 Matilda

3.2.1 Pip and Matilda

Both novels are a Bildungsroman and in both novels the narrators are homodiegetic. *Great Expectations* is the story of the growth and development of Pip, who, at the same time is the protagonist and the narrator of the story. Likewise, in Lloyd Jones’ novel, Matilda is both the main character and the narrator. This conveys that all

their actions and thoughts are the only perspective we get as readers. Moreover, both narrators provide their version of the story to the reader when they are grown-ups, so both outlooks, the one when they were young and naïve and the one as adults with a more critical point of view towards life and a wider understanding of society are shown to the reader. Therefore, voice is an important element of both books and it is a theme that will be discussed later in this paper. Both Matilda and Pip do not remember their fathers² and they also lose their mothers, Pip before the story begins and Matilda through a traumatizing murder by the redskin soldiers³ when she is fourteen. Both are raised by hostile and strict women and also look for backing in mentors; Joe and Mr. Watts.

In light of what has been written about Dolores' –Matilda's mother– harshness towards Matilda, it is worth mentioning that Dolores' behavior is due to a feeling of fear and loss. Dolores is an ardent believer in God, “she should have been a church woman” (42), and that is why she fears Mr. Watts' ideas and the fact that the book *Great Expectations* may change Matilda's faith and behavior towards God. “She didn't want me to go deeper into that other world. She worried she would lose her Matilda to Victorian England” (35). Matilda has a strong belief in Pip and this is precisely the main reason why Dolores is portrayed as an unfriendly and a cold character especially towards Mr. Watts and Matilda herself. Moreover, *Great Expectations* belongs to the “white world” (49), and Dolores fears that, like Matilda's father, her daughter may be “stolen” by them⁴, the people who have proved not to be trustworthy. Matilda is constantly trying to find parallelisms between her world and Pip's world. When Matilda

² Lloyd Jones, 2006: 25. “Me and Pip had something in common; I was eleven when my father left, so neither of us really knew our fathers”.

³ The people of Matilda's village called the PNG soldiers “redskins” because “the soldiers looked like people leached up out of the red earth”(9)

⁴ Id., 49. “White men had stolen her husband and my father. White men were to blame for the mine and the blockade”.

learns about Pip's sister, she compares her mother with Pip's sister because of their harshness⁵. However, when Matilda gets to know about Miss Havisham, she changes her mind and compares her mother with that other character⁶.

All these parallelisms between Matilda's world and Pip's world are the ones that enhance Matilda's identification with Pip. She even starts believing Pip is real⁷. She finds a friend in Pip, and with him a trustful and comfortable world "that was whole and made sense"(67). Matilda, and also all her classmates, can simply understand too well Pip's fears and his feeling of abandonment. We must recall that the islanders live trapped in a blockade, and they constantly have the feeling that they have been forgotten and abandoned by "the white world" (49), by those who gave them part of what they are now.

3.2.2 Matilda and *Great Expectations*

Great Expectations becomes something more than a book for Matilda. It becomes a synonym for safety, home, empowerment, guidance and discovery of the unknown and outside world. In a threatening and hostile environment Watts offers to the children "another world to spend the night in" (18). It becomes "an imaginary home", a place where she can feel safe and evade the cruelty of the Civil War (Butter, 2014). Even when they get to the end of the book and there are no more reading sessions in Mr. Watts' lessons, a state of wistfulness overpowers the children⁸ and it is only when the teacher decides to read *Great Expectations* for a second time that they

⁵ Id., 47: "I knew that orphaned white kid and that small, fragile place he squeezed into between his awful sister and lovable Joe Gargery, because the same space came to exist between Mr. Watts and my mum."

⁶ Id., 56-57: "Now that I had met Miss Havisham, and knew more about her unhappy past, I had changed my mind about my mum being like Pip's sister. She had more in common with Miss Havisham. [...] Miss Havisham remains in her wedding gown for an event that has been gone. I had an idea my mum was stuck in a similar moment. Only it had to do with an argument with my dad."

