Adaptation as Emancipation: Semantic Decoding of the Female Protagonist in Kenneth Branagh's Film Adaptation of Mary Shelley's Novel "Frankenstein"

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In memory of

Laurence Raw (1959-2018)

In gratitude for his contributions to Adaptation Studies

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PART IV: The Pedagogy of Adaptation – Experiences

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Why Adaptation?[1]

While it cannot be said that there is a lack of scholarly publications on adaptation studies, the present volume, as its title suggests, offers a selection of texts dealing with adaptations from multiple perspectives and thus illustrating the multifaceted concerns of adaptation scholars. For the most part, the contributors to the volume are scholars who participated at the *Adaptation: Theory, Criticism and Pedagogy* international conference that took place in February 2017 at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, J.J. Strossmayer University of Osijek, and which gathered adaptation scholars in various stages of their careers, approaching the subject of adaptation from different points of view.[2] The papers highlight the field's versatility in that they focus on adaptation's theoretical, critical, and pedagogical (applicable) nature.

Part One deals with adaptation from the point of view of the field's (contested, complicated, complex) theory. In "Theoretical Progressivism and Theoretical Return in Humanities Adaptation Studies," Kamilla Elliott argues that even the theory of adaptation should adapt to adaptation in order to be meaningful. Therefore, instead of opting for an exclusively conservative or progressive approach to theory, scholars should rather combine old and new theories in order to enable future constructive debates and keep the adaptation scholarship alive and relevant. Patrick Colm Hogan attempts to provide a theoretically clearer and, at the same time, practically valuable definition of *adaptation* by carefully distinguishing adaptation from its closely related concepts such as remediation, performative interpretation, modelling, and derivative influence.

The following two sections contain critical interpretations of specific adaptations. In Part Two, contributors discuss adaptations of literary classics, starting with Nada Kujundžić's analysis of concrete strategies employed to modify the Grimms' fairy tale "The Frog King" into the recognizable Disney mould, which may be described

[1] This publication was fully supported by the J.J. Strossmayer University of Osijek under the UNIOS INGI 2015-11 project titled *Transcultural / Transmedial: British / American, German, and Croatian Film Adaptations of Literature in the Period 1990-2015*. The project leader was Prof. Dr. Željko Uvanović.

[2] The conference resulted from the organizers' desire to continue and expand the research done within the UNIOS INGI 2015-11 project, and allowed for the project's guest researcher, Kamilla Elliott, to participate at the conference as keynote speaker.

as a mixture of fairy tale, romance, and a Broadway musical with an inevitable happy ending. Hui Wu looks at the treatment of Shakespeare's life in various biographical films and series arguing that the Bard's life, as represented in these adaptations, is an adaptation itself. These works, claims the author, highlight the trend of creating documentaries without documents that makes biopics far more a matter of fiction than faction. Finally, in time to mark the 200th anniversary of the novel's publication, Ljubica Matek and Jelena Pataki argue that Kenneth Branagh's film adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* closely follows the undercurrents of the novel by emphasizing Elizabeth's independence that was present ever so subtly in the source text.

Part Three is dedicated to adaptations of twentieth and early twenty-first century source texts. By focusing on Zack Snyder's adaptation of Alan Moore's *Watchmen*, Giuseppe Barbuscia discusses the constraints of adapting sequential art into film by focusing on the issues of fidelity and "unfilmability," and by suggesting that, rather than borrowing the graphic medium's means of expression, a successful film adaptation should develop a language of its own. Iva Polak discusses the Australian Aboriginal play *The 7 Stages of Grieving* as an adaptation of the Kübler-Ross model of the five stages of grief and of the seven stages of Aboriginal history. The combination of the two results in a cathartic performance that testifies to a deep cultural trauma and points to a possible way of healing. In their homage to Ivanka Aničić, a Croatian translator, the co-authors Tihana Klepač and Katja Radoš-Perković identify and analyse the translation strategies and procedures used in the Croatian translation of *Spamalot*, highlighting thus the complexity of cross-cultural adaptation. To adapt an English text for the Croatian audience, the translator must adapt culturally specific references such as anthroponyms and idiomatic phrases, but also various humorous elements in order to make them relevant (and funny) in the Croatian context.

The final two texts in this chapter deal with the social contexts of source texts and their adaptations. Marijan Krivak analyses Alen Bović's novel *Metastases* and its film adaptation focusing on the elements that reveal a creeping fascization of certain parts of the Croatian reality. Branko Marijanović broadens his scope and in a survey of three novels, *Things Fall Apart*, *Lord of the Flies* and *The Road*, and their film adaptations, tries to determine how successfully the adaptations manage to balance between what he sees as universal messages about the nature of humanity available in

the source texts and the strong focus on the specific cultural context that seems to be highlighted in two of the three adaptations.

Unlike the previous sections, Part Four is dedicated to the pedagogy of adaptation and provides the readers with a set of reports on particular experiences of both students and teachers in their joint adaptation projects. The papers contained therein may serve as examples for enriching the teaching experience within and without the classroom, within the realm of a(ny) curriculum or as extracurricular project, that empower students and provide them with opportunities to test their knowledge and skills and, more importantly, to acquire new ones.

Laurence Raw's paper, regrettably one of his last scholarly works, highlights his experience of teaching English to non-native speakers (Turkish students) by means of adaptation projects. This approach not only improved their verbal and non-verbal skills, but also contributed to the immense personal development of the students. Similarly, Amela Ćurković reports on the film adaptation project of students of German in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project had study-specific goals (improvement of the students' writing and speaking skills in the German language) as well as a clearly socially oriented purpose of raising awareness of the need for urgent environmental protection of Zenica and its immediate surroundings. The project's social importance was recognized and it received local support as well as international recognition dueto the worldwide online competition of the alumni members of the German DAAD Alumni Association. Amra Hodžić, a student at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek reports on her own experience of making a film adaptation, highlighting both the reasons why students seem reluctant to take part in such projects, as well as why they should not fear participating in them as the professional and personal rewards are multiple. Finally, Željko Uvanović synthesizes his ideas about the theory, criticism, and pedagogy of adaptation, thereby rounding up the volume with his view of this complex yet deeply rewarding subject.

As editors, we have attempted to create a volume that successfully illustrates a scholarly field situated on a roundabout, rather than at a crossroads, of a range of disciplines: literary studies, art, film, theatre, media studies, pedagogy, and even methodology of foreign language teaching. We hope that it will find interested readers

and in that way contribute to the existing discussion on adaptations and adaptation studies.

Osijek, in July 2018

Ljubica Matek and Željko Uvanović, editors

Part I: Theory

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Theoretical Progressivism and Theoretical Return in Humanities Adaptation Studies

Abstract

Twenty-first-century adaptation theorization in the humanities has vacillated between calls for theoretical progress and calls for theoretical return. This article argues that new theories do not necessarily represent progress and that a return to old theories does not necessarily represent regress, but that adaptation scholarship requires both because adaptation itself is defined as a process combining repetition (return) with variation (departure). Theorization needs to adapt to adaptation – to be like it in integrating both repetition and variation – in order to explicate it meaningfully. Just as adaptation has enabled older narratives to survive and thrive in new contexts, so too adaptation scholarship has enabled older theories and theoretical debates to persist. Rather than lament their survival, they have enabled adaptation studies to survive and thrive.

Keywords: adaptation, theorization, progress, nostalgia, hybridity, repetition, variation.

> *Progress is a noxious, culturally embedded, untestable, nonoperational, intractable idea that must be replaced if we wish to understand the patterns of history*. (Gould 319)

Discussing biological evolution, Stephen Jay Gould argues against a purely progressivist view of adaptation in order to understand history. By contrast, most humanities histories of theorization unfold as narratives of chronological progress, moving ever forward towards greater degrees of truth– from classicism to Romanticism, structuralism to poststructuralism, historicism to New Historicism, Freudian to Lacanian psychoanalysis, classical Marxism to post-Marxism, humanism to post-humanism, and more. Even theories declaring that there is no truth or that truth is indeterminate present themselves as theoretically and philosophically truer than prior theories that posit the existence of positive, definitive truth.

Yet the publisher's blurb to Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan's forthcoming three-volume edited collection, *Adaptations: Critical and Primary Sources*, identifies both progress and persistence in its description of the relation between Volume One, *A History of Adaptation Studies*, and Volume Two, *Theoretical Approaches to Adaptation Studies*: "Volume Two collects essays from the last 25 years, showing how the scholarly legacy laid out in Volume One still has a profound impact on adaptation studies today, while charting the process of critical and theoretical maturation" (Bloomsbury Press). In spite of this double temporal valence, the description favours progress over return to "the scholarly legacy" by figuring their relationship to each other as a "process of critical and theoretical maturation."

Not all recent adaptation scholars, however, agree that newer theories represent either progress or maturation: adaptation has been theorized variably as a progress or improvement on a prior work (Elliott, *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate* 173-81), as a means of helping that work to survive (Hutcheon 32), as a regress or falling off from a better origin in a new and inferior text and context (Lellis and Bolton), and as something that should be rendered extinct (Bluestone 218). Focusing on twenty-first century adaptation scholarship, this article argues that theoretical variations do not necessarily represent progress and that theoretical repetitions do not necessarily represent regress, but that adaptation scholarship requires both. Mieke Bal has argued: "No concept is meaningful for cultural analysis unless it helps us to understand the object better on its –the object's – own terms" (8). If adaptation has been defined as repetition with variation (Hutcheon 4) – as return and progress – then theories need to adapt to adaptations – to be like them in integrating both repetition and variation – in order to explicate them meaningfully.

Theories of biological adaptation have tended to emphasize narratives of progress from single cell organisms to a dazzling array of diverse complex organisms. Sociological evolutionary theorist Richard Dawkins maintains:

> [A]daptive evolution is not just incidentally progressive, it is deeply, dyed-in-the-wool, indispensably progressive. It is fundamentally necessary that it should be progressive if Darwinian natural selection is to perform the explanatory role in our world view that we require of it, and that it alone can perform. (210)

And yet no biologist would argue that every adaptation is progressive: indeed, scientists estimate that ninety nine percent of all species that have ever lived are extinct and that decreasing complexity is common in the record of adaptation.[1]

Similarly, a history of humanities theorization generally, and adaptation theorization particularly, reveals many theoretical returns amid theoretical change. Early eighteenth-century theories of the arts as sisters were rebutted by late eighteenth-century theories of the arts as separate species (most notably by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing), only to remerge in the nineteenth century and be routed in the early twentieth century by scholars such as Irving Babbitt (Elliott, *Rethinking* 10). This is only one of many returns, which I address further in a forthcoming monograph.

Even so, most histories and field overviews of adaptation studies present adaptation theorization as a chronological theoretical progress,[2] and where it does not progress, it is reprimanded, as theorists call the field to turn away from fidelity criticism and progress to new theories and methodologies (Elliott, "Adaptation Theory and Adaptation Scholarship" 691-4). Fidelity criticism is seen to enmesh theorization and adaptation in a discourse of futile return, as the returns and progresses of theorization are inextricably intertwined with the returns and progressions between adapted and adapting works. And yet an actual history of adaptation theorization reveals that fidelity criticism has been almost unilaterally excoriated since at least 1680, when John Dryden wrote his theory of translation and adaption. Dryden, like Dudley Andrew in the 1980s, preferred the middle way between return to the adapted work and progress away from it.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, many of the field's leading scholars (Brian McFarlane, Deborah Cartmell, Imelda Whelehan, Robert B. Ray, Thomas Leitch, and Robert Stam) took a progressivist theoretical position, arguing that the New Criticism, aesthetic formalism, high-art humanism, medium specificity, traditional historicism, and industry theories that had hitherto dominated literature, film, and adaptation studies were, at best, outdated and partial and, at worst, philosophically fallacious and politically pernicious. For Ray, older theories rendered adaptation studies "ultimately antitheoretical," "thoroughly discredited," and "irrelevant" in the year 2000 (45-6). Ray and others recommended newer theories that they considered to be more

[1] For a discussion of the link between retrograde biological evolution and extinction, see Jean Guex.
[2] Whelehan (1999); Ray (2000); Stam (2000; 2005); Aragay (2005); Murray (2008; 2012); Leitch (2017) also offer a progressivist history, moving chronologically from adaptation studies versions 0.0 to 3.0.

philosophically true and more politically democratic than prior ones, promoting structuralist narratology, Bahktinian dialogics, poststructuralist intertextuality, New Historicism, radical politics, and postmodern cultural studies to update, adapt, and diversify adaptation studies.

However, adaptation studies, as it turns out, do not live by theoretical progress alone. In the twenty-first century, adaptation studies has engaged many new theories, including postmodern theory (Hutcheon; Slethaug), theories derived from sociological and political economy theories (Murray), postcolonial theory (Jeffers; Ponzanesi), meme theory (Hutcheon and Bartolotti), new media theory (Constandinides; O'Flynn; Parody), avant-garde theory (Verrone), affect theory (Hodgkins), Deleuzian philosophy (also Hodgkins), and various new cross-cultural and translation theories (Raw; Krebs; Della Coletta).

Not only have these theories not, as turn-of-the-century critics hoped, done away with older theories, which have persisted in monographs (Cattrysse; Cahir), edited collections (MacCabe), pedagogy handbooks (Welsh and Lev), and many journal articles, they have also not resolved central theoretical problems in adaptation studies. This is because not all adaptation scholars agree that embracing newer theories represents theoretical progress. James M. Welsh, for example, founded the *Literature/Film Quarterly* and the Literature/Film Association with Tom Erskine in 1973 in defiance of "Cinema Studies snobs" and "Francophile zombie theorists" (2003, 4), in which he encompassed the poststructuralist psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan, the deconstructive semiotics of Jacques Derrida, the New Historicism and cultural studies of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze's attacks on traditional philosophy, and the postmodern theory of Jean-François Lyotard. In "Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?" (2003), Thomas Leitch characterises the journal's theoretical stance in the 1970s and 80s as maintaining a "belletristic focus, lucid prose, Kantian aesthetics, [and] Arnoldian ideas about the place of art in society" and the Literature/Film Association as offering "a haven from prevailing theoretical and political trends in contemporary film studies" (2).

For Welsh and others for whom theorization forges a path to certain, demonstrable, universally agreed upon truth that prioritizes high-art and humanist values, the theoretical turn in the humanities, which foregrounds theoretical

indeterminacy and unknowability and challenges the canon with mass culture and humanism with left-wing radicalism, demarcates a regressive return to a pre-Enlightenment intellectual primitivism. Welsh remained a major force in adaptation studies until a few years before his death, continuing to publish prolifically until 2010, leaving behind him the only adaptation studies prize for scholarship, a prize that has been awarded to scholars with whom he disagreed.

Pondering the persistence of older theories and methodologies in 2010, Cartmell and Whelehan express perplexity about and dissatisfaction with the persistence of what they characterise as "a small body of work moving against the main tide of theory," "an attitude to adaptations … that refuses to go away" (*Screen Adaptation: Impure Cinema* 11). In 2011, Colin MacCabe, editor of and contributor to the first Oxford University Press essay collection on adaptation, picked up Welsh's side of the debate, responding to Cartmell and Whelehan's question: "The fact is that people are still interested in how and why filmmakers adapt books and what they did to adapt them. So these issues and questions are not going to *go away* and perhaps it is time to ask why it is that we refuse to address them" (7, emphasis added). Even as he defends older theories from newer ones, he charges his critics with "continu[ing] to fight the day before yesterday's battles … like Don Quixote" (7). On first view, this does not make chronological sense: while the theoretical turn is over fifty years old, the theories that MacCabe champions are even older. Yet MacCabe is not so much charging their theories with superannuation as their theoretical *battles*. In his mind, older theories have not been vanquished by newer theories; they have endured. Thus, in his opinion, the battles fought by proponents of theoretical turn are not only old, but also futile.

As theoretical progress has disappointed the hopes of turn-of-the-century theoretical progressivists, scholars have *returned* to see what theoretical babies might have been thrown out with the theoretical bathwater. Timothy Corrigan, who joined co-editors Cartmell and Whelehan in calling for theoretical progress in their introduction to the first edition of the Oxford journal, *Adaptation*, in 2008, has also advanced the value of older theories for twenty-first-century adaptation studies:

> We need to encourage the refractive spread of adaptation studies where evolutionary progress can also be a return to positions that we may have archived too quickly—from Vachel Lindsay and BelaBalázs to Bazin and

> Bellour and well beyond. (Corrigan, "Adaptations, Refractions, and Obstructions" 22)

Practicing what he preaches pedagogically, his literature and film readers reprint essays by these older scholars along with newer writings (1999; 2011).

Cartmell and Whelehan also returned to older scholars in 2010 to consider essays on adaptation by André Bazin written in the 1950s, fruitfully blending some of his ideas with newer, progressivist ones (*Screen Adaptation*). In 2012, Thomas Leitch returned to his 2003 belief that intertextuality would resolve the problems of theorizing adaptation, revising and adapting his arguments ("Adaptation and Intertextuality").

Under new editorship by Elise Walker and David T. Johnson, *Literature/Film Quarterly* continues to publish articles engaging older theories as well as those adopting newer ones, as does Oxford University Press's second edited collection, edited by Thomas Leitch, *The Oxford Companion of Adaptation Studies* (2017). Other scholars and editors, including Cartmell and Whelehan, have been similarly ecumenical in *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen* (2007) and *Adaptations: Critical and Primary Sources* (2018), as have editors Dennis Cutchins, Katja Krebs, and Eckart Voigts in their *Routledge Companion to Adaptation* (2018).

Adaptation, a hybrid, requires theoretical hybridity. More specifically, as a process of repetition and variation that resists unilateral theoretical progress and resolute theoretical entrenchment, it requires theoretical hybridity that engages in progress and return. Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation*, published in 2006, commendably straddles old and new theories and methodologies. Ideologically postmodern, it is structured empirically, with chapters titled, "What?", "Who?", "Why?", "How?", "Where?", and "When?" In 2011, Frederic Jameson's first foray into adaptation studies was a strange brew of modernist medium specificity theory, poststructuralism, high art humanism, Marxist dialectics, and Lacanian psychoanalysis ("Adaptation as a Philosophical Problem"). Adaptation resists. It requires its scholars to look both backwards and forwards. Not all theoretical hybridity is equally illuminating for all adaptation scholars, but adaptation scholars need to be adaptive, unafraid to experiment with combinations of theories, and willing to consider theories that we may have archived too quickly, as well as those that may seem too radical and progressive for our tastes. Just as Hutcheon argues that adaptation enables older stories, myths, and narratives to survive and thrive

into posterity (32), so too adaptation studies has enabled older theories and theoretical debates to persist long after the rest of the humanities has moved on from them. Rather than lament their survival, we need to see that these are essential for adaptation studies to survive and thrive.

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An Analytic of Adaptation and Related Processes[1]

Abstract

There are many senses in which the term "adaptation" is employed. The following essay sets out to make the idea of adaptation more theoretically clear and practically valuable by articulating a meaning that is precise but remains broadly consistent with common usage. In relation to this, it sets out necessary conditions and contributory factors that distinguish adaptation from such closely related concepts as remediation, performative interpretation, modeling, and derivative influence. Among other things, an adaptation is in some sense both the same as and different from the source work. Drawing on different levels of narrative representation, the essay goes on to distinguish just what components of a source text are likely to be changed in adaptations – from story world to narrational medium – and how those components might be changed. The essay goes on to consider the purposes of adaptation, both thematic and emotional. It concludes with a brief example, the author's own adaptation of an Emily Dickinson poem, created for use in his course treating nineteenth-century American literature.

Keywords: adaptation, narratology, semantic analysis, theme, emotion, Emily Dickinson.

There has obviously been a great deal of important work on the nature and operation of adaptation. Nonetheless, Kamilla Elliott has pointed out that even major scholars in the field "struggle to define adaptation" ("Theorizing" 32). This is related to Lawrence Raw's observation that "[t]he term 'adaptation' is flexible, meaning different things in different contexts" (233). Also, Elliott has urged adaptation theorists to "reconsider our . . . definitions" ("Rethinking" 584). In keeping with these points, the paper begins by reconsidering the fundamental question of just what we might count as an adaptation,

[1] An earlier version of this essay was presented as a keynote speech at the conference on "Adaptation and Perception" at the Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, December 2015.

distinguishing it from such closely related alternatives as performative interpretation and modeling. In connection with this, the paper examines the components of a representational artwork and how these are open to adaptation, and subsequently turns to the purposes of adaptation as they bear on these components.

The nature of adaptation is not precisely an empirical question. There are different ways in which one could define the concept, and those ways may each have its own particular value, its appropriateness to a given context. The context that will be adopted here is the relation of adaptation to cognitive and affective literary universals – in keeping with the observation by Chan and other scholars that there is "a tendency in all human societies to rewrite original texts" (412); for example, dramatic adaptations are found in Europe, India, China, and Japan. This is not in any way to claim that a universalist context is the most important; ideological analysis of adaptation is potentially far more valuable, at least in the short term. To select a cognitive and affective universalist context is merely to claim that this is one context in which the study of adaptation has at least some value and this paper can, perhaps, contribute to adaptation studies in this area more than elsewhere. The point is parallel to the project of adaptation studies more generally. It is not necessary to examine a given work as an adaptation (or, for that matter, as falling into any other particular category, such as a genre or historical period) – a point noted in general terms by a number of theorists, including, for example, Linda Hutcheon (6). The reason for studying a work as an adaptation is simply that there is some non-exclusive value in doing so. The same holds for examining adaptation in relation to general processes of cognition and affection. So, what can we say about adaptation in a universalist context?

What Is an Adaptation?

The most fundamental property of an adaptation has an air of paradox. There are necessarily (at least) two works – the precursor and the adaptation – but the two works are in some sense the same. A love suicide play by Chikamatsu is not an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, though both works may involve romantic love, separation, and suicide. They are simply two works, not one. Conversely, one's printed edition of *Romeo and Juliet* is not an

adaptation of the Folio or the Quarto versions of the play, though it may be a variant of one or another. In this case, we have just one work, not two of them.

Unsurprisingly, *adaptation* is not a scientific concept; it is not fully defined by necessary and sufficient conditions. Of course, in trying to treat adaptation with some degree of scientific rigor, we try to make the concept more precise, not leaving it merely in the vague realm of family resemblance. Nonetheless, it does not seem productive to act as if there is a strict division between the phenomena covered by the concept of adaptation and those indicated by closely related concepts. In other words, even for scientific purposes, we are well-advised to take *adaptation* as involving a gradient of inclusion, such that some instances are very good cases, others are less good cases, still others are debatable, and some are clearly not adaptations, but something else (for instance, different editions or performances).

Nonetheless, it is possible to give certain conditions that appear necessary for something to count as an adaptation and others that contribute to it counting as such. One necessary condition has already been noted:

N1: There are two works, one of which is the precursor, the other being the adaptation.

The definition of "two works" is left vague, as all that is required at the moment is that there be some way of distinguishing the works, (for example, as a material object, such as a painting, and a verbal object, such as a text). There are, nonetheless, ideas implicit in this condition that should not remain vague, and it is worth spelling out two of them. Specifically, we may isolate the following necessary conditions:

N2: The adaptation was created intentionally.

N3: The precursor work contributed causally to that creation.

These three conditions eliminate some cases of mere generic parallelism, such as that between *Romeo and Juliet* and a given play by Chikamatsu. However, they do not eliminate other cases of generic parallelism, influence, or even mere inspiration. For instance, if one of Chikamatsu's plays inspired a later author to write a love suicide play, then the play was a precursor and the creation of the later play was causally affected by Chikamatsu's work.

However, we would not call the later work an adaptation. Here, then, we need to add another condition, as follows:

> N4: The adaptation must exhibit extensive and systematic similarities with the precursor; moreover, these similarities must be to some extent distinctive of the precursor as an individual work, not merely properties common to works of the same genre or other category.

This leads to two further problems. First, these conditions do not exclude editions of a work. Second, they include influence, particularly what we might refer to as *debilitating influence*, influence that compromises the new work by making it *derivative*. Indeed, this is where the criteria for adaptation begin to become interesting and significant, since subsequent criteria have greater consequences for the analysis of adaptations. Specifically, to differentiate adaptations from editions, two things should be done. First, the first condition must be rephrased as follows (adding the italicized portion):

> N1 (revised): There are two works, *explicitly distinguished as two works*, one of which is the precursor, the other being the adaptation.

This will be necessary to eliminate plagiarism and forgery as well. Second, the following condition is necessary:

> N5: The adaptation deviates significantly from the precursor.

Clearly, we do not wish to count any deviation from a precursor as an adaptation. For example, a simple film of a theatrical performance would probably not differ enough from the performance itself to count as an adaptation. The relation of the film to the performance is more akin to the relation of the performance to the play text. However, in this case, it is not a performative interpretation, but a remediation. Obviously, remediations are often adaptive. The point here is simply that they need not be.

In addition, "significantly" in condition N5 is intentionally vague. It depends in part on the nature of the work itself. However, it depends equally on the social circumstances in which a work is received by the creator of the adaptation and his or her audience. What counts as significant deviation from a work may change historically as works are added to a genre, for example. The same point holds for similarity. What seemed very similar to *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in the years just after its publication might appear generically

magical realist a decade later. Moreover, even within a relatively consistent social context, "significant" is vague in terms of degree. This suggests a contributory factor, rather than a necessary condition, as follows:

> C5.1: The prototypicality of an adaptation increases to the extent to which it deviates from a precursor.

For example, we would count a filmed theatrical production as, at best, only a very slight adaptation of a play, since it does not deviate greatly from the source work. On the other hand, it is important to qualify this with a contrary contributing factor:

> C4.1: The prototypicality of an adaptation decreases to the extent to which it does not preserve distinctive similarities with the precursor.

Conjunctively, C5.1and C4.1 indicate that a work will be a more prototypical adaptation to the extent that it is able to preserve distinctive features of the precursor and at the same time alter the precursor extensively.

Conditions N4 and N5 may be called the *similarity* and *deviation* conditions, respectively. Deviation is generally what is of greatest interest in adaptations. Before going on to discuss deviation, however, we need to complete the present analysis. As phrased, we have not yet distinguished adaptation from debilitating influence or derivativeness. Here, we appear to need an *identification* criterion to match the *differentiation* criterion added in N1. Specifically, we might add the following:

> N6: The adaptation is acknowledged as the same work as the precursor.
>
> > C6.1: In the prototypical case, it is important to the response of the audience of the adaptation that it is recognized as an adaptation.

In cases of influence, there is no such acknowledgment.

What is Almost an Adaptation?

The preceding necessary conditions and contributory factors set out a preliminary definition of adaptation that should be productive for further discussion in terms of cognition and emotion. Nevertheless, before going on to that we should note that this analysis distinguishes adaptations from some categories of works (e.g., editions), but it preserves considerable continuity between adaptations and some other categories. These

continuities are perhaps most readily understood in relation to the interpretively key criterion of deviation.

Specifically, on the "far" side of deviation, the side on which there is too much deviation, we have modeling. Modeling preserves some features of identity with the precursor text, but the extent of deviation has become too great to allow for identity. Thus, we would be unlikely to call Joyce's *Ulysses* an "adaptation" of the *Odyssey*. *Ulysses* is perhaps an extreme case, since its relations with its precursor are often tenuous as well as non-distinctive, as illustrated by the fact that many of the chapters appear to have as close a relation with *Paradise Lost*, as with Homer's epic.[2] Yet, the point here is that there is a continuum. This is reflected in the way we speak about such cases, ranging from "loosely modeled on" to "modeled on" to "based on" (which implies a closer relation than mere modeling) to "adapted from" – to "a performance of."This is probably where the much-debated issue of "fidelity" belongs. It does not bear on the intrinsic value of the later work, but on the nature of the claims made regarding its relation to the precursor. A film may be outstanding in and of itself, but highly misleading with respect to the precursor, if the author appears to claim close similarity.

A particularly important type of modeling occurs when an author takes up a precursor and revises the precursor work in such a way as to challenge its political or ethical implications. In the context of postcolonial literature, this is referred to as "writing back."[3] However, the practice is by no means confined to Modern national liberation movements. We find it, for example, in Kālidāsa's (fifth century) response to the semi-sacred *Rāmāyaṇa*. In *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, Kālidāsa retells the famous episode of Rāma's rejection of Sītā in Duṣyanta's rejection of Śakuntalā, though with a range of alterations that serve to comment on the original episode (Hogan *Affective*, 165-81), even while making Kālidāsa's play so different from the original that it cannot count as an adaptation.

On the "near" side of deviation, the side on which there is too little difference from the precursor, there is performative interpretation. A number of writers have broadly linked

[2] See: Hogan, *Joyce, Milton, and the Theory of Influence,* 1995.
[3] See: Ashcroft et al, *The Empire Writes Back*, 2002.

adaptation with interpretation,[4] but it is important to distinguish types of interpretation in adaptation and elsewhere. *Critical* interpretation typically claims to articulate what a work means. *Performative* interpretation, in contrast, attempts to make salient one possible way of thinking about a work. A critical interpretation, then, seeks the most plausible understanding of a text. Conversely, a performative interpretation of a text sets out to develop one possible meaning of the work, even if that meaning is not the most plausible, based solely on the text (in isolation from added scenery, costuming, music, line delivery, and so forth). The least "adaptive" case of performative interpretation comes with works that fulfill two conditions. First, they are based on precursors that were intended for performance. Although we are willing to count some stagings of plays as adaptations, we do not begin with the idea that such a staging is an adaptation. Second – and this is generally the interesting condition – the performative interpretation remains close to plausible critical interpretations of the play. This proximity ranges across the various aspects of the work to which this paper will turn in the following section. For example, a play script may or may not mention the clothing of the characters. Thus, it might be possible to have all the characters appear naked on the stage without contradicting anything in the play. Yet, this would, in all likelihood, be rather implausible as a critical interpretation of the play. More importantly, we may be able to stage a work so as to present its thematic significance in a way that is not very plausible as a critical interpretation. For example, in staging *The Merchant of Venice*, it is possible to stage Shylock's forced conversion as tragic. However, this seems an unlikely critical interpretation. Shakespeare presumably thought that converting to Christianity was a matter of converting to the true religion, thus a good thing. He may have regretted and criticized its forced nature, but that would not make the conversion itself tragic. In a case of this sort, it seems to make much more sense to speak of the performance interpretation as having at least elements of adaptation. We could refer to cases of this sort as "adaptive interpretations."

[4] See: Elliott, "Theorizing Adaptations/Adapting Theories," 2013, and works cited therein.

Adaptation: What Is Changed and How?

The preceding case of Shylock raises two issues. First, just what components of a work might be altered in adaptation (as well as performative interpretation, or other forms of transformation) and, second, why someone – a later author – might wish to alter them. The components of adaptation will be considered in this section; its purposes will be addressed in the following section. In discussing these components, the paper uses the terminology of narrative theory. However, the analysis applies to any representational work, whether or not it involves the representation of causal sequences of actions and events.

Specifically, it is important to distinguish different levels of representation. First, there is the story world: the place, time, things, and people that compose the represented world. The story world involves principally the entities explicitly mentioned or portrayed in the work, but also all entities presupposed by the work. The presuppositions are largely taken care of by our assumption of overlap between the real world and the fictional world – roughly following what Marie-Laure Ryan refers to as the "Principle of Minimal Departure" (447-9), that is, the assumption that the story world coincides with the real world unless otherwise stated. This is "roughly" the case as it seems that the assumption applies only to the extent to which such coincidence is presupposed by some aspect of the story world. The point is relevant because an adaptation may diverge from the story world simply by adding an element from the real world that is not presupposed by the precursor work. For example, a production of a play that takes place in 1935 might add, say, newsreel footage or radio broadcasts that bring in elements of world politics that were absent in the original text. This would at least contribute toward making the work an adaptive interpretation.

Adaptations often address the story world. For example, *O* (Tim Blake Nelson, 2001) changes the story world of *Othello* to an American high school. Feng Xiaogang's *The Banquet* (2006) transposes *Hamlet* to tenth-century China. During the Vietnam War, some adaptive interpretations of Euripides' *Trojan Women* shifted the play to contemporary Southeast Asia. Leaving aside techniques based on remediation, perhaps the most common technique of adaptation involves changing the story world.

More specific than the story world is the story itself, or the stories, if there are multiple sequences. The story is the causal sequence of actions and events that usually

constitute the main source of recipient interest in the work. In principle, any sequence of actions and events could form a story. However, stories prototypically involve one or more agents with one or more goals they are trying to achieve. The various actions and events are not simply incidental to this central process; they either inhibit or advance achievement of the goals. Moreover, there are recurring genres that guide the selection of goals, the means by which the goals are pursued, and the audience attitude toward the goals and their pursuit.

Adaptations may change the story. However, we commonly think of the story as essential to a narrative representation. As such, changes in the story tend to be limited. When story changes become extensive, we tend to think of the work as a rewriting rather than an adaptation. To illustrate, we would say that Shakespeare rewrote or based parts of his plays on various sources, rather than that he adapted them. Similarly, Aimé Césaire rewrote Shakespeare's *Tempest*; he did not merely adapt it. If both the story world and the story are extensively altered, we tend to speak of modeling. Thus, Joyce radically altered the story world and the story of the *Odyssey* when he modeled *Ulysses* on it. The same point holds for Kālidāsa in rewriting part of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*.

One way in which stories may perhaps be more readily adapted is through genre changes. These include changes from tragedy to comedy, as in Nahum Tate's version of *King Lear* (1681).Genre changes of this sort might also include certain forms of parody. Of course, in such cases of story alteration, one might debate whether the new work is best characterized as an adaptation or is better viewed as a revision. But, again, there is often no clear cut-off point in reality, and our theory should not predict such a cut-off point if there is none.

The next level of representation is plot – the way the story is presented. Plot always differs from the story in being less complete than the story; there is necessarily a selection of story information in the plot. Moreover, that information deviates from the story in terms of organization. As is widely noted, the plot may present story information out of chronological order (as in the use of flashbacks). It also presents story information in ways that make some pieces of information more salient than others, in ways that facilitate or inhibit the drawing of causal connections, and so on.

Unsurprisingly, all these elements can be and are varied in adaptations. Consider, for example, selection and remediation. Norms regarding various media involve different durations. Novels may be quite long. Moreover, they vary fairly continuously in length and in organization (that is, they may be 200 pages long or 210 or 217 or any other number; they may have many or few, short or long chapters, and so on). Television programs are often short (less than thirty minutes), although they may be long (in serials). No less importantly, they tend to be organized in fixed units of roughly a half-hour or one hour, minus time for commercial breaks.[5] Films tend to be not less than about seventy-five minutes and not much more than two hours. These constraints are not required by the media as such, but accrue to the media due to distribution and other practices. Nonetheless, they have significant consequences for the processes of adaptation, including selection into plot. To take an obvious example, a film adaptation of a novel will almost certainly have a considerably more selective plot than the precursor work.

Perhaps more interestingly, emphasis may be varied or preserved from a precursor to an adaptation. Moreover, if preserved, it may be preserved by the same or different means. For example, in order to stress a particular element of the scene (for instance, some artifact that will play an important role later in the story), a novel may devote a separate sentence or sentences to the topic. A film version may do the same thing with a voice-over commentary. But it may equally preserve the emphasis and saliency by framing, focus, or camera manipulation (for instance, a zoom in on the object). Consider, for example, a sentence such as, "The club was crowded and Jake had to squeeze through dancing patrons." It tells us directly what Jake did. If this is represented visually, the filmmaker has to be sure that the viewer notices that Jake is squeezing his way through, rather than allowing the viewer to be distracted by all the other onscreen events.[6] This sort of change is prototypical for adaptation – a change made to communicate the same information or have the same effects as the source text.

Timing too may be adapted. We find this in all aspects of timing, from chronology to pacing. To take a simple case of the former, in a novel, two simultaneous scenes might

[5] On certain features of narrative specific to television, see: Mittell, "Film and Television Narrative," 2007.
[6] The complexities of conveying information visually have been discussed insightfully by Bordwell (1998).

be developed in full one after the other. In a film adaptation, these scenes may be intercut with one another. This is not simply a necessary result of remediation. Films can and do involve extended sequential emplotment of parallel sequences – as in the clichéd intertitle of some Westerns, "Meanwhile, back at the ranch. . ."A change to intercut scenes is, rather, an adaptive choice.

Turning to the next component, the term "narration" is used broadly to refer to the provision of story or plot information through some subjectivity, the narrator. Given this broad usage, every narrative – more generally, anything communicated – has a narrator, a subjectivity guiding the selection and ordering of story information. There are differences in the degree to which the narrator is or is not personified or personalized, which is to say, associated with identifiable characteristics, such as explicit attitudes or biases, or a distinctive dialect (Margolin 56). Nonetheless, every narrator in this sense has three properties. First, narrators have some means of acquiring knowledge of the story world and story. That means may be a matter of factual omniscience, perceptual omniscience, external factual or perceptual information (without access to the internal lives of characters), and so on, through many variants. Second, narrators have attitudes or motivations. Some aspects of the story and story world interest them more than others; communicating certain aspects interests them more than others. Narrator unreliability may be either epistemic (a matter of the narrator's limited knowledge) or attitudinal (a matter of the narrator's interests, which may include deceiving a narratee). Narrator forthcomingness (Bordwell *Narration*, 60) – the degree to which the narrator fills in important information – is also a matter of attitude. Finally, narrators have some means of communication. That means of communication is always the perceptual interface with the recipient, principally auditory or visual. Thus, it is particularly relevant to the relation between adaptation and perception. Within the perceptual interface, it is important to distinguish verbal from non-verbal communications.

Adaptation may, once again, alter any of these elements. Remediation often involves changes in the narrational forms of knowledge and communication. For example, adapting a novel to film will regularly involve some shifting of verbal to non-verbal forms of knowledge and communication, perhaps adding or perceptually manifesting optical and aural point of view. Even in cases where a film preserves verbal narration, it is commonly a

matter of an auditory version (a voice-over), although a selection of text may be used in titles, especially in silent films. More extreme adaptations may change the narrator or focalizer,[7] though changes of this sort commonly lead to what we might be more likely to call rewritings. In keeping with this, a common form of writing back involves retelling a story from a different point of view, as when, in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Jean Rhys retells a part of *Jane Eyre* from Bertha's perspective.

Sometimes, a new work will be designed to create a narrational effect similar to that of the precursor but by using different means, in some cases medium-specific means. The shift from words alone to words and images in a film adaptation typically limits the range of verbal techniques, but obviously adds the possibility of visual techniques. At times, the adaptation seeks to parallel distinctive narrational features of the precursor as well. For instance, in *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner presents the events through a range of different character narrators. In his film adaptation, James Franco imitates this technique of verbal narration by giving the audience not only voice-overs from different verbal narrators, but also split-screen representations of different visual perspectives.

The Purposes of Adaptation

Thus, there are many means of altering a precursor work to produce an adaptation. Yet, this raises the question of why one might wish to alter the precursor work in the first place. There are, of course, straightforward cases. The nature of the medium might be such as to in effect require a minimal change. Shifting from a verbal text to an enactment (in theatre or film) requires a number of alterations in the source work. Moreover, conventions associated with a medium impose further necessities, such as the limitation of film duration. However, these do not explain the extent of even the most common adaptations, which deviate much more from the precursor than is strictly required by the constraints and conventions of the target medium. For example, a film adaptation of a novel could use voice-over narration with simple illustration of the action or events, even though this is extremely rare. Even the strictest and most faithful –what we might call "minimal"

[7] A focalizer is a character whose point of view restricts the information provided by the narrator (Jahn 173).

adaptations – more fully transform a novel into dialogue and visual action than bare necessity would require. In a sense, the reason for this is obvious – it makes a better film (or theater production or video game), but that does not really answer the question. Something is better to the degree that it satisfies a certain purpose. What, then, are the purposes of an adaptation?

To an extent, the purposes of an adaptation vary with context. Specifically, they change with the adaptor, the target audience of the adaptation, and the presumed durability of the adaptation. For example, adapting a song for a birthday present will have different aims than adapting a novel for a commercial film. Nonetheless, for most adaptations that are likely to be of general interest, the history of literary theory suggests two that are recurrent and predominant – to please and to teach, to be "sweet" and "useful" as in Horace's well-known phrase (75). More precisely, literature and other forms of art aim at emotional effects and thematic communications, in a very broad sense of "thematic." Adaptations aim at affecting those emotional and thematic purposes.

Specifically, an adaptation – or any related change, such as a performative interpretation – may aim to enhance, sustain, diminish, or alter the emotional force of a precursor. We may distinguish three sorts of emotion that may be manipulated through adaptation. The first is simple interest, our emotional – or perhaps pre-emotional – engagement with a work, which tends to be aroused and sustained to a great extent by novelty (Silvia 221). Thus adaptations, particularly adaptations appealing to a broad, popular audience, often try to produce novelty. We find a case of this in the 2015 Deutsches Theater production of *Was ihr wollt* (William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*) in which relatively static dialogue scenes were transformed into traveling conversations through the use of a rotating stage. It is relatively rare that adaptations try to diminish interest; their aim is commonly to enhance it. Enhancement of interest may come through changing any element of the work. However, it is perhaps most obviously a matter of story world change (for instance, shifting the time to the present) or, even more, emplotment: *what* information is presented *when*. Of course, changes in the story itself can increase interest. Then again, changes in the story tend to push the new work into the realm of a rewriting rather than an adaptation (or a performative interpretation). A more extreme case may be found in Mani

Ratnam's rewriting of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in *Raavan*. There, he not only changes the historical location of the events; he alters the events themselves extensively (though not so much as to obscure the relation to the precursor). Ratnam's film is indeed an excellent example of modeling.

A second sort of emotion affected by adaptation is aesthetic – the feelings of beauty or sublimity. There is considerable reason to believe that aesthetic response is a function of both information processing and emotion (Hogan, *Beauty and Sublimity* 19-45). The information processing components (which foster emotional response in their turn) are non-habitual pattern isolation and prototype approximation. The emotional components are attachment or bonding and what is called "reward," the system that governs seeking and pleasure, "wanting" and "liking," as Chatterjee puts it (309). Adaptations may or may not address aesthetic feeling. If they do, it is often by way of adding further sorts of pattern, frequently patterns specific to the perceptual quality of the medium of adaptation, thus stylistic features of the perceptual interface. For example, a film adaptation of a novel may add non-habitual patterns of camera movement or editing. Film adaptations also enhance aesthetic appeal through prototype approximation in such areas as the selection of actors and actresses with highly prototypical faces, which tend to be judged the most beautiful (Langlois and Roggman 115-21). As to the emotions that produce aesthetic enjoyment, "seeking" or reward system engagement is produced most often through story and plot (in our empathic sharing of the protagonists' goals). Attachment bears in obvious ways on story (for instance, when the story treats love), though it may also involve plot selection and construal (for example, through the use of mother-child images to activate the viewers' attachment memories) or narration (for example, through the personalization of the narrator).

To exemplify these points, we may return to Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. It treats the *Rāmāyaṇa*, but it more directly takes up and rewrites a part of the *Mahābhārata*. In doing so, it develops novel patterns, as in the symmetrical organization of the acts (Hogan, "Beauty, Politics and Cultural Otherness" 26) and makes the story more

prototypically romantic.[8] More importantly, it fosters attachment response through the tender relation between the lovers (which appears largely opportunistic in the *Mahābhārata* original) and through the elaboration of scenes treating parent-child bonding. (Both the original and Kālidāsa's rewriting produce seeking system engagement through plot interest.) In short, through his rewriting, Kālidāsa has greatly enhanced the reader's or audience member's likely aesthetic pleasure in the work.

Finally, there is the range of story, plot, and narration emotions that enter into both precursors and adaptations – the sorrow of a tragedy, the suspense of a mystery, the fluctuating trust and distrust of some psychological fiction (to take examples of story, plot, and narration emotions respectively). Any of these feelings may be modulated in adaptation. To put it differently, both source and target works are to some degree ambivalent. Often, an adaptation will alter the "profile of ambivalence" in the precursor work. For instance, one film adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry V* might enhance its nationalistic fervor; another might diminish that fervor and enhance the (very limited) suggestions of grief over war's destructiveness. A Brechtian production may seek to diminish all story and plot emotions, perhaps manipulating narration emotions in more complex ways. An interesting case here is Chen Kaige's film of the Orphan of Chao story (represented in a well-known Yuan Dynasty play by Ji Junxiang). The story concerns an orphan who is in part raised by the man who murdered the orphan's family; it culminates in the revenge of the child against the adoptive father. Chen develops the relationship between the orphan and his adoptive father, making the revenge much more emotionally complex.

Thematic purposes too involve enhancing, sustaining, diminishing, or otherwise altering the aims of the precursor work. Here too there are many possible techniques for doing this. At the most general level, however, we might say that there is thematic ambiguity in most works, parallel to emotional ambivalence, and adaptations may alter the profile of ambiguity. For example, as already suggested, one might argue that Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* presupposes the good of conversion to Christianity, but may also be critical of forced conversion or religious bigotry. A particular adaptation or

[8]The paper here refers to the more commonly treated, Devanāgarīrecension of the play; the Bengali recension is somewhat different (see Rajan 13-20 and Miller 333-5).

adaptive interpretation could downplay the Christian theme and enhance the concerns with forced conversion or religious bigotry. As usual, all the levels are available for such deviation. However, the most straightforward is perhaps the transformation of the story world, as when a Greek tragedy is used to comment on contemporary political events.