⁷ Id., 58: "I had come to know this Pip as if he were real and I could feel his breath on my cheek"

⁸ Id., 92: "The story was at an end. So was our journeying in that world. We were back to our own. Without any prospect of escape, our days lost their purpose."

feel sheltered again⁹. *Great Expectations* also serves Matilda as a tool for empowerment and a guide to survive in a world full of fears that changes without warning (Shiller 2012, Calleja 2008). Mr. Watts himself brings mystery and sparks curiosity among the village children. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the reading of a book which is about the “outside world” raises that same curiosity. Words such as “marshes”, “wittles”, “leg irons” or “frosty morning” inflict especial interest towards that new, exotic world. Benjamin Walker relates the use of a canonical English text in the class with Bhabha’s discussion of the “signs taken for wonders”. It is legitimate that *Great Expectations* encourages Matilda to write her own memoirs as well as Bhabha’s assertion that “the English book [...] suggests the triumph of the write of colonialist power”(Bhabha, 2006: 40). However, it should also be pointed out that Matilda’s education, unlike the system described by Bhabha in British India, is not based on a factual tyrannical and imperialistic Western dominion.

3.2.3 Matilda’s Voice and Education

Once the blockade is imposed and Mr. Watts becomes the teacher of the school, the class becomes a hybrid space, or, taking again a Bhabhasian neologism, the class becomes a “third space” for the children. Mr. Watts creates a site of “in-between” when he offers the children a western view of the world, unknown by the children, while, at the same time, the children receive lectures from the adults of the village who participate actively in the class. Mr. Watts invites the islanders to share their knowledge with the children in the school. This knowledge is transmitted orally and usually by means of short stories which teach several lessons about everyday tasks, religion, sexuality and morality. The children, Mr. Watts and also the reader get to know about

⁹ Ibid. “Our only consolation was that by reading it a second and third time we would still have another country to flee to. And that would save our sanity.”

the meaning of the color blue, what the heart seed is, why to believe in the devil or some cooking tips like how to kill an octopus. Moreover, Mr. Watts not only gives a new world to explore to the children, but he encourages them to create their own. When *Great Expectations* is burnt by the redskins the second time they get to the village on foot, Mr. Watts tries to look on the bright side despite it being a difficult task. Taking as an example Mr. Dickens and his inspiration to write *Great Expectations*, he reminds the children that they still have their minds and their imagination and enlivens their voice and selfhood. In order to take the children to the world of imagination, Mr. Watts uses a technique commonly used in meditation and relaxation exercises to take control of your mind¹⁰; he makes the children say their names out loud to themselves.

The sound of my name took me to a place deep inside my head. I already knew that words could take you into a new world, but I didn't know that in the strength of one word spoken for my ears only I would find myself in a room that no one else knew about. Matilda. Matilda. Matilda. I said it over and over. I tried out different versions, dragging the word out and expanding that room. *Ma til da*. (124)

As this passage shows, thank to Mr. Watts and *Great Expectations* Matilda discovers her new own world i.e. her selfhood and uniqueness, thus, Bhabha's "third space" is fulfilled with Matilda's character.

3.3 Mr. Watts

Mr. Watts is likely to be the most complex character of the novel. He adopts different self-built identities, but, at the same time, he hides a personal story on his back which is surrounded with mystery. This mystery is due to his ethnicity¹¹ and a lack of information regarding his past. In a world which "knew only sameness" (2), Mr. Watts

¹⁰ This technique is a frequent exercise used by actors to get to know themselves better and relax the mind and the body. At the end of the book, when Matilda goes to New Zealand to know more about Mr. Watts life, Mr Watts (ex)wife tells her that he used to take part in an amateur theatre group. This could be one of the reasons why Mr. Watts knows and uses this technique with the children.

¹¹ Id., 11. "Mr. Watts was more of a mystery because he had come out of a world we didn't really know."

is presented as an eccentric man who is married to an insane black woman of the village. It is his wife's madness and their everyday stroll what makes him look even stranger and more mysterious for the islanders. However, the mystery that surrounds him is what lets him adopt different identities and pass himself off as different characters from *Great Expectations*.