A Brief Example

This analysis was originally delivered at a conference that treated not only adaptation, but also the development of new media and their bearing on adaptation. The conference took up such topics as the opportunities for people with little expertise or funding to create adaptations. I therefore chose to discuss one of my own adaptations, posted on YouTube. I have done brief adaptations or performative interpretations for my classes, which I do in part because I allow my students to undertake a creative project for part of their grade; my own effort at such a project gives them an idea of what I am looking for. Since the present volume treats pedagogical issues, in addition to theoretical and critical topics, it seemed appropriate to treat one of these.

I was teaching American Literature to 1880 and offered the students the option of a creative project in place of answering two of the five questions on the final exam. My version of the project was on Emily Dickinson's poem "I'm Nobody! Who are you?"[9] I first did a musical setting of the poem. I recorded the setting and tried singing the poem, but failed abysmally. I then read the poem to the music, but it somehow kept coming across as frivolous. Moreover, the music was too simple to stand on its own, with the lines read rather than being sung. I altered the music using standard software, giving it a more upbeat, engaging, and contemporary feel. This was an attempt to enhance the interest of the work, which is such a famous poem that we risk finding ourselves bored simply by its repetition. I read it somewhat mechanically with the thought of dampening the sense of frivolity produced by my earlier readings and yielding something more Brechtian instead. I also filtered the voice to produce the amateur radio sound. I did this in part to enhance interest by giving it an unusual vocal quality, and one that fit the technological sound of the

[9] See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAfKXUydmDk.

manipulated music. I also did it to suggest a sort of ham radio communication between people who are in some way removed from the ordinary means of communication, a sort of contemporary version of the social outcasts the class discussed in interpreting the poem.

I had begun our class discussion of the poem by explaining that Dickinson relies on abstraction and ellipsis in her poetry, leading us to fill in a great deal, often through implied oppositions. In connection with this particular poem, I began by asking who is named "Nobody." It is, of course, Odysseus. He claims that his name is "Nobody" when held by the Cyclops Polyphemus and he uses that name to engineer his escape. Specifically, Odysseus blinds Polyphemus, who cries out in pain, but no one helps him. His fellow monoculars call to ask who is harming him, but Polyphemus replies that Nobody is harming him, therefore they all leave him alone. I then asked who would be escaping from capture in mid-nineteenth century America. Moreover, who would "advertise" in such a way as to harm such a person. The answers are clearly "slaves" and "masters seeking escaped slaves." We also discussed that the opposite of June would presumably be December, associated with Jesus's birth; the demagogue who is repeating his own name is opposed most obviously to God, whose name we might more appropriately repeat ourselves; the frog, tied to land and water, is opposed most obviously to creatures of the air, such as birds, which may also lead our thoughts heavenward, rather than toward the "bog." Moreover, the general celebration of the lowly is central to Jesus' teaching (see, for example, Matthew 20:16 on how "the last shall be first, and the first last," in the King James translation[10]).

In conclusion, the poem may be read as a criticism of slavery, which – like many other criticisms of slavery from the time – appeals to Christian principles and associates slaves with Jesus. In my visual adaptation of the poem, I began by connecting the speaker with Harriet Tubman, an escaped slave who helped many other slaves to escape. Through the montage, I associated her with the Virgin Mary and the slave she is helping with Jesus. I chose Our Lady of Częstochowa for this association due to the fact that she and Jesus are black in this representation. For the pernicious "Somebody," I chose an image of John C. Calhoun, Vice President of the United States between 1825 and 1832. I illustrated the

[10] Available at https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Matthew-Chapter-20/ (accessed 20 Nov. 2017).

image with a quotation from a notorious pro-slavery speech of his. All this was done with the obvious purpose of enhancing one set of thematic purposes of the poem, along with relevant emotional response to those purposes. I shifted from the nineteenth to the twentieth century with the Nazi rally to generalize Dickinson's political and moral concerns, not only to Nazi Germany, but also to related events recently in the United States. The image of the Tollund Man extends the point back 2300 years, thus suggesting the still broader generalization implied by Dickinson's abstraction (since the poem is clearly not confined to the case of escaped slaves).

Conclusion

Adaptation is a complex process that can be distinguished by a number of necessary conditions and contributing factors. There is a gradient of prototypicality for adaptations and a crucial variable in defining that gradient is the degree to which the new work deviates from the precursor. Specifically, a prototypical adaptation differs significantly from its precursor while maintaining a distinctive identity with the precursor. For narratives, the identity is most often at the level the story. However, any level of a narrative or otherwise representational work may be varied – from story world through plot and narration. The purposes of adaptation are primarily to modulate the emotional effect of the work or its thematic import. Like everything else in today's society, current forms of adaptation are in part old and in part new. New media do not fundamentally change the processes of adaptation nor our possible response to them. Rather, the basic principles of adaptation and processes related to adaptation – performance, performative interpretation, rewriting, modeling (including writing back), and various forms of influence – re-appear with new media, even if more people are able to engage in such processes. Indeed, as I have suggested through examples from different traditions, these processes appear to recur not only across different time periods, but also across different cultures as well. My hope is that future research on the details of such trans-historical and cross-cultural recurrence will be facilitated and the details themselves will be clarified by the preceding analysis. Indeed, future research should correct and further develop the analysis as well.

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Part II: Criticism – Case Studies: The Classics

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Following Her (Father's) Dreams: The Disneyfication of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's "The Frog King"[1]

Abstract

Over the decades, Walt Disney Animation Studios have become well-known for adapting various types of texts for the big screen, particularly children's novels and fairy tales. However, regardless of the nature of the source materials and the cultural, historical, and social context in which they originated, their animated adaptations tend to follow the same basic pattern, largely predicated on fairy tales. The films created through this specific process of adaptation – often referred to as Disneyfication – may be described as a mixture of fairy tales, romance, and Broadway musicals, complete with comedic side-kicks and happy endings. The present paper aims to examine the process of Disneyfication by means of a close and comparative reading of Disney's 49th animated feature film *The Princess and the Frog* (2009) and its source materials: E.D. Baker's children's fantasy novel *The Frog Princess* (2002), and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's fairy tale "The Frog King" (1857). Although Baker's novel is cited as the inspiration for the film, the paper argues that *The Princess and the Frog* relies much more heavily on the Grimms' fairy tale, from which it borrows (and significantly alters) themes (such as the importance of keeping one's promises and finding a suitable romantic partner), motifs (bargaining, false promises), and character traits. Acknowledging that the process of adaptation can never be a straightforward reproduction of a given story in a different medium, the paper will focus on concrete strategies employed to modify the Grimms' fairy tale (and, to a lesser extent, Baker's novel) and fit it into the recognizable Disney mould.

Keywords: adaptation, animation, Disneyfication, fairy tale, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "The Frog King," *The Frog Princess*, *The Princess and the Frog*, Walt Disney Animation Studios.

> So shake a stick at those Grimm Brothers, when it comes to princesses and frogs we now have a beautiful, boisterous sister in charge.
>
> (Sharkey)

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Introduction

The animated film *The Princess and the Frog* (2009) marked a triple milestone in the history of one of the leading global purveyors of family entertainment, the Walt Disney Animation Studios. Namely, it featured the very first African American princess in the Disney canon; a (short-lived) return to hand-drawn animation, which was abandoned in 2004 after a string of financially under-performing films[2] and replaced by the increasingly popular CGI animation (Adams 2010); and a return to traditional fairy tales,[3] which have long been a staple of Disney animation. Not only was the Studio's first feature-length animated film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), based on a fairy tale (Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's "Snow White"), but the same genre also launched (with *The Little Mermaid*) and for the most part sustained (with *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*) the so-called Disney Renaissance, when fairy-tale-based films saved the company from financial ruin, brought about by underwhelming box-office performances of *The Fox and the Hound*, *Oliver & Company*, and especially *The Black Cauldron*.[4]

Set in the vibrant 1920s New Orleans, the movie centres around Tiana, a hard-working African American waitress who dreams of one day opening her own restaurant. Following an unsuccessful attempt to purchase a run-down sugar mill and turn it into "Tiana's Place," the desperate girl kisses a talking frog who promises her financial compensation in return. The frog is actually the disinherited (and equally desperate) Prince Naveen, whose attempts to marry Tiana's rich friend Charlotte had been thwarted by the mysterious voodoo sorcerer Dr Facilier, who turned him into a frog as part of his elaborate scheme to take over the city. Since Tiana is not a princess, the kiss not only fails to break Facilier's spell, but also causes Tiana to become a frog herself. The unlikely companions set off in search of Mama Odie, "the voodoo queen of the bayou" (*The Princess and the Frog*), falling in love and avoiding Facilier's demonic servants from the spirit realm along the way.

The film is said to be loosely based on *The Frog Princess* (2002), a children's fantasy novel by American author E.D. Baker that was, in turn, inspired by Jacob and

[2] These include *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, *Home on the Range*, and especially *Treasure Planet*, which Jerry Beck describes as "the biggest financial disaster in the history of Disney animation" and decisive factor "in the decision to close the 2-D animation studio that had flourished for 65 years" (290).
[3] Almost two decades had passed since the previous fairy-tale-based Disney film, 1992's *Aladdin*.
[4] See: Maltin, *The Disney Films*, 2000.

Wilhelm Grimm's "The Frog King, Or Iron Heinrich" ("Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich"), the first fairy tale in their collection of stories *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*Children's and Household Tales*, 1812/15–57). While this may suggest that the Grimms' narrative only has a secondary, indirect influence on the film, the present paper argues that the opposite is true. As the following paragraphs aim to demonstrate, in terms of themes (finding a suitable romantic partner), motifs (false promises, bargaining), as well as characters and their traits (the hero, the heroine, and her father), *The Princess and the Frog* draws much more heavily on the Grimms' fairy tale. The film will therefore be examined as an adaptation of "The Frog King," partly influenced by *The Frog Princess*.

Adaptations constitute a large majority of Disney's animated canon (which, at the time of writing, encompasses 57 feature-length films). However, while the source materials differ significantly in terms of genre (legends, myths, fairy tales, children's novels, and so on), intended audience, and the cultural, social, and historical context in which they originated, they typically undergo the same adaptation process, which film critic Richard Schickel terms "Disneyfication" (225). In terms of both form and content, the end result presents a combination of the fairy tale, Broadway musical, and romantic comedy: a romantic adventure story in which good triumphs over evil, earning a happy ending (Zipes, *Art of Subversion* 209).[5] Leaving aside a critical and aesthetic evaluation of Disneyfication, as well as the contested issue of (in)fidelity[6] to the source material, the paper draws on existing adaptation, Disney, and fairy-tale studies (most notably the writings of Jack Zipes and other scholars whose research focuses on cinematic fairy-tale adaptations) in order to examine the concrete strategies utilized in the process of adaptation, the (inevitable) alterations of the source material, and the way its meaning is interpreted and reshaped in the film. In other words, the paper is not concerned with the question of "how successfully a film translates the tale into a new medium," but rather "what new and old meanings and uses" the Disney version brings to the table (Greenhill

[5] For a more in-depth description of "the Disney recipe," see: Zipes, *Enchanted Screen*, 88.

[6] According to Linda Hutcheon, the transposition of a given narrative from one semiotic system (e.g. literature) to another (e.g. film) by its very nature demands alterations of the source material, not only because of the different nature of the semiotic systems (16), but also because, she claims, the process of adaptation is one of creation and (more importantly) interpretation (8). For Zipes, the issue of fidelity is irrelevant since it can never be truly achieved and contradicts the very purpose of an adaptation as a new interpretation and presentation of an existing story (*Enchanted Screen*, 11; for more on the issue of fidelity see, among others: Hermansson; MacCabe, Murray, and Warner; Stam).

and Matrix 4). A close reading of the select film and its source material will occasionally be expanded to include other Disney (fairy-tale) adaptations, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the Disneyfication process.

An Overview of Literature

Considering Disney's status as "a globally dominant producer of cultural constructs related to gender, race, ethnicity, class and sexuality" (Lester 294) and Tiana's high-profile status as the first African American Disney heroine, it was inevitable that "she and the movie [would] inherently come with much historical baggage to unpack and a barrel of critical concerns, high expectations, and pressing questions" (297). Unsurprisingly, the majority of existing scholarly writings and critical responses to the film are concerned with the issue of race.

For many, the mere existence of an African American princess[7] was ample cause for celebration (Lester 297). In calling Tiana "the princess [she] didn't know [she] had been waiting for [her] whole life," Sara Sarasohn effectively summarizes the sentiment and cultural relevance of the moment by admitting that seeing "a black woman wearing a tiara and running her own business" in a Disney movie brought tears to her eyes. The hard-working Tiana who dreams of entrepreneurship rather than romance and is determined to shape her own destiny (Terry) was hailed as a positive role model for young audiences (Stephens 98). The film in which African American characters are voiced by and modelled after African American actors (492) was greeted as a long-overdue and most welcome antidote to the highly problematic representation of non-white characters in previous Disney films, such as *Dumbo* (cf. Wainer), *Lady and the Tramp* (Akita and Kenney), *The Jungle Book* (Ciha, Joseph, and Martin), and especially the controversial *Song of the South* (Sperb).

However, the same things that some celebrated as progressive features of the film, others perceived as examples of what King, Lugo-Lugo, and Bloodworth-Lugo term "false positivity" – seemingly positive images that in actuality denigrate difference (157). Many deemed the fact that the first African American princess is also the first Disney heroine to work for a living as highly problematic. For McCoy Gregory, Tiana's dependence on manual labour serves to perpetuate the stereotype of the black woman as

[7] Jena Stephens hails her as "a symbol of progression for the Disney franchise" (98).

"invisible or as solely attached to labor" (433), while Lester believes it is likely to diminish her "royal aura for those rightfully expecting the first black princess to live in the same world of fantasy and (im)possibility as do her other sister princesses" (297). England, Descartes, and Collier-Meek express concern over the fact that the re-emergence of domestic work in Disney princess films, absent since the days of Snow White and Cinderella, is associated with a black heroine (564). Furthermore, the fact that the first black princess spends the majority of the film in frog form,[8] making the supposedly central issue of race a moot point, was a source of much disappointment (cf. Barnes; Libby). Given the amount of time Tiana spends in what he terms "greenface" (425), Ajay Gehlawat challenges the possibility of calling *The Princess and the Frog* a black princess narrative, proposing instead that it is "the first Disney princess narrative in which the princess is absent from most of the film and instead takes the form of a slimy amphibian" (429). Not everyone agreed that the assuming of an amphibian form negated Tiana's race; Esther Terry, for instance, points out that the heroine's voice (provided by African American actress Anika Noni Rose) serves as a constant reminder of her human identity (477).

Naveen's lighter-toned skin and unspecified ethnicity[9] provoked similar contrasting interpretations: on the one hand, his ambiguity is viewed in a positive light, "as a destabilizing force" that "subverts notions of race and ethnicity" (Barker 494, 495). On the other hand, the notable absence of positive male African American characters in the film (the only significant dark-skinned character is the antagonist) problematizes the issue of Naveen's skin and the overall construction of African American maleness in the film (Lester 301).

A number of scholars claim that by refusing to engage with complex issues and realities of the early-twentieth-century American South – marked by segregation and the infamous Jim Crow laws (Breaux; Hebert-Leiter; Rizov) – the film generates a harmful image of a "fantasy color-blind, merit-based society" (Charania and Simonds 70), "a 'Disneyfied' postrace world" (Moffitt and Harris 73) in which "African Americans are present yet absent and race is implicit yet unaddressed" (Gehlawat 429; see also King et

[8] Depending on who is timing it, Tiana spends from 57 (Breaux 405) to 80 minutes (Moffitt and Harris 65) of a 95-minute film in frog form.

[9] "[H]is name is Indian (and his mother appears to be wearing a sari), his accent is Brazilian (voiced by Bruno Campos), he comes from Maldonia, which sounds European, and he has a British butler" (Barker 494).

al.).[10] For Turner, the fact that material circumstances and work, rather than race, are presented as the point of difference between Tiana (who works two jobs) and her Caucasian friend Charlotte (who, thanks to her father's fortune, never has to work; cf. Dargis), is a reflection of the film's "color-blind ideology" which "exonerat[es] the hegemonic culture" by implying that "race has nothing to do with success or failure" (91). While the majority of critics acknowledge the absence of a direct engagement with sensitive issues such as race, not all of them see this as problematic or surprising. Sarasohn, for instance, notes that one cannot expect a "deep and meaningful exploration of race" in a Disney movie, while Barker deems any expectations of an in-depth (or any, for that matter) engagement with problematic issues on Disney's part unrealistic, as this would be incompatible with the Studios' "sanitized aesthetic" and efforts to appeal to the broadest possible market (483).

In addition to the widely-discussed issue of race and historical (in)accuracy, scholars have also addressed the film's representation of ethnic minorities, as exemplified by the Cajun firefly Ray (Hebert-Leiter). Moffitt and Harris present the results of their audience reception study, conducted among African American mothers who watched *The Princess and the Frog* with their daughters, while Parasecoli analyses the importance and symbolism of food and cooking in the film, which, he claims, serve as "visual markers and decontextualized signifiers for race and ethnicity" (451). Assuming a feminist approach, Jena Stephens views Tiana – along with other "third generation Disney princesses" (*Brave*'s Merida and *Tangled*'s Rapunzel; 97) – as a departure from the "weak female" Disney princess archetype (97) and a symbol of the new, "independent, strong, self-sufficient female character" (106).

While a significant portion of Disney scholarship consists of analyses of Disney adaptations and their relationship to their source material (e.g. Brode and Brode; Inge; Trites; Wright), few authors have explored *The Princess and the Frog* as an adaptation (e.g. Kujundžić's feminist reading of the film occasionally refers to the Grimms' fairy tale). The present paper proposes to fill this gap, thus contributing to Disney, adaptation, and fairy-tale studies.

[10] Other Disney films have been similarly criticized for their tendency to "airbrush" (Lester 301) or ignore select (unpleasant, problematic) aspects of the historical, social, cultural, and geographic context they are portraying (e.g. the simplification and re-writing of colonial history in *Pocahontas*, the absence of black characters in *Tarzan*, etc.; cf. Byrne and McQuillan; Galloway; Ward; see also Wallace).

Amphibian Royalty: "The Frog King" and *The Frog Princess*

Initially published in the first edition (1812) of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimms' "The Frog King"[11] is strikingly different from other (Grimms') fairy tales that constitute the popular (Western) canon, such as "Snow White," "Cinderella," or "Sleeping Beauty." While it does contain many traits typically associated with the fairy-tale genre, such as the presence of a magical and non-magical world (Messerli 274), wondrous transformation (Zipes, "Introduction" xvii), and the confronting and successful resolution of a problem which leads to a happy ending (Swann Jones xiv), it also features a rather atypical heroine and gender dynamics. The story follows a haughty princess who loses her favourite play-thing: a golden ball. To get it back, she promises to become a friend and companion to a talking frog, convinced she would never be called upon to actually fulfil it. However, when the frog suddenly appears at her doorstep, her father forces her to play hostess to the unwanted guest. She unwillingly offers him a seat at her table and food from her plate, but when the frog tries to sleep in her bed, she throws him against the wall. The vile amphibian is instantly transformed into a handsome prince who immediately proposes marriage.

Strikingly absent from this plot description is the magical kiss which seems inextricably linked with the story in popular imagination, and prominently featured in both *The Frog Princess* and *The Princess and the Frog* (for a discussion of the origin, dissemination, and ultimate superimposition of the kiss motif onto the Grimms' fairy tale, see Mieder). Rather, it is an act of violence (which takes even more extreme forms, such as decapitation in other versions of the tale; cf. Röhrich; Zipes, *Golden Age* 276-8) that triggers the central transformation from a pesky frog to desirable partner.

As may be deduced from the brief summary presented above, the unnamed heroine of "The Frog King" is a far cry from the likes of Snow White or Rapunzel, who patiently accept their fate and endure hardship until the arrival of a male saviour. Unlike the demure, self-sacrificing, and, for the most part, passive heroines of traditional fairy tales, the "selfish, greedy, ungrateful, and cruel" princess in "The Frog King" is, in the

[11] In the Anglophone world, the story is better known as "The Frog Prince," possibly because the title was selected by Edgar Taylor for his English translation (although, given the liberties he took with the text, the term "loose adaptation" may be more appropriate; Zipes, *Grimm Legacies* 34) of the tale, published in the 1823 collection *German Popular Stories* (Zipes, "Repulsive Frog" 121).

words of Maria Tatar, almost a model of "bad breeding" (*Off with Their Heads!* 11). However, despite bearing traits that are typically attributed to fairy-tale antagonists, the princess not only avoids punishment, but also ultimately receives the genre's highest prize: a happy ending manifested as marriage to a prince. Another departure from the usual fairy-tale pattern (at least the type of pattern most frequently utilized in the Grimms' oeuvre) is evident in the unusual gender dynamics: while this by no means implies a simple reversal of gender roles whereby the princess would be given an active and the frog a passive part in the story, the male character (who still demonstrates a lot of initiative as he demands something in return for his assistance and makes his way to the castle all by himself) spends the majority of the story "in a subordinate position, forced into the role of supplicant" (Tatar, *Annotated* 8, n. 6) and dependent on the princess to put an end to his predicament. As the analytical part of the paper will demonstrate, both the characterization of main protagonists and their relationship will undergo significant and interesting alterations in the Disney adaptation.

The "Frog King"-inspired fantasy novel by E.D. Baker is told from the perspective of the heroine, Princess Emeralda ("Emma"). Hiding in the swamp from her mother who demands that she marry the conceited Prince Jorge, Emma comes across a talking frog who claims to be Prince Eadric. Initially sceptical, Emma eventually kisses Eadric in an attempt to break the spell, yet (due to a spell-reversing bracelet given to her by her aunt, the Green Witch Grassina) ends up turning into a frog. The two royals-turned-frogs set out on a journey to find the witch who cursed Eadric and ask her to turn them back into humans. After a series of encounters with dangerous inhabitants of the swamp (the wannabe witch Vannabe, and various animals), they regain their human forms, thanks to Grassina's advice.

The Princess and the Frog borrows many elements from Baker's novel (the first in what would later become a series following the adventures of Emma and Eadric), most notably the overall plot structure built around an adventurous journey through the swamp, as well as the humorous twist whereby the kiss leads not to the frog being turned into a prince, but the princess becoming a frog. Both the book and film feature a benevolent older woman versed in the magic arts and accompanied by a green pet snake (aunt Grassina and Mama Odie, respectively), whose advice helps bring about the protagonists' transformation and happy ending. Certain character traits of the book's

protagonists are transferred to their cinematic counterparts: thus, Tiana bears traces of Emma's social awkwardness, resourcefulness, self-reliance, and determination, while the conceited Naveen is something of a composite of Prince Eadric and Prince Jorge. Once they become aware of their mutual feelings, both the cinematic and literary couple seem accepting of the possibility that they may have to permanently remain frogs, as long as they can stay together ("As far as I'm concerned, it wouldn't be so awful if we had to stay frogs, not if we were together;" Baker[12]). Finally, the film borrows minor motifs from the book, such as the comic mishaps related to the heroine's attempts to use her tongue to catch food.

(In)Appropriate Character Traits

As previously stated, the strong-willed and self-absorbed princess in "The Frog King" is quite unique among the Grimms' fairy-tale heroines. Making her characterization even more remarkable is the fact that she retains her assertiveness, self-centredness, and strong will amidst the numerous changes the Grimms introduced to the narrative throughout the different editions of their collection (Tatar, *Hard Facts*, 8; Zipes, *Grimm Legacies* 18-20),[13] many of which were intended to silence the heroine (Bottigheimer 52, 56) and tame her sexual desire. As Bottigheimer writes, in the 1810 manuscript version, she is "altogether too eager to jump into bed with the frog once he is shown to be a handsome prince" (160). What is especially striking is perhaps not so much the set of character traits itself (featured in many other tales), but the fact that their bearer is the story's protagonist who, despite being wilful and disobedient, is ultimately rewarded.

In the process of Disneyfication, the negative traits of the princess are, for the most part, either completely eradicated (defiance, rebelliousness, self-assertiveness), substituted with more acceptable alternatives, or transferred onto the male character (deceitfulness, selfishness). Substitution is most evident in the way the Grimms' princess and Tiana initiate the transformations of their future partners. Tatar distinguishes between two basic types of stories featuring animal bridegrooms,

[12] All quotations from *The Frog Princess* are taken from an unpaginated e-book edition.
[13] For more on the Grimms' editorial strategies and changes made to the different editions of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, see, among others: Bottigheimer; Rölleke; Tatar, *Hard Facts*; Uther 485-526; Zipes, *Art of Subversion*.

depending on the means of their transformation into human form, which, in turn, is linked to the character of the heroine. On one end of the spectrum are tales like "Beauty and the Beast" in which the heroine's patience and compassion result in the Beast regaining his human form; on the other are tales such as "The Frog King" in which compassion is substituted with passion as the transformation is triggered by "a gesture of vehement rage" (Tatar, "Why Fairy Tales Matter" 60). The coupling of "Beauty and the Beast" and "The Frog King" here is symptomatic, given the similarities of their Disney adaptations. Perhaps because both *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog* portray physical transformations of male protagonists preceded and prompted by transformations of their character, Tiana resembles Belle much more than she does her presumed literary counterpart. Like Belle, she relies on compassion (rather than passion), and other traditionally feminine traits such as her "capacity to nurture" (Cummins 25) and provide emotional support (cf. Murphy 134).

Ultimately, it is not Tiana, but the "spoiled little rich boy" Naveen (*The Princess and the Frog*) who shares character traits with the heroine of "The Frog King," and whom, incidentally, Orrin Robinson calls "a spoiled brat" (112). The similarities are perhaps most notable in the bargaining scene, in which the Grimms' princess is trying to negotiate the retrieval of her golden ball and Disney's prince is soliciting a kiss from a waitress in a princess costume. The brief outline of the scene reveals the underlying gender swap: in the fairy tale, it is the princess who seeks help and promises something in return, and in the film it is the prince. Significantly, they both offer material possessions as a compensation for assistance (princess: clothes, pearls, and jewels; Naveen: money) and make promises they do not intend to keep. As the princess explains to her father, she was willing to promise the frog whatever he wanted in order to get her ball back, not once considering that he would be able to leave his well and crawl up the marble steps of the castle.

The Princess and the Frog ascribes the part of the deceiver to Naveen, who moreover misrepresents himself as being "fabulously wealthy." Once it is established that Tiana is unable to help him, he reveals his attempt to manipulate her in order to get what he wants: "Well, the egg is on your face, alright, because I do not have any riches! … I am completely broke!" Thus, the Disney film re-enacts one of the key episodes in the Grimms' fairy tale (deception is absent from *The Frog Princess*: Eadric is honest

about who he is and what he wants, and does not offer anything in return for Emma's kiss), but alters the gender dynamics in the process and transfers traits deemed unacceptable in female protagonists (duplicitous female characters who lie and manipulate others are always antagonists – consider Ursula in *The Little Mermaid* or *Tangled*'s Mother Gothel) to their male counterparts.

Justification of Negative Traits

Naveen also bears some of the negative traits ascribed to the male characters in *The Frog Princess*, primarily their boastfulness and vanity. His frequent complimentary remarks about his own appearance are reminiscent of the self-absorbed braggart Jorge, whom Emma dismisses as being too in love with himself to ever form a meaningful relationship with someone else. Furthermore, Naveen's rhetoric – most notably his boasting about his romantic conquests (he claims to have dated "thousands of women") and kissing prowess ("All women enjoy the kiss of Prince Naveen;" "Just one [kiss]. Unless you beg for more") – echoes that of Prince Eadric ("I like being kissed by beautiful young ladies"). Furthermore, he is spoiled, idle, irresponsible, and incapable of taking care of himself. While a number of negative traits and behaviour patterns featured in the source materials are transferred to film, this process of transference also includes their significant re-contextualization and justification. Naveen is thus portrayed not as someone who is inherently lazy or unwilling to do things by himself (Davis, *Handsome Heroes* 177), but rather as someone brought up to be entirely reliant on other people (*The Princess and the Frog*):

> When you live in a castle, everything is done for you. All the time. They dress you, they feed you, they drive you, brush your teeth. … I admit, it was a charmed life until the day my parents cut me off and suddenly I realized I don't know how to do anything.

This type of vindication whereby the negative traits of male characters (e.g. the Beast's selfishness and hard-heartedness in *Beauty and the Beast*) are presented as not being inherent, but rather caused by harmful influences in their surroundings (a result of nurture rather than nature), and their morally questionable or even criminal actions (Aladdin and *Tangled*'s Flynn Rider are thieves) somehow justified, is a common strategy of Disneyfication.

Male Transformation, "Male Myth"?

According to Zipes, "The Frog King" is a male-driven narrative, moved forward by "the frog, desperate to be released from a magic spell, and the authoritarian king/father, who insists that the princess behave correctly and keep her word" (*Grimm Legacies* 20). The same can be said about *The Princess and the Frog* in which Tiana's story, meant to take the centre stage, is shaped by male characters: her father (who instils his dreams and work ethics into her), the Fenner brothers (who prevent her from fulfilling her dreams by hard work alone), Dr Facilier (who turns Naveen into a frog), and Naveen (who tricks her into kissing him). In this respect also, *The Princess and the Frog* is closer to the Grimms' fairy tale than Baker's novel, which is predominantly populated and driven by female characters, told from a female perspective, and features only one major male character Eadric.

Despite the above mentioned role of male characters and the fact that it is named after its male protagonist, "The Frog King" is often interpreted as a narrative about female (sexual) maturation and abandonment of childish pursuits (playing with a golden ball) in favour of adult preoccupations (finding a suitable partner), overcoming of aversions towards sexual intimacy in general and the male sexual organ (symbolized by the frog) in particular (Bettelheim 286–291; Jones 16), and addressing young girls' anxieties about marriage (Tatar, *Annotated* 10, n. 8). In other words, it is a female story. The princess is the first character introduced into the story, while the frog appears later, initially acting as a fairy-tale helper and gradually becoming as a protagonist in his own right. While the transformation of the frog into the prince is one of the main narrative goals, the central focus remains on the princess. Baker's novel is even more explicitly and thoroughly a female-centred narrative, as evidenced by the title and choice of female protagonist as the narrator. The story of *The Frog Princess* is Emma's story, in the sense that she is both the one who tells it, and the one the story is about. Her journey from princess to frog and back to princess is one of self-discovery in which she proves resourceful and courageous, and discovers some hidden talents she decides to pursue further at the end of the story.

As already evidenced by the title (which, significantly, was initially meant to be *The Frog Princess*; Breaux 398), the Disney adaptation abandons a female-centred

narrative in favour of one in which the male story is at least as important (if not – as previous examples of Disney adaptations would suggest – more important; Zipes, "Breaking the Disney Spell" 37) as the female one. Davis' claim that Naveen's role in the story "take[s] a back seat to Tiana's" (*Handsome Heroes* 175) seems questionable given how instrumental he is to the realization of her dream and, by extension, a satisfactory ending to her narrative. Rather than a character who exists only in relation to Tiana (which is the case with her father; see below), Naveen is given an independent plot line and full-fledged character transformation. Much like Disney's Beast, Naveen undergoes the said transformation upon establishing a romantic connection with a caring and supportive female (cf. Cummins; Jeffords).

Naveen's transformation from "a no-count, philandering, lazy bump on a log" (*The Princess and the Frog*) to a caring, capable, and self-sufficient suitor is first revealed as his willingness to assume responsibility and put the needs of others before his own. Not only is he prepared to do "whatever it takes to make [Tiana's] dreams come true," including getting one or more jobs, but he also (temporarily) abandons his own pursuit of happiness (asking Tiana to marry him) in order to help the woman he loves achieve her goal of opening a restaurant (he is willing to marry the rich Charlotte Le Bouff to be able to financially assist Tiana). In addition to being the receiver of positive influence, Naveen attempts to exert it as well, challenging her single-minded focus on work and teaching her how to be less of a "stick in the mud" (*The Princess and the Frog*). At first glance, it may seem that this two-way relationship poses a challenge to Zipes' claim that Disney films are solely concerned with male transformations, generating and perpetuating what he terms the "male myth" ("Breaking the Magic Spell" 37). However, the concrete transformations experienced by Naveen and Tiana may be seen as significantly differing in extent and degree. As Davis notes, his relationship with Tiana prompts Naveen to leave his selfish, irresponsible ways behind and "become a better man" (*Handsome Heroes* 177). In contrast, the kind, caring, and responsible Tiana is already a paragon of virtue and therefore does not require an in-depth character transformation the way Naveen does. Rather, she is prompted to re-evaluate her priorities, revise her beliefs and attitudes, and acknowledge that there is more to life than work (cf. Kujundžić 270).

Daddy's Girl

The only notable character in "The Frog King," apart from the hero and heroine is the heroine's father, the king. As his role was gradually expanded through the different editions of the story, he became crucial in the Grimms' agenda to turn the story into "a miniature behavioural lesson" (Tatar, *Annotated* 3) as a mouthpiece for morals about the importance of gratitude ("It's not proper to scorn someone who helped you when you were in trouble!" Grimm and Grimm 4) and keeping one's promises ("If you've made a promise, you must keep it", 3). Assuming the form of orders to be obeyed, these morals also serve to promote paternal and patriarchal authority (Tatar, *Hard Facts* 121). In contrast, the father is notably absent from *The Frog Princess*. Rather, it is Emma's mother who embodies parental authority, demanding that the ungraceful girl start behaving like a princess and marry the self-absorbed Prince Jorge.

Both the Grimms' princess and Tiana are identified through their relationships with their fathers: the princess is referred to as "the king's daughter" (*Königstochter*) and even "the king's child" (*Königskind*) throughout the story (Grimm and Grimm 2-5), while Tiana is repeatedly described as her "daddy's girl" (*The Princess and the Frog*). Although he appears only briefly at the very beginning of the film, his value system, ambitions, and work ethics define Tiana's entire life. From the very beginning, Tiana emulates her father, who was "one hard-working man. Double, sometimes triple shifts. Never letting on how bone tired and beat down he really was." These words could just as easily describe the adult Tiana as she is first introduced in the film: coming home from working a night shift, only to change clothes and head out to her second work place.

Much has been made about the uniqueness of Tiana's dream (when compared to those of other Disney princesses) and the fact that she proclaims that the only way to make it true is to work hard, rather than just wish for it (Barker 494). However, both the dream and the means of its realization come from her father:

> [T]he father writes her name on the restaurant picture, thus putting his project as a man and as a person of color in the hands of his daughter, who lovingly clutches it to her chest and in turn entrusts it to the evening star, only to be reminded by her father that it will also take hard work to achieve what she will set her mind to. (Parasecoli 460)

She frequently speaks about opening her own restaurant not as her own dream, but one that she shares with her father. The dutiful daughter thus makes it her life's goal "to make sure all daddy's hard work means something" (*The Princess and the Frog*).

The lesson Tiana learns in the course of the film and the change she undergoes, while triggered by the appearance of Naveen and the possibility of romance he introduces into her life, are once again derived from her father. While trying hard to make her father's dreams come true, she misinterprets his remark about not losing sight of what is really important and focuses too much on what she wants (the restaurant), ignoring what she needs (love). Ultimately, the way to achieve true happiness is to become even more like her father who may not have gotten "what he wanted, but he had what he needed. He had love! He never lost sight of what was important" (*The Princess and the Frog*). This is in direct contrast with the Grimms' heroine, who achieves her happily ever after and gains a royal spouse by rebelling against parental (and, by extension, patriarchal) authority and refusing to obey her father's explicit orders. While Tiana makes her daddy's wishes and principles her own, the princess ultimately rejects them and expresses her own will in an act of self-assertion and defiance (Zipes, "Repulsive Frog" 115).

In both narratives, the father plays a key role in selecting a suitable partner for the heroine. Once the frog has been transformed into a "prince with kind and beautiful eyes," the heroine, "in keeping with her father's wishes," accepts him "as her dear companion and husband" (Grimm and Grimm 4). Although the marriage hinges on the father's blessing, the suitor must first change in order to win the approval of the future bride. Since the suitor's frog form is firmly rejected as repulsive, it is immediately substituted with a more appealing and acceptable (human) form (Zipes, "Repulsive Frog" 115). Tiana's father may not be called upon to bestow his blessing on his daughter's partner, but he appears to be a model against which that partner is evaluated. In other words, Naveen does not require the approval of Tiana's father, but needs to take on some of his features (most notably, his diligence) and value system in order to appear more suitable. What makes Naveen ultimately worthy of Tiana is his willingness to place her needs first, get a job (maybe even two or three), and work hard just like her father. Thus, what makes this initially repulsive partner (due to his lack of

independence, carelessness, and self-centredness) more appealing is a character (rather than physical) transformation modelled after the future bride's father.

McCoy Gregory makes much of the fact that *The Princess and the Frog*, unlike many other Disney productions, not only gives the heroine both parents, but retains her mother (typically absent; Ward 150, n. 7) throughout the film (445). At the time of the film's release, Eudora was one of the few on-screen mothers of a Disney heroine (others include Aurora's mother in *Sleeping Beauty* and Mulan's mother).[14] However, while Eudora is unique as "a presence and a voice of encouragement for Tiana" (McCoy Gregory 445), her role in the story is minimal (consisting mostly of reminding Tiana of the importance of love), and her influence on Tiana incomparable to that of her father. Although Tiana's mother is also employed (according to Big Daddy, she is "the best seamstress in New Orleans;" *The Princess and the Frog*) and Tiana is seen accompanying her to work, she does not become a role model for her daughter. Ultimately, the late father proves much more important and influential than the living mother (Kujundžić 271).

The Antagonist

Neither the "Frog King" nor *The Frog Princess* features a traditional (fairy-tale) villain; in both cases, the sorceress/witch who transforms the prince into a frog is only talked about, but never actually appears in the story. Unlike "The Frog King," which provides no information on the sorceress or motivation for the spell, *The Frog Princess* has Prince Eadric provide some explanation for his predicament. Namely, he was punished for making inconsiderate remarks about an old witch's "clothes and hygiene" (Baker).

The fairy-tale-based black-and-white characterization typical of Disney films demands a clearly defined villain. In cases when the source material does not provide one (like in H.C. Andersen's "The Little Mermaid") or contains morally ambiguous characters (e.g. Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*), the Disney adaptation typically demonizes the existing characters (Frollo in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, the sea witch in *The Little Mermaid*) or introduces new characters to fill the role of

[14] The trend of absent mothers, prominent among early Disney heroines (including Snow White, Cinderella, Ariel, Belle, Jasmine, and Pocahontas) has undergone significant changes as more recent films typically feature both parents (e.g. *Tangled*, *Merida*, *Frozen*, *Moana*).

antagonist (Gaston in *Beauty and the Beast*). *The Princess and the Frog* presents an interesting case in this respect as it opts for the unconventional route of side-stepping existing characters (sorceress, witch) and introducing a new one – the "shadow man," Dr Facilier. Of particular interest here is the gender shift:[15] while tales belonging to "The Frog King" type typically feature female antagonists ("a witch, female sorceress, or mother-in-law;" Tatar, *Annotated* 12, n. 10), *The Princess and the Frog* opts for a power-hungry Voodoo sorcerer who relies on his "friends on the other side" (the spirit world) in an attempt to take control over New Orleans.

While *The Frog Princess* reveals Eadric as the culprit for his own enchantment, *The Princess and the Frog* shifts the blame on a greedy and malicious villain and Naveen's vengeful and easily manipulated servant, once again exculpating the male protagonist whose only mistake is being too easily deceived by Facilier (whom Davis identifies as a trickster figure; *Handsome Heroes* 220). Interestingly enough, Facilier and Naveen initially seem to (at least partly) share the same goal: getting their hands on Big Daddy Le Bouff's money. While Facilier never explicitly states this, he does voice his dissatisfaction with "living on the margins, while all those fat cats in their fancy cars don't give [him] so much as a sideways glance" (*The Princess and the Frog*). That the "fat cat" in question is primarily the Le Bouff patriarch is made clear during the opening musical number ("Down in New Orleans") in which Facilier angrily compares the pile of bills Big Daddy nonchalantly gives to a newspaper boy to a single coin he himself managed to make (in a dishonest way). The disinherited Naveen, who needs "green" to maintain his lavish life-style, also has his sights set on the Le Bouff family fortune, through marriage to Charlotte. However, his selfishness and willingness to enter a loveless marriage for material gain is presented as somewhat benign, especially since his intended bride is also guided by selfish interests (desire to become a princess) rather than genuine emotion (cf. Davis, *Handsome Heroes* 176). In contrast, Facilier's motives

[15] Amy Davis (*Good Girls*) notes a significant decline in the number of female antagonists during and after the Disney Renaissance, i.e. following *The Little Mermaid*'s formidable sea witch Ursula. Since 1989 (the year *The Little Mermaid* was released) until today, Disney animated films featured only five female antagonists: Yzma in *The Emperor's New Groove*, Helga, the secondary (and eventually repenting) antagonist in *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, Doris in *Meet the Robinsons*, Mother Gothel in *Tangled*, and *Zootopia*'s Bellwether (the status of *Moana*'s TeKā as an antagonist is somewhat problematic). Davis sees these as positive, progressive changes from the earlier, more sexist depictions of female characters, and association between female power and evil.

are unambiguously condemned as they ultimately hurt others (he promises his mysterious friends all the souls in New Orleans once he assumes control over the city).

Concluding Remarks

The aim of the present paper was twofold: to demonstrate that Disney's *The Princess and the Frog* is most heavily influenced by and may therefore be considered as an adaptation of the Grimms' fairy tale "The Frog King," rather than Baker's novel *The Frog Princess*, and to examine the said film within the wider context of Disneyfication.

The analysis has shown that the film borrows a number of themes, motifs, and character traits from the Grimms' narrative, often significantly altering them to fit the Disney mould. Thus, all the negative traits of the Grimms' princess are eliminated, substituted with a more acceptable alternative (rather than demonstrate her will and resort to violence, Tiana brings about Naveen's transformation by showing compassion, care, and support), or simply transferred onto the film's male protagonist. This suggests that character traits are attributed based on gender and that notions of (un)acceptable behaviour differ for male and female protagonists. When it comes to male protagonists, their negative traits and problematic behaviour patterns are re-contextualized and justified, and commonly presented as a result of external influences, rather than inherent flaws.

The analysis highlighted the increased narrative significance and role of the male protagonist for the film adaptation, and explored the role of the father who, while absent from *The Frog Princess*, assumes an important part in "The Frog King," and becomes a central influence in *The Princess and the Frog*. Finally, the analysis revealed a number of similarities between the selected film and other Disney adaptations, thus confirming the persistency and stability of the Disneyfication pattern, established already by the Studio's earliest animated offerings (Hallett and Karasek 117). The elements of Disneyfication include the centrality of (heterosexual) romance, a specific cast of characters including clearly defined protagonists and antagonists, and their helpers, overcoming of obstacles with magical intervention, an adventure shared by the romantic couple, and a happy ending, typically manifested as marriage.

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To Be, or Not to Be Shakespeare? Documentaries without Documents: Biographical Films about the Mysterious Author

Abstract

While Shakespeare's plays have been adapted to excess, he himself as a historical figure has been absent from the screen for almost one hundred years. Since the 1990s, however, Shakespeare has enjoyed an ever-increasing popularity in both feature films and documentaries. Rather unexpectedly, feature films such as *Shakespeare in Love* and *Anonymous* appealed to the public at large, but also to critics. Recently, the Bard even advanced to the leading character of a sitcom, *Upstart Crow*. This paper aims to analyse how the evolution within the genre of biographical film, which represents an adaptation of the subject's life and increasingly implies fictionality in addition to documentary representation, coincides with general trends in the film and TV industry as well as in historical research.

Keywords: Shakespeare, biographical film, documentary, feature film, sitcom, adaptation, fictionality.

Starting with *King John* in 1899, Shakespeare's plays have been turned into films more than 400 times,[2] which makes the Bard the most cinematised author in the history of film, and a veritable champion of adaptation. Nearly all of his plays have been adapted to screen, not only in the Anglophone world, but also in countries such as Russia, Brazil, China,[3] and Japan. By contrast, Shakespeare as protagonist was almost absent during the first hundred years of film,[4] whereas the lives of other famous authors have

[1] The author wishes to thank Stefan Schomann for the inspiring exchange and Michael Skupin for editorial retouches.

[2] In 2014, the *Guinness Book of Records* listed 420 feature films and TV-movies, including 79 versions of *Hamlet* and 52 of *Romeo and Juliet*. The *Internet Movie Database* currently lists more than 1300 references to Shakespeare's works, though some of them are rather obscure or irrelevant (*Guinness World Records*, www.guinnessworldrecords.com/news/2014/4/william-shakespeare-turns-450-ten-startling-great-bard-themed-world-records-56900; *IMDb,*www.imdb.com/name/nm0000636).

[3] See: Wu, "Shakespeare in Chinese Cinema" and "Three Hamlets."