When analyzing Mr. Watts' character, it is necessary to keep in mind that Mr. Watts' changes of identity should not get mixed up with Mr. Watts' persona. In the same way that Pip becomes Handel in *Great Expectations*, Pop Eye, Mr. Pip, Mr. Dickens and even Mr. Watts are identities that Tom Christian Watts takes in given situations; When Tom Watts pulls a trolley with his wife Grace standing on it while he wears a red clown's nose, he becomes Pop Eye for the islanders. Later on in the book the reader discovers that they were performing a biblical scene with King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba¹². Then, he becomes Mr. Dickens in order to protect Daniel when the Redskins come for the first time and see PIP written on the sand. He is also called like the "greatest English writer of the nineteenth century" (21) at the end of the novel, when Matilda refers to him as Mr. Dickens as a symbol of the figure of the storyteller:

The Mr. Dickens I had known also had a beard and a lean face and eyes that wanted to leap from his face. But my Mr. Dickens used to go barefoot and in a buttonless shirt. Apart from special occasions, such as when he taught, and then he wore a suit. (256)

Tom Watts becomes Mr. Watts when he arrives to Bougainville. When Matilda goes to New Zealand to talk with Mr. Watts (ex)wife¹³, June Watts, she always refers to Mr.

¹² In NZ Mr. Watts and Grace used to go to the same amateur theatre group and once they performed a biblical scene with the characters King Solomon and Queen Sheba. When Sarah –Tom and Grace's child– died of meningitis, Grace fell into depression and was even taken to a mental hospital. Mr. Watts thought that the only way to heal Grace was for her to reinvent herself, so they moved to Bougainville and every day they performed that scene.

¹³ Mr. Watts was married when he met Grace. He never gets divorced from June, that is why, legally, June is still Tom Watts' wife.

Watts as Tom. It is in Bougainville where he is known as Mr. Watts since the villagers used the word “mister” for full Anglo-Saxon names¹⁴ and that is why he came to be called Mr. Watts. Finally, he also embodies the character of Mr. Pip when the rambos come to the village and ask him who he is and what he, a white man, is doing in the Village. He takes Mr. Pip’s voice to protect himself and it is behind this identity when the reader gets to know some personal information about Tom Watts’ past.

3.3.1 Mr. Watts’ “Third Space”

Using stories as a weapon¹⁵, Mr. Watts behind Mr. Pip’s identity tells a made-up story which assembles a mix of Tom Watt’s life, the islanders’ lives and Dickens’ character Pip’s story.¹⁶ This story within a story becomes a hybrid narrative itself. As Matilda points out “It was a made-up story to which we’d all contributed. Mr. Watts was shining our experience of the world back at us.”(192). In this story told to the rambos in a scheherazadian way (Butter, 2014 and Kossev, 2009), Mr. Watts explains his love story with Grace and how they attempted to create “a new world” (171). This new world was personified with Sarah, a baby girl born out of the love between Tom and Grace. As Sathybhama and Torre assert, the birth of this baby strengthens Mr. Watts self and identity: “In that baby’s face [...] I saw my mother’s eyes, my father’s cleft chin. [...] It was familiar geography all muddled up. I saw bits and pieces of Anglo-Welsh heritage in a coffee-colored skin”. With Sarah the concept of “the spare room” is also introduced. Mr. Watts together with Grace endeavor to create a space “meant for their coffee-colored child to one day call her own”(179). In order to anticipate any cultural clashes their child may have to deal with when she grows up,

¹⁴ Id., 3: “Although we know him as Pop Eye we used to say “Mr. Watts” because it was the only name like it (Anglo-Saxon) left in our district.”

¹⁵ Id., 256. “I never once saw him (Mr. Watts) with a machete – his survival weapon was story”

they try to reflect their beliefs, thoughts and what they identify as their cultural identity on the walls of what should have been Sarah's room, but sadly she dies of meningitis before her first birthday. This attempt to create a new space is comparable with the school classes in the village school. Both Sarah's room and the school become a gathering place for different ideas, beliefs and ethnicities. So once again, Bhabha's concept of the "Third Space" is recalled and exemplified with the spare room, and personified with Sarah.

3.3.2 Mr. Watts and *Great Expectations*

The love Mr. Watts has for Grace is the factor that lets him carry on after their baby's death, and it is in *Great Expectations* where he finds the strength for leaving his life in New Zealand behind and moving to Bougainville with Grace.

You know, Matilda, you cannot pretend to read a book. Your eyes will give you away. So will your breathing. A person entranced by a book simply forgets to breathe. The house can catch alight and the reader deep in a book will not look up until the wallpaper is in flames. For me, Matilda, *Great Expectations* is such a book. It gave me permission to change my life. (155)

Like Pip, Tom Watts reinvents himself. He is even called differently in the place where he grew up and the village. As he tells Matilda, *Great Expectations* gave him permission to change his life, to "make himself anew" (90). This passage also shows the power of literature and how a book can not only bring you to another world but it can also change your life; Matilda describes that as an "act of magic" (231).