[4] Apart from a silent film based on *Julius Caesar* where the bard appears in the background story (Howard, *Shakespeare's cinematic offshoots* 309), and a British TV drama *Will Shakespeare*, created and directed by John Mortimer (1978).

already been depicted prominently in the era of silent film, for instance Leo Tolstoy (1912, 1913), Giacomo Casanova (1918, 1927), and Friedrich Schiller (1923). The early years of the sound film portrayed writers as national heroes, struggling between personal tragedy and literary triumph, such as Alexander Pushkin (1937), Maxim Gorky (1938-1940), Friedrich Schiller again (1940), or Edgar Allan Poe (1942). Later biopics showed literary figures on an epic quest, like Cervantes (1969), Molière (1978), and the Brontë Sisters (1979). Yet, it is only in the 1990s that William Shakespeare, one of the most famous writers of all time, really entered the stage of biographical film.

1. To See, or Not to See Shakespeare?

It seemed that the plays had completely outshone the playwrights, until a profound change occurred within the past twenty years. While *William Shakespeare: A Life of Drama* (1996) was still a conventional TV documentary, *Shakespeare in Love* (1998) marked a turning point in the career of Shakespeare as protagonist. This coincided with a boom of film adaptations based on his plays, particularly in the 1990s. Both trends were "fuelled by the cultural fantasy of a popular Shakespeare" (Lanier 166). Subsequently, Shakespeare enjoyed increasing popularity as a subject of biographical films and TV productions, especially during the London Olympics in 2012, the 450thanniversary of his birth in 2014, and the 400thanniversary of his death in 2016, which inspired a number of biopics in various genres and formats. This paper discusses five of them: *William Shakespeare: A Life of Drama, Shakespeare in Love,* the feature film *Anonymous* (2011), the television series *Shakespeare Uncovered* (2012), and the sitcom *Upstart Crow* (2016/2017). Other productions include *Elizabeth Rex* and *A Waste of Shame,* two TV dramas from 2004 and 2005*,* and *Will*, a 2017 TNT series. A Canadian production entitled *The Shakespeare Conspiracy* has been announced, but is yet to be released (Bacino).

So, how can one explain Shakespeare's long-term absence from the big and small screens upon the emergence of the film medium? Also, why, by contrast, did he become a favoured protagonist in the recent times? Paradoxically, the answers to these two questions seem to have one and the same basis, and that is: the lack of factual information. While the said issue used to be considered a restrictive circumstance, the lack of information about the Bard's life is now perceived by filmmakers as liberating

as it brings forth imaginative resolutions to the mystery that is Shakespeare's life.

Even though numerous kinds of biographies have been published in many languages, Shakespeare's life has remained notoriously mysterious for four hundred years. He has been regarded as a complex and confusing biographical riddle, generating the mystery of true and false Shakespeare. This biographical obscurity poses a considerable challenge to any film about the playwright's life. How does one do a documentary without any documents? Presenting the Master without making use of his own letters, diaries, manuscripts, or of records by his contemporaries – not to mention the fact that his very name and his authorship have been challenged – represents a daunting task. Namely, all the blank spaces and uncertainties brought about extreme difficulties for the filmmakers, especially those who wanted to film an educational, if not an academic biopic. How does one fill two hours, or even one hour of film with such severely limited source material? To further complicate the matter, Shakespeare's personal life, as far and as little as we are acquainted with it, was not particularly dramatic in nature, let alone melodramatic. There is little proof of romantic affairs and, from the point of view of a screenwriter, nothing peculiar that would make for an enticing plot, except for his phenomenal success as a playwright. As Stephen Greenblatt describes it in his preface to *Will in the World*: "A young man from a small provincial town – a man without independent wealth, without powerful family connections, and without a university education – moves to London in the late 1580s and, in a remarkably short time, becomes the greatest playwright not of his age alone but of all times" (11). That is an intriguing story, indeed. However, how could it be illustrated?

The American documentary *William Shakespeare: A Life of Drama* can serve as an illustration of the deplorable confinement resulting from the lack of hard facts and solid evidence. It was produced by A&E TV channel and broadcasted in the biography column in 1996. Due to its length, that is fifty minutes, it is suitable for a TV programme. The film shows Shakespeare's 52-year long life and his playwriting in a chronological and linear way. It is a traditional narrative about a historical figure, divided into five parts. Part One gives an overview of Shakespeare's birth, family, childhood, marriage, and his children. Part Two tells the story of how the young man settled in London and struggled to establish his career. Part Three emphasizes the turning point in the playwright's life after he lost his son, and the impact this had on his

creativity. Part Four shows the achievements of the author's creative peak, while Part Five relates his retirement and early death. In accordance with the chronological order, Shakespeare creates the historical dramas and comedies in the early period of his career, the tragedies in the middle period, and the romances at the very end. The film employs a complete and rounded structure, which has an opening, conflict, climax, and ending, just like Shakespeare's typical five-act plays. It also mentions some of the playwright's public secrets – the relationship with a "Lovely Boy" and with a mysterious "Dark Lady," as well as the question of authorship. At its end, the film quotes the famous words by Ben Jonson (1572-1637): "Shakespeare is not of his age alone, but of all time."

A documentary does not require the timeliness of news, but strives to put forth the values of history, culture, and society, as well as to observe and reveal facts together with human nature. Therefore, a documentary need not to have a fascinating plot, but simply a logical structure and appropriate details that make the characters well-developed, and the social context real and vivid. Attractive audio-visual details are the key to the success of a documentary film. *William Shakespeare: A Life of Drama* employs static representation. From its beginning to the end, it shows photos, paintings, and portrayals from different periods, together with limited documentary evidence, such as Shakespeare's birth certificate and published plays. Among the interviewees, elderly professors outnumber actors, meaning that academic work ranks above artistic achievements. All speakers are presented in half-body and close-up shots filmed indoors or in the studio, illuminated with soft, warm light. As the documentary's very title suggests, the film mostly uses stills and videos of stage performances. Except for a very short sequence at the end, it does not include examples of movie adaptations. Only several film posters are shown to indicate Shakespeare's far-reaching influence, although once again in a static way. The film features two kinds of sound sources. One is language, such as commentary, voice over, reading aloud, line dialogue, and introductions by the interviewees. The other is music, present throughout the film to create moods and feelings. The documentary does not use environmental sounds or other elements of reportage, only stock footage.

Biographical films are adaptations not based on fictional works, but on real lives. They always entail the issue of fidelity, in this case mostly to the story of the

protagonist, to its written record, and historic material. *A Life of Drama* scrupulously tries to use only those pieces of information that can be verified. It consults a number of academic authorities and avoids any speculation as it aims to be seen as a serious and reliable documentary. Altogether, this programme, which was part of an "arts & letters" series, can serve as a model for the standard version of a biographical film, albeit executed under unfavourable conditions, given the fragmentary state of the raw material. Later on, the paper will look at another documentary that deals more freely and artistically with the biographical challenges: *Shakespeare Uncovered*. This evolution, however, might not have been possible without the success of a biopic of a very different kind.

2. To Sell, or Not to Sell Shakespeare?

The story of Shakespeare's life is at best a biographical fragment, which has seriously hindered its representation on screen. The playwright is more a *doppelgänger* than a protagonist. In such a case, it might seem easier to make a feature film from imagination and deduction than a documentary film from objective and factual records. An imaginative approach could free Shakespeare to become "Shakespeare" – a fictional character based on a true, but hopelessly incomplete biography. As a Chinese saying goes: It is easy to draw a ghost (because nobody has seen it).

Other sources could partly make up for the deficits. While we know little about Shakespeare's personal life, we know a lot about the historical context of his time. Hence, the exploration of historic panorama can be just as attractive as that of an individual hero. One could also look for the varieties of biographical films that to a lesser extent depend on personal references than the classical documentary. Additionally, one could try putting to work alternative narrative techniques that require fewer biographical details.

The 1998 film *Shakespeare in Love* by British director John Madden focuses on a special period of the Bard's life – the period during which he was writing *Romeo and Juliet*, drawing on his own experience. In the words of the director: "This man who wrote so many extraordinary things and had so many amazing insights must have had something that happened in his life that enabled him to do that" (qtd. in Mayo 300). The love between the film's protagonists, William and Viola, is a work of fiction, but being a

married man, Shakespeare is likely to have experienced romantic feelings first-hand and might have expressed them in the play. There is evidence of a few anecdotes of his love affairs with women other than his wife, although it is not as reliable. Usually, Shakespeare's homosexual preferences are featured much more prominently. By portraying Shakespeare as an unquestionably heterosexual man, the film by default works to maintain the secured state of knowledge in order to appeal to the general audience. Madden wanted to make a movie "that didn't feel academic or dry or any of those things" (qtd. in Mayo 299), again advocating the mainstream appeal.

A feature film makes comprehensive use of various elements, such as literature, drama, music, and visual arts in order to tell a story, present characters, and depict life. A biopic can be made into a feature film, but based on real people and events. It has the liberty to portray characters in detail by using imagination, drawing conclusions, and embellishing them in order to present complete, lifelike historical figures. Moreover, as a cultural production in the postmodern society, the film provides the audience with a higher level of audio-visual pleasure by having them consume the "romance of Shakespeare" rather than eliciting imaginary happiness by reading a sentimental love story. For example, what makes *Romeo and Juliet* special is the fusion of different genres, from love story and comedy to a heart-breaking tragedy. In a similar way, the film also fuses several genres – romance, history, comedy, and biopic, likewise including elements of tragedy and violence. The fusion makes the story full and the characters real, the plot more vivid, the conflict stronger, and the picture more substantial.

There are two plot lines in *Shakespeare in Love*. The main storyline follows the love story between Shakespeare and a wealthy girl named Viola in the 1950s London. The sub-plot is the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet in Verona, set in the eleventh century. Both plots take place in the past from the perspective of the audience, but the love of Shakespeare and Viola unfolds at the present time. These parallel narratives intersect and communicate with each other. Because of the playwright's love story, the play-within-a-play structure in the film is embodied in two spatial and time settings, onstage and offstage. Either the love of Romeo and Juliet or the one of Shakespeare and Viola can prove the existence of true love. However, the former pursues the unity of love and marriage, resulting in a tragedy; the latter accepts the separation of love and marriage,

resulting in the rational return to reality. This echoes the final judgement given by Queen Elizabeth I in the film: Her Majesty awards master Kent (Viola) to Romeo (Shakespeare) on stage, then returns Viola to her fiancé Lord Wessex. Thus, the dialectical relationship between art and life is illustrated, and the blurred boundaries between reality and fiction are made clear.

The genesis of the film proved to be quite complicated. Various influences and requirements that partly contradicted each other had to be combined. A Hollywood blockbuster was to be made about an iconic British author.[5] Two scriptwriters had been commissioned, firstly Marc Norman and later Tom Stoppard. The director and the two main actors were replaced in the course of the production. The film "borrowed" the title from a French play by Alexandre Duval, *Shakespeare amoureux* (1804), as well as ideas for the plot from Caryl Brahms' and S.J. Simon's 1941 novel *No Bed for Bacon*.

Moreover, Stephen Greenblatt, a Renaissance scholar at Berkeley at the time, originally served as an adviser to the first scriptwriter: "The idea of *Will in the World* originated years ago during conversations I had with Marc Norman, who was then in the early stages of writing a film script about Shakespeare's life" (15). This cooperation can serve as an interesting example of the mutual influence between a major Hollywood production and the practice of New Historicism. Greenblatt's way of reinterpreting history had a deep effect on the original scriptwriter of *Shakespeare in Love*. Yet, the specific requirements that come along with writing for the screen, and therefore for the general public, also challenged the scholar and eventually led him to write his most successful book. Namely, *Will in the World* is a programmatic title for a work of New Historicism. The term, coined in analogy to the literary New Criticism, refers to a school of historiographical thinking and writing that puts the emphasis on the interdependency of all kinds of "texts" and on the historical context rather than on individual achievements. To put it bluntly: History can be regarded as a form of fiction, and fiction can be seen as a real historical reappearance.

Given this background, it makes sense that the film does not bother with distinguishing the true or false, fact or fiction. Either way, history is a narration. The true protagonist might not be an individual hero, but history itself:

[5] For a more detailed account on the painstaking path to produce the film, see: Dipietro (2007) and Salvador-Bello (1999).

> Greenblatt's new historicism played a formative role in Norman's parallel between early modern and late capitalist. … Norman's theatre of harsh economic necessity and blood-on-the-floor violence mirrors the backdrop of political oppression, religious persecution, public execution and all-pervading fear in Greenblatt's Elizabethan England. (Dipietro 45, 44)

By shifting the attention away from Shakespeare as a historic personality and directing it towards the general conditions for artistic production in his time, Greenblatt facilitated the development of the plot. The story and numerous details of *Shakespeare in Love* cannot be verified, but they can also not easily be falsified. The screenwriters made use of poetic license, using the freedom of a feature film while still incorporating authentic elements and claiming historic plausibility. The result can be categorised as biographical fiction.

The production costs of the film were only $25,000,000, its box-office takings about $100,000,000 in the United States alone and $289,000,000 worldwide ("Shakespeare in Love"). It won seven Oscars in 1999 and additional awards at film festivals. It is a spectacular example of both artistic and commercial achievement. The box-office hit that succeeded beyond all expectations made a good case for the following productions. Yes, Shakespeare was suitable for the mass market. He could succeed as a hero on screen, despite – or perhaps precisely because of – the limited biographical evidence.

3. To Be, or Not to Be Shakespeare?

Another interesting case is *Anonymous,* a 2011 Anglo-German co-production. Directed by Roland Emmerich, it explores the question of authorship, authenticity, and legality, and "reveals" the mystery of true and false Shakespeare. It portrays the bloody political struggles during the reign of Elizabeth I. The protagonist is Edward de Vere, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford. He is not only the queen's incestuous lover, but also the anonymous writer of "Shakespeare plays." Shakespeare himself is just a puppet. The director stated that he had found the same topic of talent and jealousy in the film *Amadeus*. However, he decided to create a more dramatic story by adding political themes featuring kings, queens, and conspiracies, resulting in a tragedy in the style of Shakespeare ("Anonymous"). Being a famous director of commercial blockbusters, Emmerich was very familiar with the secrets of the market. Therefore, he included

multiple genres and elements of suspense, thriller, palace struggle, and history into the film. Following the development of the plot, the audiences enter the world of anonymity – an intimidating and exhilarating world created by the director. He makes the audience believe that "Shakespeare plays" must have been written by the Earl of Oxford.

The plot of *Anonymous* is even more speculative, riskier, and more inventive than that of *Shakespeare in Love*. Yet, oddly enough, the least meticulous and least academic of all biographical films on Shakespeare is based on an academic controversy. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, Shakespeare's authorship has been called into question. A number of theories evolved, favouring various candidates for the real author, one of them being Edward de Vere. While most literary scholars consider these biographical offshoots to be mere conspiracy theories, there is yet no decisive evidence on the authorship. On the eve of the London Olympics in 2012, *Anonymous* caused yet another stir: whether Shakespeare, regarded as a national ambassador of Britain, ever existed. Without really solving the mystery (or even attempting to solve it), the discussion contributed much to the publicity of the film. From the perspective of advertising, this was the most effective movie trailer, and free of charge. By using digital technology, *Anonymous* restores and reproduces many facts and details about the Tudors with faux-historical images and excellent performances, though it "proves" nothing. The initial question remains unsettled, just as the title of the film indicates. Nevertheless, the charm of art lies in innovation and imagination, and the film at least proves the director's creative ability to bring to life such a soul-stirring story about disobedience and offence.

What used to be a handicap for classical documentaries on Shakespeare, that is, the lack of certitude and historical accuracy, has in this case turned into an asset. Ambiguity, mystery, and speculation appeal much more to the audience than an ordinary, unchallenging existence. Another stylistic device is the play-within-a-play, which opens up a temporal-spatial crisscross structure. The "past" and the "present" in a film are two independent modes of space and time. In other words, such a film contains two space-time intertwined narrations, or two stories told parallel to each other. Nowadays, it is quite popular to use this unconventional structure (Su 113), as was seen in the example of *Shakespeare in Love*. The two spatial and temporal settings in *Anonymous* are the present London and past London. In the main storyline, the Earl of

Oxford writes literature behind the scenes and struggles with his tragic destiny. In the sub-plot, the British actor Sir Derek Jacobi gives a shocking speech on stage, saying: "Our Shakespeare is a cipher, a ghost. So let me offer you a different story. A darker story, of quills and swords, of power and betrayal, of stage conquered and throne lost" (*Anonymous* 00:03:12 - 00:03:30).After that, the film switches from the present to past London. By all kinds of "facts and evidence" meant to convince, it completely deconstructs the miracle of Shakespeare's creation. At the end, the film returns to the present and the speaker continues: "Though our story is finished, our poet's not. For his monument is ever-living … made of not stone, but of verse. And it should be remembered … as long as words are made of breath … and breath made of life" (*Anonymous* 02:03:19 - 02:03:42).This means that all the arguments and conclusions concerning the myth of "true and false Shakespeare" are irrelevant; the most important is the existence of those precious works and their artistic value. As Juliet says: "What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called, retain that dear perfection which he owns without that title" (Shakespeare 345).

4. To Tell, or Not to Tell Shakespeare?

To feature historical matters in any kind of media, it helps to have a suitable occasion coming up. Anniversaries are a common example, since historical figures receive increased attention among the general public at such times.[6] Political or national festivities might serve as another example, as was seen in the case of *Anonymous*. The 2012 Olympics also brought about the six-episode TV series *Shakespeare Uncovered.* Carried out by several co-producers, it was a special project within the London "Cultural Olympic." It was broadcasted by BBC Four at the same time and ran for three consecutive months.

Differing from *William Shakespeare: A Life of Drama*, the narration of *Shakespeare Uncovered* is non-linear, scattered, and disconnected. Each episode deals with aspecific play or several plays, discussed by an actor or director for sixty minutes. In episode one, Joely Richardson reflects on Shakespeare's early career and his roles for

[6] *Will*, a TNT series released in 2017, seemed to have come too little too late. Yet, it was originally scheduled for production in 2013, just in time for Shakespeare's 400th anniversary (See: *Deadline Hollywood*, deadline.com/2013/03/participant-media-cable-network-pivot-launch-august-1-462470).

women. In episode two, Ethan Hawke reflects on the greatest productions as he uncovers the story behind Macbeth. In episode three, Derek Jacobi discusses *Richard II* and reveals why it could have cost Shakespeare his life. In episode four, director Trevor Nunn looks at the magical world created in *The Tempest*. In episode five, Jeremy Irons uncovers the extraordinary appeal of Shakespeare's Historical Plays, and in episode six, David Tennant meets other actors who have played Hamlet, from David Warner to Jude Law. The series features an open structure without centre and focus. The episodes are parallel and equal to each other, and the series could have continued indefinitely. The introduction to the plays does not deal with outstanding works and serious scenes; the introduction to the characters does not present their whole life from birth to death. Rather, the intention was to "uncover" unknown stories to the audience as well as author's psychological motivation for writing. In this way, the modern audiences can bridge the gap of four hundred years between Shakespeare's time and their own time more easily by watching the speakers who have played various roles relate their personal experience. This helps the audience to gain a better understanding of the works as well as experience the pleasure of participation and personal inspiration.

Shakespeare Uncovered is a dynamic representation of the playwright's biography. A number of clips from film adaptations and shootings of live scenes are used in it, providing the film with diverse visual effects. Each episode is narrated by an actor or actress in the present time and space. The effect in sync gives the TV documentary a specific charm that other media cannot match. It highlights the sense of reality with the original site resources and lets the modern audience transcend the space and time distance. The actors and narrators not only introduce Shakespeare, but also express their own understanding and experience when playing the roles. For instance, in the last episode, a few actors who have played Hamlet exchange their professional approaches. For the last words by the Danish prince, "O God, Horatio … if thou didst ever hold me in thy heart, absent thee from felicity a while, and in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain to tell my story" (Shakespeare 687), they have individual and quite differing understandings. As the saying goes: "there are a thousand Hamlets in a thousand minds." Actually, Hamlet did not say it in vain. His story has been passed on to us and represented in many different forms, and it most certainly did not end with the last line by the tragic prince: "The rest is silence" (Shakespeare 688).

The kind of free-style documentary presentation chosen for the series might be less educational, but is presumably more entertaining and exciting. It prefers subjective statements to the more objective scholarly research. By selecting actors as principal witnesses, it automatically intensifies the performative qualities of the narration. It dispenses with chronology and academic expertise, but at the same time diversifies the series and gives freedom to both the structure and dramatic effects. Most likely, the successful example of *Shakespeare in Love* and the concurrent trends in historiography, represented by Greenblatt's *Will in the World* and the school of New Historicism, have facilitated and inspired the production of *Shakespeare Uncovered.* In a similar style, BBC Four released another series titled *Shakespeare Unlocked.* Serving as a prelude to the 2012 season, actors and directors from the Royal Shakespeare Company presented key scenes from some of his plays.

5. To Laugh, or Not to Laugh about Shakespeare?

The biopic aims to shape the characters "of the past," but filmmakers always re-examine history and humanity from the present perspective. As a combination of historical figures and modern film and television art, its intrinsic features form a unique aesthetic between truth and fiction, history and art. To paraphrase Michel Foucault's theory, the time and context of storytelling are more important than the time and context of the story itself.

On 23 April 2016, the four-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's death was marked. The British Council and the British Promotion Committee announced that in memory of "Shakespeare lives," a large celebration will be launched around the globe. In more than one hundred countries and regions, various forms of celebrations were held to memorialize Shakespeare as a national treasure. *Shakespeare Uncovered* was re-broadcast. In the same year, a biographical sitcom named *Upstart Crow* emerged, completely overturning the previous styles of the adapted classics and biographies with hilarious humour and absurdness from beginning to end.

Sitcoms first appeared in the golden age of the American radio broadcasting (1920-1950). Nowadays, they are one of the most popular TV genres. *Upstart Crow* originally had six episodes; seven more episodes were produced in 2017 due to the unexpected success of the show. Each episode is thirty minutes long and switches

between two fixed scenes: from Stratford-upon-Avon (Shakespeare's home) to London (little rehearsal theatre). It was filmed without live audiences and added the recorded laughter in the post-production. There are usually four essential roles: the main character, the anti-hero, the lover, and the friend. It is not difficult for the audience to identify the corresponding characters. All these are typical features of a sitcom. In *Upstart Crow*, each episode is divided into three parts. The punchline is also very retro. For example, three comedians are discussing what they should perform at a banquet. Two traditionalists think they can amuse the audience just by pretending to be stupid. However, the one, who seems to be familiar with what is in vogue in Italy, insists on playing a deep comedy. Eventually, the traditionalists win because the audience was amused by their jokes. In the TV series, the sublime aspect present in the original tragedies is entirely eliminated by revealing the source of inspiration for plays such as *Romeo and Juliet* or *Macbeth*, which allegedly came by chance or an accident from daily life.

In fact, the title of the sitcom is ironic itself. When Shakespeare appeared to "shake" the world of stage, one of the "University Wits" named Robert Greene (1558-1592) used the label "upstart crow" in his famous biography booklet, *A Groats Worth of Wit Bought with a Million of Repentance*, to insinuate that the Bard of Avon was in fact without university education and came from the countryside (Sun 57). Hence, the seemingly gratuitous comedy made use of historical and academic research. The show's credits aptly pick up this idea in a funny way by showing a little crow fluttering above the skyline of Old London. The scriptwriter Ben Elton restored the Bard to a common man who made it from the lower class to the upper class due to his "quill skill" (which in the film is made of a feather from Shakespeare's chicken). Perhaps the rich life experience from folk, city, and court alike and his sharp observations provided Shakespeare with an inspiration and formed his unique and charming style. He can switch freely and easily between elegance and vulgarity (even dirty jokes), tragedy and comedy (even farce). In *Upstart Crow,* we encounter a more real and grounded Shakespeare who reveals his private side before the audience. In short, he is a true seriocomic man. Daring self-mockery and self-deprecation is not only an individual's strength and confidence, but also that of nation.

The series is a bold attempt to familiarise (some would say, trivialise) Shakespeare to an audience that is far removed from the traditional "high culture." In accordance with the characteristics of the sitcom genre, it shows "Will at home" instead of "in the World."The outside world is never explored and the audience never has the chance to marvel at the historic panorama. Instead, everyone stays indoors, either at the family's home or at the rehearsal theatre. The camera never leaves the studio. Given the lack of information available about Shakespeare's personal environment, the mere attempt of doing a sitcom on the playwright deserves a good laugh.

Conclusion

"Shakespeare is box-office poison"(163), Lanier reminds us. However, Louis B. Mayer's famous dictum has been outdated for some time already. New biopics, as well as spectacular adaptations of his plays have been giving his name "currency in the media marketplace" (Hodgdon vii). Productions like *Shakespeare in Love* have successfully capitalised his fame and, in return, provided him with an even greater popularity worldwide. By interweaving Shakespeare's life and works, and by blending "fact" and "fiction," such films correspond to the concept of postmodern intertextuality. As Angela McRobbie argues: "Postmodernism considers images as they relate to and across each other. Postmodernism deflects attention away from the singular scrutinizing gaze of the semiologist, and asks that this be replaced by a multiplicity of fragmented and frequently interrupted looks" (13).

Under these circumstances, more and more film adaptations focus on the author of the book or the legend related to the book instead of works themselves. For example, *Shakespeare in Love* connects the author's love with the character's love in *Romeo and Juliet* to create a realistic and fictional effect simultaneously. The purpose is to explore the inner relationship between the author's feelings and his works, which is an important tendency of contemporary filmmaking. Namely, to look for psychological motivation of characters and events and find the narrative basis on both the conscious and subconscious level. In *Anonymous*, an academic debate was brought to the screen with unconventional courage. For a feature film, it does not matter what the conclusion or the outcome is. Its charm lies in its bold imagination and the vitality of its performance. In turn, *Upstart Crow* embodies the power of audio-visual pleasure and

amusement. While enjoying the sitcom, the audience might become interested in Shakespeare's original plays and might want to understand them more, and not just passively accept the propaganda and indoctrination.

The very same circumstances that accounted for Shakespeare's long-lasting absence from the screen contributed to his recent career as a popular and lucrative protagonist. In their respective ways, all the films (and a sitcom) discussed in this paper have contributed to the further popularisation and commercialisation of Shakespeare. Now, not only have his works been brought to screen, but also his life. The puzzle that is his biography and the enigma of his authorship will be discussed indefinitely. To be, or not be (Shakespeare) will remain an eternal question.

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Adaptation as Emancipation: Semantic Decoding of the Female Protagonist in Kenneth Branagh's Film Adaptation of Mary Shelley's Novel *Frankenstein*

Abstract

Based on the case study of Kenneth Branagh's film adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the article represents an intervention in discourses of adaptation as literary criticism, highlighting different ways in which adaptations can critique literary texts, emancipating themselves from the suggested authority of the novel(s) by broadening the interpretative possibilities through the critical appraisal of historical and contextual circumstances of the source text. Namely, Mary Shelley's novel is abundant with women who embody the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries female social position in that they are devoid of the right to speak and decide for themselves on any matter besides the "trivial," emotional ones. However, Shelley's representation is far from condoning the state that her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, calls the "state of perpetual childhood;" rather, it is to be read as a severe criticism thereof. Consequently, although Branagh's adaptation, more specifically his emancipation of Elizabeth's character, is often viewed as a significant departure from Shelley's text, the aim is to show that *Mary Shelley's* Frankenstein closely follows the undercurrents of the novel and in fact emphasizes – due to the improved social status of women in the twentieth century – Elizabeth's independence that was present ever so subtly in the literary text.

Keywords: Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Kenneth Branagh, emancipation, adaptation.

> "She presented Elizabeth to me as her promised gift, I, with childish seriousness, interpreted her words literally and looked upon Elizabeth as mine – mine to protect, love, and cherish" (Shelley 18).

> "Books and movies are like apples and oranges. They both are fruit, but taste completely different." Stephen King

Since its first publication almost two hundred years ago,[1] Mary Shelley's "hideous progeny" – the term that the author personally attributed to her debut novel –has remained a phenomenon to this day. An excellent, complex literary work of fiction written by a nineteen-year-old woman, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*, has provided many writers as well as filmmakers with a plethora of inspiration for numerous adaptations, thus extending its popularity and allowing it to permeate popular culture. Set in the time when the world changing effects of the French Revolution and the First Industrial Revolution were as strong as ever, the novel serves as a testament of and commentary on numerous social, political, economic, and above all scientific advancements which took place in the period, "especially the discovery of the nature of electricity" (Storment).Combining the values of reason promoted by the Enlightenment, and the quantum leap in knowledge of the human body and its functions, as well as Romantic fascination with the morbid, Shelley depicts Victor Frankenstein as an overreacher who attempts to create life. And it is exactly the combination of the rapid development of science and the complex moral questions relating to Frankenstein's revolutionary scientific endeavors that presents to this day the most fascinating and frequently explored aspects of Shelley's work by both critics and film directors.[2] Kenneth Branagh's adaptation, by contrast, explores another issue that exists as a subtext of the multi-layered source text; namely, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994) examines and subverts the inferior position of women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by representing Elizabeth as an emancipated woman. Whereas her subservience in the novel turned *Frankenstein* into an object for great interest of feminist, psychoanalytic, post-colonial, and queer literary critics, producing a

[1] The first published edition of *Frankenstein* dates back to 1818, while the subsequent editions appeared 1823 and 1831.

[2] To name just a few examples: 1931 James Whale's *Frankenstein*, starring Boris Karloff as the Monster; 1958 *Frankenstein 1970* again with Karloff who now plays Dr Frankenstein experimenting with cloning in his nuclear-powered laboratory; 1965 Ishiro *Honda's Frankenstein Conquers the World* in which the Monster's heart is stolen by the Nazis and manages to survive the bombing of Hiroshima, subsequently allowing for the creation of a giant monstrosity that goes on to destroy the world.

considerable body of works interpreting *Frankenstein* from these positions,[3] Branagh's adaptation claims to highlight feminist dynamics in the source text. However, in the field of adaptation studies few critics have approached the issue by attending to the adaptation of implied positions or subtexts, which Branagh claims to have done, arguing that the novel indicates Shelley's strong feminist perspective. Based on the case study of Branagh's adaptation, the essay represents an intervention in discourses of adaptation as literary criticism, highlighting different ways in which adaptations can critique literary texts, emancipating themselves from the suggested authority of the novel(s) by broadening the interpretative possibilities through the critical appraisal of historical and contextual circumstances of the source text.

The idea of adaptation as a mode of literary criticism is not new. In *The Novel and the Cinema* (1975), Geoffrey Wagner proposes three types of adaptations: transposition (direct translation with minimal interference), commentary (adaptation which purposely alters elements from the source text), and analogy (deviates from the source text in order to produce a new work of art), based on how true the "transition of fiction into film" (131) turns out to be. While Wagner takes a somewhat condescending attitude to the adaptation and favours the literary source text as superior, his idea of adaptation as commentary seems to be particularly helpful for viewing Branagh's adaptation as criticism, since commentary, as Wagner sees it, purposely subverts and challenges the hypotext. In fact, adaptation in the form of a commentary can also represent a form of a supplement to the hypotext (222-227), highlighting issues that might have been less conspicuous in the literary text. Similarly to this, but without the implied superiority of fiction over film, in *Filming Literature: The Art of Screen Adaptation* Neil Sinyard asserts that "The legacy of the nineteenth-century novel is the twentieth-century film" (vii), thus suggesting that there is a kind of "natural" relationship between the two media (and two forms of art) that are co-dependent and complement each other in mutually enriching ways. In this way, adaptation is seen as a mode of interpretation which occurs as the source texts are "modified in the adaptation process to make them relevant to the period in which they are made" (ix).Quite explicitly, for Sinyard, "adapting a literary text for the screen is essentially an act of literary criticism" (x). Finally, in *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate*, Kamilla Elliott

[3] Cf. Baldick (1987); Beer (2003); Bohls (1994); Caldwell (2004); Fisch, Mellor, and Schor (1993); Hodges (1983); Johnson, Butler, and Felman (2014); Shaw (2000); Veeder (1986).

explores different concepts of adaptation as they undertake various forms of literary criticism. Among those that Elliott suggests, two seem to be particularly relevant for the purpose of this paper. In the de(re)composing model of adaptation, "novel and film decompose, merge, and form a new composition at 'underground' levels of reading" (157) so that the adaptation rejects certain parts of the novel, favoring others, and "allows for other mergers of social context and literary content" (160). Equally important, Elliott's trumping concept of adaptation suggests that the adaptation attempts to remedy the source text's flaws by testing "the novel's representations against texts deemed more authoritative—against written and artifactual history, psychoanalytic theories, and contemporary politics", suggesting that the film has represented the novel's signified better (174), uncovering the intended meanings that were impossible to realize in the novel's specific historical period or literary form.

If, following these arguments, we take an adaptation to be a specific reading of a literary text, it becomes interesting to look at the relationship between the hypotext, in this case Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and Branagh's film as its hypertextual elaboration in which Branagh takes the subtext of the source text and makes it the adaptation's main text. Drawing on her mother's famous theoretical treatise,[4] Shelley wrote a novel that is primarily an act of female rebellion against the norms of the male-dominated world, and its subversive tone is said to have "figured more importantly in the development of feminist literary theory than perhaps any other novel" (Hoeveler 45). Although most often seen as a birth myth or the echo of the myth of creation of man,[5] the author's ingenious use of the peculiar motif of male parthenogenesis, emphasized by what Kaye refers to as Victor's subsequent postpartum depression ("Feminist Sympathies", 57-71), has reached much further, challenging key notions of the social hierarchy of Shelley's time and expressing a severely critical attitude toward patriarchy and the ubiquitous fear of the Other. This essay argues that Kenneth Branagh's adaptation of the novel decodes the covert semantic, ontological, and epistemological notions concerning the male-

[4] Mary Wollstonecraft's text *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, published in 1792 and belonging to the so-called first wave of feminism, represents a harsh critique of the society's view on women which was, according to her opinion, prone to "considering females rather as women than human creatures" (6).

[5] *Frankenstein* is said to function as a metaphor for Shelley's traumatic birth experience at the age of sixteen and the subsequent death of her daughter, as well as the fact that Shelley's mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, died of puerperal fever soon after giving birth to her. It also clearly echoes the biblical story of the creation of man, wherein in Shelley's nineteenth century rendition the scientist takes over the role of God.

dominant social hierarchy available in Shelley's hypotext and represents a hypertext which overtly emancipates the main female protagonist. The claim that Branagh's adaptation departs from the novel's original purpose (e.g., Parker) is deconstructed by showing how his attempt at destabilizing the nineteenth-century oppressive patriarchal paradigm in fact closely follows the undercurrents of Shelley's novel. In other words, by departing from the mainstream focus on the monstrous scientific creation and the questionable ethics of its creator, and by emphasizing the importance of the relationship between Elizabeth and Victor, Branagh foregrounds the ideas subtly pointed out by Shelley. In figuring Elizabeth Lavenza as emancipated, he challenges the misconception that, by representing women as passive figures in a dominant man's life, Shelley supports patriarchal hierarchy and the relationships of power resulting from it. In addition, despite his interventions, Branagh managed to "represent better" (Elliott 174) as his adaptation takes into account the accuracy of Shelley's political upbringing and values that seem to be highly underscored in the novel. Branagh's adaptation did not simply rely on Shelley's text as the sole authority, but it took into account the echoes of her mother's (Mary Wollstonecraft's) values and work that (must) have influenced Shelley's novel and life. Thus, his adaptation trumps the traditional perception of Elizabeth's character as weak and submissive, and foregrounds the feminist values promoted by both Shelley and Wollstonecraft, consequently emancipating Elizabeth quite explicitly. In this, Branagh does not (wish to) violate the novel, but functions as a critic suggesting that the potential for feminist reading is available both in the hypotext and its historical context.

Such a claim may seem problematic in light of the fact that a male film director claims to be speaking for a woman author, taking over her voice and representations, and overwriting them with his own. However, instead of positioning himself above the female writer as the authoritative patriarchal figure, one who is giving his own, male vision of the novel, Branagh's adaptation suggests something else. His film echoes the awareness of the fact that for as long as the oppressor does not change the discriminating policies, the voices of the oppressed will not suffice. Whereas Shelley speaks subtly, Branagh feels the duty (and has the privilege of being able) to speak more loudly and explicitly in order to identify a social problem. In addition, he highlights that, as a consequence of feminist activism – instigated by the likes of

Shelley's mother, Mary Wollstonecraft – the social position of women and, with it, the expectations of contemporary audience concerning a female protagonist have changed: "Considering how times have changed in attitudes toward women's roles in films, it would not seem right to have her [Elizabeth] in the story just as a love interest. Mary Shelley was a strong woman who I'm sure questioned Percy Shelley, and I'm convinced she intended Elizabeth to be a strong character" (Branagh qtd. in Koltnow 10). Moreover, his treatment of Shelley's novel might be said to echo John Stuart Mill's parliamentary engagement for women's rights and the suggestions that it was Mill's wife who wrote or helped him write his *The Subjection of Women*, but could not be credited with the text due to gender conventions. While this is problematic and reveals the social inferiority of women at the time, it is beyond any doubt that it was far better to have had the text published under John Stuart Mill's name than not having it published at all. Similarly, a female director might have (should have?) given a feminist reading of Shelley's novel and Elizabeth's character in an adaptation of *Frankenstein*, but, so far, did not.

Initially, Shelley's *Frankenstein* was perceived as being affirmative of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' social hierarchy since her female characters were figured in a way that seemed to reduce them to "the helpless charges and pretty playthings of their husbands" (Hale 19), who "devote themselves to nurturing others to the point, whether they realize it or not, of sacrificing their lives for them" (Tyson118).And indeed, the literary representation of the four most prominent female characters – Margaret Walton, Elizabeth Lavenza, Caroline Beaufort, and Justine Moritz– clearly suggests their subjugation and inferiority. However, it does not suggest that Shelley is in any way complicit with or supportive of this state of affairs. The "curious fact" (Davies 307) that Mary Shelley, the daughter of one of the most prominent feminist literary authors – Mary Wollstonecraft – wrote a text whose female characters make for "such an insipid lot" (Youngquist 349) presented itself as a challenging research topic that resulted in the understanding that Shelley's, as Hale calls it, "completely gendered representation of weak women in need of male protection and careless men undone by unbridled ambition" (12) representing her critical exposure of the unacceptable state of affairs and that "the binaries of public and private, male and female, presented in the novel demand to be read as a critique of the binaries

themselves" (Hale 12). The title of Branagh's adaptation, which according to Parker is "a misnomer" because of its lack of consideration for Shelley's initial concern, in fact signals not only the formal recognition of Shelley's authorship of the story, but also the director's desire to make what he considers to be Shelley's intention more explicit in the hypertext. Heidi Kaye's study of Branagh's adaptation is a rarity in that it actually considers the possible feminist interpretation of the adaptation and the significance of Branagh's enlargement of both Elizabeth's and Justine's roles, but contrary to this essay, which proposes feminist critique as being central to Branagh's film, Kaye sees this as inferior to the issues of masculinity and male bonding ("Feminist Sympathies" 57-71).

Indeed, the female characters in Shelley's *Frankenstein* certainly are figured as passive in a number of ways. For example, the novel is framed by the correspondence between Sir Robert Walton and his sister, Margaret Walton, who is represented as a passive recipient of her brother's letters. In their correspondence, Robert laments the lack of a male companion with whom to share his thoughts and preoccupations, although he is clearly already sharing them with Margaret. His remark is a subtle dismissal of his sister as a valid conversational partner and, at the same time, vital both for the exegesis of the text and its subsequent adaptation. According to Bennett and Curran, Margaret's character is simply "a metaphor for [men's] commanding power over [women's] lives" (2) and her lack of voice serves as a symbol of the perceived inferiority of women in discursive practices, capable of only producing trivial writings. Margaret's physical absence is equally significant; not only does she not have a voice, she does not have a body in the text, thereby pushing what Mellor defines as the "rigid division of sex-roles: the man inhabits the public sphere, the woman is relegated to the private or domestic sphere" ("Usurping the Female" 115)to even further extremes. This seems to be in conflict with both the ideas of Shelley's progressive mother and her own lifestyle and serious writing, thus pointing to the conclusion that the passivity of her female characters should be read as criticism of the status quo, not an endorsement of it.

Similarly, Shelley uses the character of Justine Moritz, "a dutiful servant and surrogate mother" (Tyson 118), to critique the fatal outcomes of strict patriarchy wherein men's openly destructive patronization is hidden under the guise of a good-willed, "protecting spirit" (Shelley 36). In fact, her tragic destiny is intended to shock

the reader, unsettle the complacent acceptance of patriarchy, and question the fact that men are entitled to make critical decisions about women's destinies. Victor is responsible for Justine's death both implicitly (because Justine is mistakenly taken to be guilty for the crime that Victor's Monster committed), and explicitly (because here fuses to speak up and reveal the identity of his brother's murderer in order to selfishly protect himself and his extreme scientific endeavors). Yet, he sees himself as the designated martyr: "The tortures of the accused did not equal mine; she was sustained by innocence, but the fangs of remorse tore my bosom, and would not forego their hold" (Shelley 135).The incident stands for a state of affairs in which women are victims to men's ambitions, because "their obedience to the role prescribed for them by the male patriarchal society … deprives them of any ability to save themselves" (Smolka 26). What is more, Justine accepts her helpless position of victim and finds solace in trusting her implicit murderer: "I feel as if I could die in peace, now that my innocence is acknowledged by you, dear lady, and your cousin [Victor]" (Shelley 141).

Branagh avoids such direct exposure of Victor as a hypocrite and weakling by having Justine lynched by an angry mob before Victor arrives and learns of the circumstances of his brother's death. His intervention directs the audience's attention away from questioning the morality of Victor's deeds (unlike in the novel, wherein he is motivated by the desire to achieve greatness and learn what no man has learnt before, Victor's research in the film is motivated by his grief because of his mother's death),and toward what Branagh figures as the key problem: gender relationships. One might argue, especially in light of the fact that Branagh is male, that his choice can be seen as intended to exculpate the main male protagonist, illustrative of what the patriarchal system tends to do with a potentially guilty patriarch, or of an attempt to create a male hero with whom the audience can identify. However, in the context of the entire film, Branagh's decision to remove focus from Victor as the culprit highlights Justine as an exemplary victim of the patriarchal system rather than of a single morally lacking individual.

In a similar manner, Caroline Beaufort represents another victim of the nineteenth century social norm. Said to be a woman with "a mind of an uncommon mould" (Shelley 35) since prior to her marriage she used to do "plain work; she plaited straw; and by various means contrived to earn a pittance scarcely sufficient to support

life" (35) of her ill father and herself, Caroline stands for the prototype of the progressive feminist ideal. Nevertheless, it is only through her marriage to Victor's father that she is rescued from the "undignified" life of plain work and self-reliance, and becomes the embodiment of the patriarchal ideal of a devoted, self-sacrificing, overly affectionate mother ("Usurping the Female" 116).Caroline's destiny echoes the situation between Margaret Walton and her brother where, hidden between the lines of brotherly love and a mundane, affectionate exchange, there is downright derision of a female's right to be educated and to surpass their pre-set role in the society – that of a tacit wife and mother. The same social dynamic is apparent in Frankenstein's attitude to women, education, and the public world. In fact, men seem to have taken pride in not knowing anything about female issues and not caring either. As Tómasson states, "it appears that [Victor] does not regard the education of women as something that should concern him greatly" (20). His perception of women is biased as he interprets women to be only interested in the private sphere symbolized by poetry, emotions, imagination, and overall detachment from the actual world: "I delighted in investigating the facts relative to the actual world; she busied herself in following the aerial creations of the poets. The world was to me a secret, which I desired to discover; to her it was a vacancy, which she sought to people with imaginations of her own" (Shelley 39). Victor thus mirrors the general attitude of the time according to which science and education were gendered as male, whereas women were relegated to the domestic sphere. In this, Shelley foreshadows John Stuart Mill's criticism of the cultural mechanism behind the oppression of women, which implies that women and men inhabit opposite extremes of "human nature" – men being purely rational and women emotional:

> All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others. All the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women, and all the current sentimentalities that it is their nature, to live for others; to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections. (Mill 19)

This is clearly illustrated in Caroline's decision to care for Elizabeth who is ill with the scarlet fever, consequently succumbing to the illness herself, "proving" her lack of reasoning skills and her heavy reliance on emotion. It appears that her physical

weakness results from her intellectual weakness, but in fact it is "the insufficient education of women" that prevents their equal participation in the *male* world "and thus degrades them" because, as Vycpálková contends, education that only refers to "household matters and instructions on pleasing a husband makes women of weak mind" (38). Branagh dispenses with this episode (Caroline dies in childbirth in the film) and emphasizes the female intellectual and rational side by representing Elizabeth as a well-educated, level-headed, and therefore also strong young woman, not an overemotional and weak girl. In line with Wollstonecraft's claims, Shelley "explores how perceived physical differences between men and women have been wrongly expanded into the central structuring principle for society" (Bugg 3) according to which male physical power mirrors male intellectual power, whereas female relative physical weakness mirrors female intellectual weakness. Branagh illustrates this when he depicts the re-animated Elizabeth as equally strong, or even stronger than both Victor and the Monster, because her moment of enlightenment, in which she realizes that the right and the ability to decide her fate belongs only to her, gives her the physical power she needs to end her life and burn down the laboratory as the ultimate locus of male power and control.