4. ANDREW ADAMSONS' FILM ADAPTATION

As has been seen in the previous sections, *Mr. Pip* is a highly complex novel with many layers and depths so, taking such a novel as *Mr. Pip* and putting it up on the big screen becomes a laborious task. However, the director and also scriptwriter

Andrew Adamson accomplished the task with competent results. Adamson's adaptation omits some chapters of the book but, on the other hand, he adds some scenes of his own and despite this, all the relevant themes of the movie are portrayed and the essence of the book is maintained. This is not only a personal judgment, but several reviews support it and even the writer of the book agrees¹⁷.

For this study there have been selected three scenes of the movie to be analyzed. The choice of these scenes is due to several reasons. First of all, they are the last three scenes of the movie so they work as a summary and they cover the main concepts dealt with in this paper. Secondly, and with relation to the first reason, in these last three scenes Matilda is already an adult, but she sees Pip again, so it implies that *Great Expectations* still has an effect on her. Thirdly, the four main characters of the movie and the book – Matilda, Pip, Mr. Watts and Dolores – are given a voice in these final scenes. Finally, these are the ones chosen because Matilda can be seen in the three different settings that appear in the movie: London, Matilda's imaginary London, and the village in Bougainville.

4.1 1st Scene – Matilda in the Charles Dickens Museum

In the movie, once the blockade ended, seven years after Matilda escapes from Bougainville, a lawyer from Sydney pays her a visit to give her Mr. Watts will. In that will Mr. Watts gives almost all his properties to her, including half of a house in Gravesend. This is the reason why she ends up going to London and hence, to the Charles Dickens museum. In the book though, the events happen differently. Matilda does not inherit any flat neither does she end up in London because of a lawyer or a

¹⁷ Lloyd Jones was interviewed, together with Andrew Adamsons and Hugh Laurie by the NZ Herald and regarding Adamsons' adapting process he said the following: "You always hope that the person making the film has an intimate understanding with the book and Andrew had read it very closely and deeply. He sort of picked up all the different layers."(Calden and Corry, 2013)

will, but she is about to finish a PhD on Charles Dickens and she goes to London to compile information. In the book she does go to visit June Watts, but she lives in Wellington, New Zealand. When she goes to Gravesend, she sees rows of emigrants who are about to take a “sea journey into the unknown” (250). This image echoes in her memory, and she recalls the last conversation she had with Mr. Watts about leaving the village. Matilda had blocked out many of her memories and feelings, she had made herself anew and had avoided her past. She had left the village and she had never looked back (252).

In the movie, this feeling arouses in Matilda after reading the famous Dickens quotation “It is the most miserable thing to feel ashamed of home” (Dickens 1996: 124) –a quotation which Adamson shows at the beginning and at the end of the movie–. When Matilda goes to the museum she sees this sentence written down under a picture and subsequently, she “meets” Mr. Dickens in his study. It is in front of a mannequin of the English author where she sees Pip again. During the course of the movie, Pip, as a product of Matilda’s imagination, accompanies Matilda even in the hardest moments. However, after Mr. Watts and her mother are murdered by the redskins she stops imagining Pip, she decides to forget, she feels “ashamed of home”. When Matilda reenounters Pip, she also reenounters herself and clears the blockage from her past. Therefore, although Adamson’s version is different from Jones’ one, the essence of the passage remains.

Adamson’s cinematic resource of recreating and performing Matilda’s mind is perhaps the brightest resource of the movie. It enables the audience to enter in Matilda’s mind and see the world of *Great Expectations* from her perspective. In this scene, the spectator sees Matilda being hugged by Pip while she cries on his shoulder. This image

becomes a powerful symbol of reconciliation and acceptance of her past. The following chosen scene analyses in depth this made up Victorian world of Matilda's.

4.2 2nd Scene – Matilda's Imaginary World and Pip's Farewell

It is generally known that Charles Dickens wrote two different endings for *Great Expectations*, in the first one Pip would return home, but he would not stay and Stella would have married another man. In the second ending, although it is not explicitly written, there is clear evidence that Pip stays in Gravesend and marries Stella. Jones and Adamson take the first original ending and compare Matilda's life with Pip's; Pip is not able to return home, but Matilda is.