Shelley's depiction of the female role in the nineteenth-century society culminates with Elizabeth, who epitomizes the fact that "the only way women can rise in the world" (Wollstonecraft 32) is through marriage. Although she acknowledges the sorry state of affairs according to which all the female characters are "mere toys" (Vycpálková 38) in the hands of their fathers, husbands, and brothers, Shelley certainly does not condone it. In fact, she goes to great lengths to show that women are treated and perceived as objects, rather than subjects with their own free will, which results in negative outcomes for the entire society. As the offspring of a widower who "commodif[ied] the child much as one might in a business negotiation" (Bennett and Curran 2), Elizabeth was sent off to live with cousins, the Frankensteins, without any affection expressed by her father. She is received into the Frankenstein family home as an object intended for Victor's pleasure: "I have a pretty present for my Victor – tomorrow you shall have it" (Shelley 18), says the delighted Caroline "playfully" (18). Moreover, Victor's later expression of sentiment reveals that he perceives her as a pet: "I loved to tend on her, as I should on a favourite animal" (39).Victor's insistence on

keeping the Monster a secret deprives Elizabeth from crucial knowledge and prevents herto search for safety and possibly save herself, eventually leading to her prophetic and literal transformation into "an abject (…) corpse by the end of the novel" (Frampton 27).

Contrary to this, Branagh's Elizabeth is ready to leave Victor after realizing that he is keeping her in the dark about his endeavors and places her dignity above her "need" to get married. Branagh's treatment of Elizabeth culminates with his changing of Shelley's overt text when he lets Elizabeth make the final choice about her life and death, a decision that Parker sees as "Branagh's most audacious departure" from the novel's plot, but which in fact represents adherence to the novel's feminist critique. Despite being highly appreciated as a faithful representation of "the Promethean theme of the overreacher who defies God by assuming his power of creating life" as well as "the Creature's autodidactic acquisition of a voice and his later use of it to face his creator" (García 230), features which were persistently suppressed in the previous adaptations, Branagh's alterations with regard to Elizabeth seem to some to have ruined her representation in the source text by giving her a voice. However, she is in fact the only female character to whom Shelley gives voice in the novel. Despite the obviously male-dominated narrative, the letters which Elizabeth sends to Victor provide the readers with an insight into her attitudes regarding her inferior position. Also, her testimony for Justine is the most vocal protest in the novel, one through which Mary Shelley is said to have voiced her own dissatisfaction with the British judicial system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ("Usurping the Female" 117). In this manner, Branagh's portrayal of Elizabeth can be interpreted as a *louder*, or "beef[ed] up" (Kaye, "Gothic Film" 249) version of Shelley's character and his adaptation of her, at least, can in no way be seen as "a pale copy of the real thing" (Cartmell and Whelehan 3). In other words, through his translation of a literary character into a film character, Branagh unlocks the feminist critique that Elizabeth carries in both narratives: his semantic decoding of Elizabeth serves as an affirmation and confirmation of both Shelley's and Wollstonecraft's attitudes to women's social position.

Thus, although Branagh's Elizabeth is as beautiful, kind, and loyal as the one in Shelley's novel, she is hardly the prototype of a helpless woman who spends her time idly waiting for Frankenstein to pay attention to her. On the contrary, she openly

expresses her pain caused by Victor's blatant negligence, and despite temporarily covering for him by presenting her own letters as if they were written by Victor (further proof of her audacity, empowerment and ingenuity), she refuses to simply accept her situation as it is. As opposed to Shelley's Elizabeth, who is constantly reminded of her "*proper* and *natural* place in private familial and public extra familial interaction" (Behrendt 71),[6] Branagh's heroine goes to see Victor when he fails to confide in her regarding his troubles about creating the Monster and demands an explanation. The clash between her love for Victor and her self-respect presents viewers with one of the most emotionally fraught scenes in the movie; Elizabeth is heartbroken after Victor tells her that their relationship comes second to his work, but the strength of her character emerges when the audience can see her fighting very hard to find the courage to stand up for herself and break off with Victor, which she manages to do. She does return to him later in the film, but only after Victor desperately asks for her forgiveness. In this way, Elizabeth's higher value for her own self-respect over her relationship with Victor remains intact throughout the film.

In the novel, Elizabeth's relentless compliance and fulfillment of other people's – primarily men's – wishes, culminates in her death. Victor refuses to tell her what is going on even though everyone's life is at stake, and makes it clear that only *after* Elizabeth is married to him will her position as a confidante, but still not an equal, be validated: "I will confide this tale of misery and terror to you the day after our marriage shall take place; for, my sweet cousin, there must be perfect confidence between us" (145). The fact that Victor's distrust entails an imminent threat to her wellbeing is irrelevant to him, as her safety is secondary to his. In fact, it never occurs to Victor that the Monster may hurt Elizabeth; he always perceives himself as the centre of the Monster's interest and intentions, thus illustrating the prevailing view according to which it is in women's nature to make sacrifices for others: "their nature [is] to live for others; to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections" (Mill 19). Branagh approaches this differently and alters Elizabeth's background role to that of a major character, transforming her "from Shelley's domestic

[6] Namely, when Elizabeth quite reasonably suggests that it would be much more suitable for Victor's little brother Ernest to become a farmer (whereas his father wants him to be a lawyer) due to his love of nature and fresh air, Alphonse patronizingly rejects her proposal and says "that [she] ought to be an advocate [her]self" (Shelley 93), efficiently putting an end to their discussion.

angel into a well-dressed bundle of Gothic spitfire" (Braun 1).When the Monster kills her, Victor uses the same technology to bring her back from the dead that he used to create the Monster, thus effectively attempting to show that men have the ultimate control over a woman's life and death. In addition, after Elizabeth's re-animation, the two males struggle for her affection without any regard for her wishes, objectifying her once again. The scene reaches its peak when, although zombielike, Elizabeth realizes what she has become and decides to finally take her life into her own hands by committing suicide. The significance of the scene is multiple: not only does Elizabeth finally have the ability to choose what will become of her, but she also decides to die rather than continue to be a mere object of male affection.

In the larger scheme of things, Elizabeth's final emancipated decision illustrates the fact that life without agency and the right to choose is no life at all in the eyes of a liberated woman. In this, she becomes a spokesperson for Wollstonecraft and for the suffragettes of Shelley's time, as well as for contemporary feminists and women all over the world. It is clearly suggested in the film that the destruction of weak female characters, featured heavily in Shelley's novel, does not serve only to critique men and the destructive repercussions of their dominance over women, but also to urge compliant women to fight against "a state of perpetual childhood, [and being] unable to stand alone" (Wollstonecraft 31). In this view – which does not put the blame exclusively on men – Victor Frankenstein can also be seen as a victim of the society's prevailing, prejudiced attitude and practice. His main fault is not seen in the mere creation of the Monster, but in the fact that he is unable to provide his [childlike] creation with adequate care, which would have prevented the Monster's rampage. Significantly, the reason why Frankenstein was unable to perform the parental role adequately is his acceptance of the gendered separation of the male and female spheres which, while preventing women from intellectual and economic independence, equally cripples men in giving the affection and "nurturance [that a child] requires" ("Making a Monster" 300).

If anything, Branagh's take on the character of Elizabeth serves both to give a better perspective on the detrimental social aspects that Shelley pinpoints as well as to support the basic premise that lies at the heart of all artistic creation, which, as Hutcheon points out, is the need to strike a chord with its audience:

> An adaptation, like the work it adapts, is always framed in a context—a time and a place, a society and a culture; it does not exist in a vacuum. Fashions, not to mention value systems, are context-dependent. Many adapters deal with this reality of reception by updating the time of the story in an attempt to find contemporary resonance for their audiences. (Hutcheon 142)

Therefore, Branagh's departures from the plot and characterization of the novel should likewise be viewed as a consequence of the need to make a character believable and acceptable to contemporary western audiences who would find the figuration of Elizabeth as a one-dimensional, submissive, helpless, and frail woman to be anachronistic and unappealing. But beyond this obvious point, such figuration of Elizabeth would further contribute to the loss of a feminist perspective that Branagh's *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* seeks to retrieve from Shelley's novel. He admits to being aware of the fact that she was presented as "a minor player" (Bennett and Curran 1) in the hypotext and that he deliberately decided to change that in his work, both in order to remain true to Shelley's values and to adhere to the standards of the contemporary audience:

> We have all grown so accustomed to all those screen versions of 'Frankenstein' that we have forgotten that Mary Shelley had something entirely different in mind … Elizabeth is only talked about in the book, and I felt that had to be changed. It seemed ridiculous that she would not question what he was up to, and I felt we had to have her voice in our story. (qtd. in Koltnow 10)

This testifies to the fact that the process of adaptation needs to take into account "the contexts of reception and creation" (Hutcheon 142) which will inevitably result in a hypertext that differs in various ways from its source, but also one that adheres to it sometimes in unexpected ways. In *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, Branagh is adapting Elizabeth to suit contemporary (feminist) audiences, but at the same time, he is returning to the author's intent in that he is fulfilling Shelley's own unrealized wishes for nineteenth-century women.

Following this, it becomes much clearer why Shelley's novel features one explicitly defiant, subversive female character, although she is not English. Just as

contemporary audiences would not accept a passive cinematic Elizabeth, so too the audiences of her own day would not accept and identify with a defiant, rebellious Englishwoman. In fact, Shelley uses the ubiquitous Romantic trope of the Other to depict an Arabian woman, Safie, who opposes the existing social norms, and serves to reinforce Wollstonecraft's ideas regarding the need for social equality between men and women, by contradicting her father's will.[7]In this, Safie's perceived otherness arises not only from her exotic (Arabic) origin, but also from her rebelliousness, making her both a symbolic outcast (as she rejects the social norms and defies conformity) and a literal one (as she is forced to search for a safe haven in the woods, away from society). Through her character, Shelley criticizes social conformity, embodied in Englishness, which more often than not represents a hindrance to individual happiness. For reasons of economy, Branagh dispenses with Safie's character but channels her rebellion and independence into his Elizabeth, who continuously challenges the nineteenth-century female ideal and establishes herself as the voice of moral authority:

> Earlier, in the mansion parlor, Elizabeth scolds Victor's egoism ("Don't you think of anyone or anything but yourself?" [Branagh 117]), which arranges Elizabeth as a moral voice that reminds Victor of his *hubris* and resurrects Mary Shelley's use of Victor to represent and comment upon the ramifications the masculine order and masculine ambition. (Parker)

Moreover, rebellious and strong female identity in Shelley's narrative is further displaced onto the female creature that Victor begins to make. Victor fears it, dreading that it "might become ten thousand times more malignant than her mate and delight, for its own sake, in murder and wretchedness" (Shelley 299), presenting a concern which never troubled him while assembling the male creature. In this light, the events concerning Elizabeth's reanimation and subsequent suicide– a plot twist that is Branagh's invention – represent an adaptation of this potentially monstrous female figure in the novel. Contrary to Kaye's interpretation, in which both Elizabeth's murder and reanimation represent a punishment for her denial of the expected submissive female behavior, it seems that her suicide subverts the male claim over the female body

[7] Safie's tyrant father wants to take her with him contrary to her wishes, but she manages to escape and reunite with Felix, wherein their relationship is presented as "an alternative social organization in the novel" ("Usurping the Female" 117) based on mutual respect. Branagh replaces them (together with Felix's father and sister, Agatha) with an equally loving (and nameless) family also defying the strict division of the female and male sphere of life.

and life depicted when the creature "tears out her heart because no one loves him" and that Victor "cuts off her head and puts it on Justine's body to recreate her in his own way, rather than putting Justine's heart into Elizabeth's body" ("Gothic Film" 249). While Elizabeth is denied "further power of articulate speech by the two men, who struggle over her reanimated body as if she were a rag doll, each pulling at an arm" (Kaye, "Gothic Film" 249), she nevertheless asserts her will through suicide which leaves both male protagonists devastated. Rather than punishment, her "self-annihilation" (Kaye, "Gothic Film" 249) can be seen as emancipation – one that must be achieved through difficult and violent struggle, as suffragettes have historically proven, but emancipation nevertheless. The concept of punishing women's assertiveness features quite explicitly in Shelley's novel, but her depiction of female punishment does not function to sustain patriarchal hierarchy. Rather, she represents it as tragic and as a critique by describing the status quo, without didactically critiquing it, she "specifically portrays the consequences of a social construction of gender which values men over women" (Mellor, "Usurping the Female" 116) and expresses her strong disapproval of male dominance, deeming it disastrous for men and women alike. In accordance with this, the tone of Branagh's film suggests that the continuous dismissal of women's desires and needs, as well as their opinions and ideas, will necessarily result in disaster and tragedy. It also gives validity to Branagh's claim that the adaptation's title, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, really does reflect his commitment to "the spirit of [the novel] – in this instance formulated as author intent – in opposition not only to earlier filmic interpretations of the novel but also to its own textual manifestations" (Elliott, "Literary Film Adaptation" 225). Therefore, the delving of Branagh's film into the gender hierarchy should be viewed both as an interpretive and artistic choice, as well as the result of the authorial intent to reinforce Shelley's testimony of the severe social inequality of her time. In fact, as Elliott argues, if we read "in both directions – from novel to film and then from film back to novel – one often finds the alleged infidelities clearly in the text" (*Rethinking the Novel/Film* 157), which means that authors of adaptations often highlight certain parts of the source text and reject others, rather than "invent" them altogether or depart completely from the novel. Thus, Branagh's adaptation represents a combination of de(re)composing and trumping models of

adaptation, both of which clearly work to emphasize issues that are already inherent in the source text, as is the case with Shelley's depiction of Elizabeth.

To conclude, despite the obvious alterations in the novel's characterization and plot, Branagh's film adaptation claims to be true to the feminist critique available in Shelley's novel. In fact, it represents adaptive critique of earlier literary criticism in that it represents a combination of de(re)composing model and trumping model of adaptation. The fate of major female characters – Elizabeth, Caroline, Justine – mirrors to a great extent that of Shelley's novel. However, the inevitable destruction of female characters in *Frankenstein* is not identical in novel and film. Despite the fact that Elizabeth dies in the adaptation, Branagh's intervention suggests that she dies on her own terms, ultimately refusing to continue to be treated as an object dominated and fought over by men. Wollstonecraft's demands for emancipation and against the strict gendered division between the private and public spheres of life are reflected both in Shelley's hypotext and Branagh's hypertext of the creation story. Branagh further adapts the story to the feminist contexts of his own day, thereby allowing the processes of both aesthetic creation and adaptation to challenge the subjection and absence of women's voices. In this, the analysis of Branagh's film represents a case study for adaptation as literary criticism and, instead of fuelling the discourse on the superiority of either the medium of letters or of film, it shows how an adaptation's critique of a literary text can contribute to the field of theory and practice of adaptation by highlighting the complexity of mutual relationships between adaptation and hypotext, between content and form.

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Part III: Criticism – Case Studies: Contemporary Works

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Who Watches *Watchmen*? Film Adaptation and the Sequential Art

Abstract

While film adaptations of comic books have existed since the dawn of cinema, only in recent years did they become a practice so common as to have produced an impressive number of films in less than two decades (over 150 only in English, not including animated films). This increasing attention to comics follows the improvement of their status as a legitimate form of art, in addition to being a commercial gold mine with an immense fan-base. Often considered a past time for teenagers and a surrogate of either literature or cinema, comic books began to find legitimation between the 1970s and 1980s due to a generation of brilliant writers, mainly Art Spiegelman, Hugo Pratt, and Alan Moore. Moore in particular was probably the first writer to develop the medium's specific potential to its highest peak, liberating it from its dependence on categories borrowed from cinema and literature. Moore fiercely opposed the adaptation of his *Watchmen* (1986), claiming that it is "inherently unfilmable," yet an adaptation, directed by Zack Snyder, was produced nonetheless and released in 2009. Adapting a work that is among the first ones to develop a language so specific to the graphic medium raises several challenging questions. This paper analyses the difficulties that arise from such a specific form of adaptation as well as takes into account ideas such as "unfilmability" and "untranslatability," there by illustrating a few instances of how some specific difficulties are addressed by the director. The notion of "fidelity" is discussed in order to show how apparently transparent choices can lead to radically different results and how an adherent transposition is not necessarily the most effective way to approach adaptation of comics, while it is fundamental that the adaptation develops its own language rather than borrow it from the graphic medium.

Keywords: adaptation, comic books, graphic novel, Alan Moore, *Watchmen*, Zack Snyder, fidelity, untranslatability, intersemiotic translation.

While a consistent number of film adaptations of comic books[1] has been created since the dawn of cinema,[2] at the beginning of the twenty-first century adapting comic books

[1] The term "graphic novel" will generally be avoided in this paper. Even though its usage has become common when referred to longer, non-serial stories, often with more complex content such as *Watchmen* itself, it is not universally accepted, as it entails an attempt to dignify a medium that would otherwise be relegated to childish entertainment through the adoption of terminology borrowed from "serious"

and graphic novels became a practice so common as to have produced an impressive number of films in less than two decades. Since the release of Singer's *X-Men* in 2000, over 150 adaptations have been produced only in English, not including animated films.[3] The increasing focus on comics is a result of their acknowledgment as a legitimate form of art, as well as of the fact that they have an immense fan-base and frequently offer plenty of material for spectacular stories and action, usually guaranteeing commercial success. Commonly considered a past-time for teenagers and a surrogate of either literature or cinema, comic books began to find legitimation between the 1970s and 1980s, due to a generation of brilliant writers, mainly Art Spiegelman, Hugo Pratt, and Alan Moore.

Alan Moore, who reached the apex of his success during the 1980s, played a fundamental role in the ennobling of the medium of comics and the canonization of certain works. *Watchmen*, illustrated by Dave Gibbons and published in 12 issues starting from 1986 and then as a single volume in 1987, constituted a turning point in the genre, reversing and criticizing every possible convention that had dominated comic-book writing to that point. Even though the story is about costumed heroes, they are the antipodes of the flat, idealized heroes often represented in the Manichean world of comics. Moore's disturbingly human-like characters face deeper and more rooted fears, both personal and collective, that go beyond the typical clash between good and evil. Their psychological development (or retrogression) is observed through a detached, ironic eye yet still with compassion, a pity that is proper to the great writers.[4] *Watchmen*'s influence on later comic books has been enormous and allowed for the overcoming of many *clichés* in the genre, even though, as it is often the case, derivative works often result in generating new *clichés*. In any case, *Watchmen*'s significance transcends the borders of a single genre. Its appearance as the only comic book in the *TIME*'s list of the one hundred best books of the century in English ("All-TIME 100

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literature. Alan Moore, who dedicated his life to dignifying the medium, stated his dislike for the term explaining that it was coined for marketing purposes (Kavanagh). In this paper, more general terms such as "comic book" or "book" will be used.

[2] The first two being *Little Annie Rooney* (1925) and *Rocket Ship* (1936).

[3] A pretty accurate and updated list can be found at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_films_based_on_English-language_comics.

[4] Cf. Conrad.

Novels"),[5] can at least suggest its privileged status. The critical academic attention that Moore received for this and other works remains exceptional for a graphic novel and has probably been equalled only by Art Spiegelman's widely acclaimed *Maus*, published the very same year.

Figures 1 to 7. One of the many possible examples of inner references, taken from pages 5, 44, 64, 366 (above) and 4, 64, 366 (below).

[5] Canons and lists of this kind are, of course, always subjective and should not be taken as exhaustive. Nonetheless, they can give an idea of the perception a culture has of its own literature. Interestingly, a list by *Le Monde*, dated 1999 – six years before the *Times* list – mentions two comic books among the one hundred best books of the century: Hergé's *Le Lotus bleu* (1934-35) and Hugo Pratt's *Unaballata del mare salato* (1967-69), which is the first episode of *Corto Maltese* ("Les cent livres du siècle").

Figures 8 and 9. A typical transition in Moore's style. The film follows the book's frames very closely, but loses the transition.

In his eclectic works, Moore addresses issues that range from politics to the nature of justice, from class inequality to sexual identity, with the aim of analysing and deconstructing aspects of contemporary culture. To achieve his purpose, he developed a style that exploited the specificities of the medium to an unprecedented attempt, which highlighted Moore as one of the most interesting postmodern writers. *Watchmen*, as well as most of Moore's other works, relies heavily on both intertextuality and intratextuality. Every panel abounds with references to other literary works, films, paintings, and comic books, while inner references to the work itself simultaneously form a very dense texture. Different levels of narration overlap continuously, as words pronounced by one character deliberately appear in a panel that shows a different scene as a way to multiply the meanings and possible readings. Flashbacks are frequent but never linear, excerpts from other media – including samples of novels or even a complete comic book – are often interpolated so as to create entire stories within the main story and present multiple perspectives on the events.[6] Transitions between the scenes constitute an important aspect of the narrative technique, as they are never abrupt but always present a formal connection or overlapping that creates a continuous flow in the action and a net of references that glue the manifold narration together. All of these

[6] The variety of texts interpolated in the story is remarkable. Alongside references to novels and comic books, one can find police reports, psychological reports, marketing scrap notes, and even an article from an ornithology journal, each of which is relevant to the story and offers a different angle to some of its aspects.

devices are designed to create a vertiginous movement that raptures the reader in a world that Moore himself defined as "hypnotic" ("On Writing Comics"95), and to convey ideas more strongly and with a sense of fragmentary fluidity. Any adaptation of Moore's comic book, therefore, poses difficult questions on how to transpose this unique and medium-related style into the cinematographic medium.

Watchmen was not the first attempt to adapt one of Moore's works. *From Hell* (2001) was the first and the only one that credits Moore as its writer and to which he gave his consent. *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (2003), which Moore defined as "the reason why I decided to take my name off all subsequent films" (Beat), was probably the most unfortunate adaptation. The 2005 *Constantine* received half-hearted reviews, while the 2006 *V for Vendetta*, scripted by the then Wachowski Brothers, reached an iconic status among fans. Its popularity is witnessed by the widespread use of the Guy Fawkes mask in recent years' protest movements, including the Anonymous group, popularized by the 2006 film rather than by the comic book. The filming of *Watchmen*, though, proved to be more complicated and was only finished in 2009, after long vicissitudes that included a lawsuit by the author.