In this scene the spectator gets into Matilda's mind and sees how she bids Pip farewell. While the spectator is immersed in looking at the images, Adamson uses the creative film device of the voice-over. The voice-over gives voice to Mr. Watts' character, who recites these lines of *Great Expectations*:

Heaven knows we need never be ashamed of our tears, for they are rain upon the blinding dust of earth, overlaying our hard hearts. I was better after I had cried than before,—more sorry, more aware of my own ingratitude, more gentle. [...] We changed again, and yet again, and it was now too late and too far to go back, and I went on. And the mists had all solemnly risen now, and the world lay spread before me. (Id., 185)

These lines are from Dickens novel *Great Expectations* and they are the last lines of the last chapter of Volume 1. In this chapter Pip moves to London, but in the movie Matilda imagines Pip leaving with a boat, that will probably take him to a ship and eventually to the East, leaving home "forever". In the movie's scene these lines are important in two ways, they are important for their meaning and for the character that utters them. To start with, the first lines uttered by Mr. Watts work as a link with the previous scene; Matilda is left crying on Pip's shoulder and the fragment claims that "we need never to

be ashamed of our tears”. Moreover, at that moment Pip’s feelings parallel with Matilda’s since after crying they both feel “more sorry, more aware of *their own* gratitude, more gentle”. Then, the following lines remind the audience that there is no existence of a fixed identity. Identity is a constant changing process. (Bhabha, 2014). These lines also reinforce the two most important lessons taught by Mr. Watts to Matilda and to the people of the village; do not be afraid to reinvent yourself, there is no perfect human being and everyone is “free to make bad choices” (71), and that each person’s voice is special, “whatever else happened to us in our lives our voice could never be taken away from us” (256). These lessons become survival tools that empower Matilda to carry on. Finally, these lines are also relevant because of the fact that it is Mr. Watts the one who reads the passage and this makes us recall Mr. Watts’ lessons in the village when he read *Great Expectations* to the children in the school. Mr. Watts’ voice is still inside Matilda, he becomes part of Matilda’s identity.

Before continuing with the analysis of the last scene, it is a must to comment on the clothing and the scene settings used when Matilda dreams about *Great Expectations*. Another smart and notable device by Adamson consists of representing Matilda’s imaginary Victorian world as a hybrid space. The director tries to put on the screen the image that a 13-year-old girl from Bougainville has of 19th Century Victorian London. So as to do that, he merges the natural and colorful Pacific landscape with the buildings and living conditions of London. When it comes to the clothes that the people wear in Matilda’s mind, he employs a similar device. Despite the fact they are wearing typical Victorian apparels, the clothes patterns are colorful and they recall the traditional Papuan clothing. Finally, in all the scenes regarding Matilda’s imaginative world, all the characters are played by black actors, even Mr. Pip’s character. By doing so Adamson

uplifts Bhabha's concept of hybridity and he is able to create and show to the audience Matilda's "spare room" and cultural identity.

4.3 3rd Scene – Matilda in Bougainville

The last scene of the movie is also linked with the previous scene. In this case the thread that connects the scenes is the voice-overs. As mentioned previously, Adamson gives voice to the four main characters of the movie – and the book –. The first character that Adamson gives voice to is Pip when he becomes part of Matilda's thoughts again. Then, as has been commented in the previous section in this paper, Mr. Watts re-appears through the voice-over recalling the most important lessons Matilda learnt from him. Finally, the last two voice-overs are Dolores and Matilda herself.

In this scene Matilda has returned to Bougainville and she has done so with her father. When the audience hears Dolores' voice, Matilda is sitting down on the sand explaining to a group of children her mother's story of the wisdom of the crabs (44-45). Right after, Matilda's father appears walking towards Matilda, just as Dolores' voice-over utters: "Sometimes I miss him, sometimes when I look along the beach and there is your father Matilda, walking towards me [...] your father is walking towards us both (Adamson, 2012; 1:46:25). Obviously, Matilda's father does not walk towards Dolores physically since she died during the conflict, but he does walk towards Matilda. Dolores forms part of Matilda's essence, and this scene highlight this. In the movie, Matilda's father enters the scene unaccompanied, so the spectator does not know if he has remarried. In the book though, he marries again, but whether he returns to Bougainville with Matilda or not is left open.

Finally, the last voice that the audience listens to before the movie ends, is the main character's, Matilda's. The words Matilda utters are full of meaning and symbolism and this is why this paper's title is taken from these words:

My mother's name is Dolores Mary Naimo, my father's Joseph Francis Naimo, my father worked with the Australians who gave him the name Matilda, he gave it to my mother for her to give me, and so they called me Matilda, and I came to be known as Matilda. (Adamson, 2012; 1:46:46)

What makes the ending of the movie powerful is that Adamson takes the famous first lines of *Great Expectations* – in which Pip explains the origin of his name –, and he literally embeds them in Matilda's story. It strengthens Matilda's hybrid identity and enhances respect among ethnicities. This quotation put in context finds a balance between the western world of Pip and Matilda's eastern cultural attributes. As Matilda herself analyses in the novel:

I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip is one of the most endearing lines in literature. This is who I am: please accept me as you find me. This is what an orphanage sends its charges out to the world with. This is what emigrants wash up on Pacific shorelines with. This is what Mr. Watts had asked the rambos to accept. (254)

Finally, although displayed differently, again both the book and the movie transmit the same message. In the last paragraph of the book, Matilda also claims Pip's story to be hers: "Pip was my story even if I was once a girl, and my face black as the shining night" (256)

5. CONCLUSION

In the first section of the paper Matilda's and Mr. Watts' characters in the novel have been analyzed as well as their relation with *Great Expectations*. This TFG has proved that the cross-cultural relations between Matilda's and Mr. Watts' worlds affect both

characters' identities. The discovery of *Great Expectations* for Matilda affects her persona in different ways. First of all, she realizes how powerful literature is and she gets immersed in this new imaginary world provided by her teacher which helps her evade the hostile reality she lives. Secondly, the fact that this book belongs to a world that is detached from hers, not only awakens her curiosity for that unknown world, but also changes her inner self. Matilda's belief in Pip helps her to carry on in the face of adversities when she is in Bougainville and also, the connection that she establishes with Pip's story is what makes her decide to return home. Finally, Matilda's story can be extrapolated to the community's story and culture. The fact that she assumes Mr. Pip's story as her own does not mean that her voice is silenced, but it is mingled with his. With this assertion it needs to be clarified that this TFG is not acclaiming the colonization of the isles in the Pacific or any other actions performed by imperialistic powers, but this paper takes Bhabha's position towards it. So in Bhabha's terms, Matilda becomes a symbol of hybridization.

However, this last statement should not lead us to interpret Mr. Watts as a colonizer or an imperialistic figure. First of all, Mr. Watts' intentions do not go beyond the reading of a book which made a difference in his life and it may also have a difference for the children of the village. Secondly, Mr. Watts may embody the Western culture, and he may work as the engine that permits Matilda to be analyzed as a hybrid character, but it should also be taken into account that it is this relationship with Matilda and the Bougainvilleans what also makes of him a hybrid character.

In the second section of this TFG, three scenes of Adamson's movie adaptation have been chosen and analyzed in order to demonstrate two matters. First of all, it has been proved that Adamson's movie adaptation remains faithful although the scenes are displayed differently than in the book, and the plot suffers diverse modifications -these

changes even emphasize main themes of the novel-. Secondly, it has also been shown how Adamson's movie adaptation reinforces Matilda's hybrid identity through the use of diverse cinematic resources.

Finally, as far as this TFG's content is concerned, it should be emphasized how hard it has been to choose and narrow down all the information that could have been written about this book, as well as to just focus on one theme. As has been repeatedly proclaimed, demonstrated and highlighted in this paper, *Mr. Pip* is a book with many depths and layers that covers a variety of aspects and topics all of them worth studying. Although this TFG has solely focused on certain characteristics of Matilda and Mr. Watts' identities and the effect that reading *Great Expectations* has on them, both the novel and the movie embrace a wide range of themes which should be of interest for future academic studies. Some of these themes are: religion and the comparison that Mr. Watts makes between Pip and the devil, color symbolism and the discussions that are carried out in the novel about the colors white and black, Matilda's reliability as a 1st person narrator, the importance that is given to the female characters in the novel, Dolores rape and the effects of war or the power of education and the importance of teachers.

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