Moore has never approved of any of these adaptations. On the contrary, he criticized them and opposed fiercely to the projects, which he could not stop because, as it is often the case in the comic book industry, he did not own the copyrights to his own work. The reasons for his distaste are to be found in Hollywood's serialized methods of production and simplification of complex literary sources:

> I find film in its modern form to be quite bullying. It spoon-feeds us, which has the effect of watering down our collective cultural imagination. It is as if we are freshly hatched birds looking up with our mouths open waiting for Hollywood to feed us more regurgitated worms. The *Watchmen* film sounds like more regurgitated worms. I for one am sick of worms. (qtd. in Boucher)

Moore's opposition is not directed against the film medium *per se* (he gladly collaborated with Dez Vylenz's *The Mindscape of Alan Moore* as well as Mitch Jenkins's *Act of Faith* and *Jimmy's End*) and it is probably not directed to adaptation itself, either. What frustrates Moore is Hollywood's cannibalization of art for the sole purpose of generating income:

> The main reason why comics can't work as films is largely because everybody who is ultimately in control of the film industry is an accountant. These people may be able to add up and balance the books, but in every other area they are stupid and incompetent and don't have any talent. And this is why a film is going to be a work that's done by dozens and dozens and dozens, if not hundreds of people. (qtd. in Ashurst)

In addition, Moore finds that Hollywood's unoriginal appropriations of comic books are a deadly blow to creativity in the comic book industry, as these ultra-capitalistic methods of creation and re-creation have inevitably infected the comics production system, too:

> There are three or four companies now that exist for the sole purpose of creating not comics, but storyboards for films. It may be true that the only reason the comic book industry now exists is for this purpose, to create characters for movies, board games and other types of merchandise. Comics are just a sort of pumpkin patch growing franchises that might be profitable for the ailing movie industry. (qtd. in Boucher)

Moore was one of the very few writers of his generation who tried to develop a language, both textual and visual, that is specific to the comic book, thus overcoming Eisner's cinematic approach, which, despite having dramatically improved the quality and the perception of comics, condemned it to exist as simply a surrogate for cinema:

> It was the late Will Eisner who brought a cinematic approach to comics in the 1940s after watching *Citizen Kane* dozens of times and transferring its visual style and approach to transitions to the pages of *The Spirit*. "As much as I admire Eisner, I think maintaining that approach in recent history has done more harm than good. If you approach comics as a poor relation to film, you are left with a movie that does not move, has no soundtrack and lacks the benefit of having a recognizable movie star in the lead role." (Boucher)[7]

Hence, Moore opposed adaptation for two reasons: his generally critical attitude towards Hollywood's servile and greedy idea of movie adaptation, and his awareness of the specificity of his own works. *Watchmen* is narrated in a language native to the comic medium and so intrinsic to it that Moore believed it to be "inherently unfilmable"

[7] Cf. Moore, "On Writing for Comics", pp. 91-92. The relationship between Eisner and Wells (and between comics and films) was probably more complicated than that. While it is true that Eisner drew very heavily on *Citizen Kane*, it is also true that the director was an admirer of Eisner's (especially of his *The Spirit*) and even admitted its influence on *Citizen Kane*. Exchanges between the two forms of art were, therefore, mutual and productive, and greatly benefited both media in their early development. (See Tubau). To close the circle, *The Spirit* was made into a movie in 2008 by Frank Miller, a rare example of a comic writer lent to Hollywood.

(Boucher). Despite Moore's opposition, *Watchmen* was filmed and finally saw the light of day in 2009. Although a comparative analysis is not necessarily the best way to approach a film adaptation, it will be useful in this case, especially considering the fact that the *Watchmen* film follows the source text very closely.

The first adaptational difficulty is posed by the chronological distance that separates the book and the film. This distance is particularly significant for at least two reasons. Firstly, Moore's graphic novel is deeply grounded in the context of its own time. The then political situation, from the international tension originating from the Afghanistan crisis of 1984 to the social instability under the Reagan administration, plays a primary role in the source book. Moore created a suffocating world that intentionally intensifies the feeling of insecurity that dominated the mid-1980s. Even if the themes of *Watchmen* transcend their specific time, they still are very closely connected to it. Writing about the Reagan era during the Reagan era, and making a film about it in the twenty-first century are two different things.

Secondly, comic book writing changed significantly in the twenty years that separate the book and the film, and this change was in a good deal generated by Moore's own work. To paraphrase Borges, the most important thing that happened between *Watchmen* and *Watchmen*, is probably *Watchmen* itself.[8] To mention but one possible example, writing about anti-heroes with ambiguous morality, problematic psychology, and a tormented past was a revolutionary thing in the 1980s and represented a critique of contemporary society, as well as of the very costumed-heroes genre and its significance in said society.[9] Mostly due to Alan Moore's and Frank Miller's influence, this has almost become a standard choice (at times even a *cliché*) in recent comic-books and their cinematic counterparts. In transposing the characters to the screen, the director faces the difficult task of saying something significant about them while knowing that they cannot produce the impact they had in the source text. In other words, the director will have to try to deliver a critique of something that has already changed.

[8] "Not for nothing have three hundred years elapsed, freighted with the most complex events. Among those events, to mention but one, is the *Quixote* itself" (Borges 93).

[9] That the history and the very birth of superhero comics are closely connected to nationalistic propaganda in the United States is a well-researched topic (see, for example, Duncan (2009), Scott (2011), or Beato (2013)).

The opening scene, as it is often the case with such scenes, reveals some of the director's approaches and strategies to this adaptation. The film opens with an altercation between the Comedian and his yet unknown killer accompanied by the diegetic sound of Irving Gordon's "Unforgettable." The choice of this song obviously contrasts the action taking place in the scene, creating thus a feeling of estrangement. Such choices in the film, from the music to colouring and cinematography, deliberately try to create a vintage, neo-noir savour, and a defamiliarizing look into the recent past of both the characters (as the killer and the victim have a long history together) and of the audience. The choice of "Unforgettable" in the scene, provides therefore an inner reference to the source text, and the character's relationships as established there, and weaves into notes the idea of nostalgia, the key sentiment of those times according to Veidt, who promptly exploits it commercially, as is made clear in the source text. The director's choice of music successfully recreates the source text's metatextual layering by double coding the sound and builds a nostalgic (and *démodé*) atmosphere reminiscent of the decades past. In fact, all the songs in the film have the same tone and aim at achieving similar effects: Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are a Changin" for the opening credits sequence, "The Ride of the Valkyries" for Dr Manhattan's Vietnam scene, Cohen's "Hallelujah" for the sex sequence and so on. Precisely because the soundtrack evokes so many popular intertextual references, it may seem too obvious in certain occasions, causing the movie to lose vigour. Yet, generally speaking, it serves its purpose of connecting the historical and cultural background of the source text with the contemporary context effectively enough.

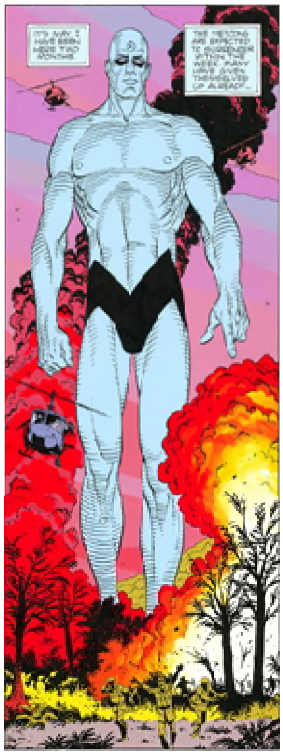
Another tendency, obvious from the very first photograms, is the evident spectacularization of the material. Snyder proposes an unusual fight: he slows down the rhythm, adds the notes of a love ballad, chooses visually strong framings and shows bodies literally flying all over the room and breaking everything that could possibly be broken. Even if the *Watchmen* book is an overwhelmingly visual experience, the fighting scenes never take the stage completely and are often relegated to quick flashbacks or symbolic overlaps. In principle, there is, of course, no reason why the director should not choose a different way of displaying physical confrontations. However, in the *Watchmen* film, fights swell out of proportion and become central to certain scenes for no other reason than to embody a quite pornographic display of

violence per se. Snyder seems compelled to obey a Hollywood precept that he cannot (and does not want to) break, but that he wants to present as unusual and defamiliarizing through the use of slow motion, a slow soundtrack, and even more spectacular moves.

Following this line of thought, it is interesting to consider how closely the source text of a comic book can or should be followed in the process of adapting it to the screen. The idea of "fidelity" was debated for centuries in translation studies and has been abandoned in the last few decades.[10] If it does not make sense to talk about "fidelity" in the inter-linguistic translation, it is questionable whether it does in the inter-semiotic translation. Moreover, this concept appears less frequently than it could be expected in the field of adaptation studies. However, given the similarities between the graphic and cinematic media and taking into account a number of very successful literal adaptations from comic books in recent years, this idea can offer interesting avenues to be explored. Certain adaptations in recent years have made the best of literal approaches, in the sense in which Cahir uses the term (16),[11] as in the case of the *Sin City* series, while others have produced poor films with a very loose approach, like *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. 2005 *Sin City*, directed by Robert Rodriguez, is probably the film that took the "literal approach" to its most extreme consequences, to the point of using the comic book, without alterations, as a script for the film.

[10] This idea was practically omnipresent in the debates on translation since ancient times. As Walter Benjamin puts it: "The traditional concepts in any discussion of translations are fidelity and license … These ideas seem to be no longer serviceable to a theory that looks for other things in a translation than reproduction of meaning" (20). The idea of fidelity, challenged by Benjamin and many others, was already considered obsolete and inadequate by the time translation studies were established as a discipline, in the 1960s and early 1970s. Cf. Snell-Hornby.

[11] In the case of comic books, where the visual element is already present, the term "literal" could be extended to signify a transposition that closely reproduces the panels' content and order.



Figures 10 and 11. An example of a "faithful" transposition. The reference to Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* is intended, obviously so if one considers that the soundtrack for the film scene is Wagner's *Ride of the Walkyries*.

Snyder approached the filming of *Watchmen* by trying a pretty literal adaptation; he did not change the plot (except for the ending) and he tried to reproduce on the screen the same scenes, characters, and moods featured in the book. Certain shots represent a very close transposition of some of the book's panels. Among many possible examples, one scene is particularly adequate in showing how two apparently similar scenes can have radically different meanings in the comic book and in the film. In Chapter 9 of Moore's *Watchmen* ("The Darkness of Mere Being" 274-306), Jon and Laurie have a long conversation that leads to Laurie's realization that the Comedian (her mother's rapist) is her father and Jon's realization of the value of human existence, even in its apparent material insignificance. The structure of the chapter is very complex and full of symbolism. Laurie's *anagnorisis* takes place through a series of flashbacks that climax into a thick page whose symmetric structure (a classical 3x3 grid, see Fig. 12) presents elements from all the flashbacks, as well as the present scene. The page brings together both past and present, creating something that has a purpose and design and, above all, that is simultaneous. The page literally shows panels from the previous pages and intertwines them with the present narration. Jon's view of time, corresponding to

Moore's, is disclosed here and finally made understandable to Laurie (and the reader), blind and unaware until that moment:

Figure 12.
"The Darkness of Mere Being." The interpolation of panels from other pages (captions have been added) creates a continuous movement between past and present, as well as between pages of the book. It also gives a visual idea of the fundamental unity of time and space.

> But time, if I understand it correctly, isn't actually passing, except in our perception of it. In fact, as far as I understand it, every moment in the universe, from its most remote past to the most distant future, is all happening at once in some permanent, eternal kind of globe of space time in which the beginning and the end of the universe are both there at the same time, along with every tiny moment in between, including all those moments which made up our lives. (qtd. in Baker 58)

As pointed out by Kuskin, the page provides multiple levels of understanding. It is a metonym, as it replaces the word "rapist" with the word "father," that is, it completely reverses Laurie's perspective on her own life, Jon's perspective on the life of the universe, and the reader's understanding of the comic book and comics at large. It also provides a synecdoche, as the page stands for the entire chapter and condenses its form and meaning. Finally, it is a metalepsis, as the character within the page is invited to read the page itself, therefore turning the character into a reader, and the reader into a

character: introspection becomes the comic page and the comic page becomes introspection ("Media"). However, when adapting the comic into a film, the director either neglected or ignored each of these aspects. This kind of juxtaposition is an effect that cannot be reproduced on the screen and is only possible on the comic page, where the reader perceives the page as a whole and can freely move forward and backward through panels and pages. In the film, however, no other solution is attempted. Even if the scene (02:02:39) closely follows the storyline of the book, the result is merely a linear flashback in which the protagonist realizes her father's identity. A significant sequence, full of symbolic meaning and crucial to the understanding of the entire work, is turned into a soap-opera scene with special effects. Even considering the restraints of the cinematic medium, Snyder seems to favour the viewer's understanding of the plot rather than finding a language that could deliver a more complex reading of *Watchmen*. The flashback technique, both in this and in other scenes, is used in a relatively linear way, and is mostly aimed at delivering those elements that are strictly necessary for the understanding of the main story. Namely, no overlapping of diegetic levels is ever attempted and even transition, a fundamental component in the comic book, that is also obviously available in film-making, is never used to create meaningful symbolism within the story, but is rather performed in a conventional way.

In this case, the very spirit of the sequence is violently reversed. The chapter in the source textis an invitation for the reader to actively participate in the page: "let yourself ***see*** it" says Jon to Laurie/the reader (Moore, *Watchmen* 280, emphasis in the source text). The film scene, in contrast, is deliberately presented as an imposition:"Do that thing you do" (Snyder 02:04:50) says Laurie to Jon, the only supernatural character in this story, after which Jon creates telepathic flashbacks in her mind, sharing his knowledge with her. Although she invited him to do it, both Laurie and the spectator are passive recipients of the story imposed upon them. While in the novel Laurie is invited to actively build understanding and interpretation by using her own memory and experience, "the movie imagines her as passive and sexual" (Kuskin); she can only wait for Jon/the film to "do that thing [they] do," to "penetrate" her with their knowledge. Whereas Moore understands the reader as an active subject who participates in the creative process, Snyder sees her as a mere consumer of a pre-constructed product,

whose function is only to swallow those "regurgitated worms" Moore so fiercely opposed.

Several instances of this kind of simplification can be found throughout the film. For example, Chapter 4 of Moore's *Watchmen* ("Watchmaker"105-38) provides a long introspective into Jon's past, which again exemplifies, in both form and content, Jon's way of perceiving the fundamental unity of time and space, as well as his final estrangement from the insignificant tangles of human existence. Once again, formal juxtapositions are a key element, as they represent a tool for deep psychological introspection into the mind of a character that is almost omniscient and almost omnipotent (the oxymoron here is intended). The specificities of the comic book medium are exploited here to convey a message that cannot be conveyed linguistically, as it is non-linguistic or super-linguistic in nature. While on the page the events of his past, present, and future life are literally simultaneous in Jon's perception, the film scene (Snyder 01:04:16) simply shows a mostly linear flashback of how a human being spectacularly turns into a superhuman thanks to a nuclear accident, a scene that in no way differs from the dozens of similar metamorphic sequences in super-hero movies. While the simultaneity of events, the unity of particular and universal that Moore achieves to convey in the comic page, cannot be reproduced in the film due to the linearity of the medium, Snyder does not seem to attempt any alternative solution and the result is that of a mere simplification.[12]

However, the ending of the story is particularly interesting since it appears to work better in the film than in the source text. Here, the director chooses a different solution than the one that many of Moore's readers might have found implausible. In the source text, Veidt teleports a giant mollusc over New York, killing millions in the process (including the monstrous creature) in order to make it look like an alien assault, and distract the United States and the Soviet Union from an otherwise inevitable nuclear confrontation. The unlikely monster was the product of the minds of a team of artists working on a film project, which Veidt managed to materialize and use in his world-saving conspiracy. In contrast, the film's plot was made more straightforward and

[12] Kuskin elaborates interesting considerations on how both the book and the film address pivotal themes such as, among others, the role of the reader and the medium, time, memory, intertextuality and derivation ("Media").

credible: Veidt simulates a Dr Manhattan attack on the city, which again results in the two world powers forgetting the incumbent war and joining forces against a newly discovered enemy. Whereas the film's ending surely works better, upon closer inspection it becomes clear that Moore's solution hides deeper meanings. The artists, not the scientists, who create the monster, create something in the world of fiction that becomes a real thing, even a thing that changes the course of human history. The symbolism here is very evident, even more so if we consider that the monster is a clear reference to a previous comic book ("Starro the Conqueror!" in *Brave and the Bold*, Number 28, the first appearance of the Justice League of America), to an antecedent and the origin of the very comic book discussed in this paper. Moore creates "a story that ultimately leads back to itself. It explains reality as a book. And so, in the end, the answer that *Watchmen* produces, is itself" (Kuskin).In Moore's view, a work of art can alter the real world inasmuch as it alters the world of those who experience it. This implies that the readers participate in the work of art and in its revolution as much as the artist does: they activate and materialize what has been created only potentially. In this sense, the comic medium probably gives the reader more power and freedom than any other medium. Inversely, in Snyder's transposition, the readers can only receive what has already been produced for them to consume.

As already mentioned, the similarities between comic books and films have generated an intense relationship between the two media. Whereas, in the past, writers such as Eisner tried to translate the cinematic language into the sequential art, in recent years film directors have often tried to adapt comic books following the panels and visual style as closely as possible. *Sin City* has been mentioned as both the most successful and most extreme example of this approach. While this proved a fortunate choice in its case, it may lead to the dangerous idea (devastating indeed, both for the comic book art and for the cinema), that a comic book is nothing else than a script for the film, and the film an enhanced comic book. *Watchmen* shows that not only can literality be counter-productive if the film does not find a language of its own, specific of its own medium rather than transposed from another one, but also that fidelity is a very impalpable and, probably, a useless category. Choices that are apparently transparent can have, at a closer look, radically different meanings on the comic page and on the screen.

To conclude, the existence of medium-specific characteristics such as the ones analysed above also poses fundamental questions on "unfilmability," a close synonym of "untranslatability."It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the idea in any depth. It will suffice to say that untranslatable elements are present in every work and every medium. If Robert Frost was right, then untranslatability is actually the very core of a work of art.[13] Nonetheless, translations are attempted and performed all the time and untranslatability is a key element that every translation practice deals with – to various degrees and with different outcomes – on a daily basis. The *Watchmen* film adaptation approaches an extremely difficult source text that heavily relies on medium specificities. Some of the solutions attempted by Snyder can be considered successful. The soundtrack, for instance, provides an interesting source of intertextual and

Figures 13 and 14: Another example of how visually close the film is to the comic book.

intersemiotic references that also facilitate understanding and compensate for many elements that are necessarily lost in the adaptation. The cinematography is visually

[13] "I could define poetry this way: it is that which is lost out of both prose and verse in translation" (Frost 7).

compelling and achieves the difficult task of creating a gloomy and suffocating atmosphere, similar to the one that captivates the readers of the source text. In addition to this, the abundant use of slow-motion pays homage to the still graphic representations available in the novel.

Nonetheless, the *Watchmen* film adaptation fails its purpose when it comes to translating the rich symbolism present in the source text, as well as most of its deeper aspects and their implications. Despite the apparent adherence to the original visuals and plot, the ideas underlying the film adaptation are generally simplistic and the director does not seem to try to achieve any of the complexity that makes the source text so significant. According to Kuskin's analysis, in fact, Snyder's film violently reverses some of the most significant ideas in the book, especially the ones regarding the role of the reader in a work of art, the transparency of the medium and the relationship between the author, medium, work and reader, which are among the most vital in post-modern writing. What the *Watchmen* film adaptation has to offer is a defamiliarizing look into recent history and an unusual reinterpretation of an over-used genre, but it ultimately fails to find a meaningful expressive language that could say something significant about *Watchmen.*

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The Power of "feeling Nothing" in Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman's Play *The 7 Stages of Grieving*

Abstract

Since its first staging in 1995, the Australian Aboriginal play *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, written by then unknown Aboriginal director Wesley Enoch and Aboriginal actress Deborah Mailman, remains a vital masterwork providing a raw yet cathartic experience of cultural trauma. By adapting the so-called Kübler-Ross model of the five stages of grief (denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance) and the seven stages of Aboriginal history (the Dreaming, invasion, genocide, protection, assimilation, self-determination, and reconciliation), the play is an invitation into an uneasy territory of charting cultural trauma. The rawness of experience of the nameless woman in this one-woman play is matched with a block of ice suspended above the stage, which gradually melts during her performance. It will be argued that this double act of melting topped with the power of the performative "nothing" shows how the adaptation of the (post)traumatic body can become a site of inscription and a site of the inscriber.

Keywords: *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, Wesley Enoch, Deborah Mailman, Kübler-Ross model, reconciliation, performative, constative.

Since its first staging in 1995, the Australian Aboriginal play *The 7 Stages of Grieving*,[1] written by the then unknown Aboriginal director Wesley Enoch[2] and Aboriginal actress

[1] *The 7 Stages of Grieving* was produced by the Brisbane-based Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts company. It premiered in Brisbane, in 1995.

[2] Award-winning playwright, director and Noonuccal Nuugi man from Stradbroke Island, Wesley Enoch lives in North Fitzroy, Melbourne. His great-aunt is Oodgeroo, the most famous Australian Aboriginal poet, storyteller, and activist. He produced over 30 plays, among which is *The Sapphire*, later adapted into the popular 2012 film of the same title. He wrote a series of plays: *The 7 Stages of Grieving* (co-written with Deborah Mailman), *Little White Dress, A Life of Grace and Piety, Black Medea, The Sunshine Club, Grace*, *The Story of the Miracle at Cookie's Table*, for which he won the 2005 Patrick White Playwright's Award. He directed *Murri Love*, *Changing Time*, *The Dreamers*, and *Up the Ladder*. Enoch was the artistic director of the theatre companies Kooemba Jdarra in Brisbane and Ilibijerri in Melbourne, as well as the resident director of Sydney Theatre Company, the associate artistic director of Belvoir Theatre in Sydney, and the director of the Indigenous section of the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games opening ceremony. The director, playwright, and current artistic director of Queensland Theatre Company, in 2017 he received a three-year tenure as the artistic director of Sydney Festival. In 2017, the

Deborah Mailman,[3] remains a vital masterwork providing a raw yet cathartic experience of cultural trauma. Moreover, this 55-minute one-Aboriginal-woman soliloquy has become a testing ground for young and aspiring Aboriginal actresses. It seems that all actresses who have played the now eponymous "Aboriginal Everywoman" in the play have seen their theatre or film career grow after taking up this role (Deborah Mailman 1994-1997, 2002; Ursula Yovich 2006; Lisa Flanagan 2008, 2010; Chenoa Deemal 2015-2017). Reviewing the 2008 production, Russel Edwards notes that "[e]xcerpts [from the play] have since become standard audition pieces for aspiring Aboriginal actresses, and the play itself is deservedly becoming an established rite of passage" (Edwards). Indeed, the role is meant only for Aboriginal actresses because, as Enoch maintains, "[t]here is the politics of the skin in the sense that someone walks in there and audiences immediately overlay a whole history on what they are thinking: that here's a black woman who's telling these stories about the family, and the disadvantage and all that kind of stuff" (qtd. in Bradley Smith 42). In other words, "[y]ou can't just hit the Internet to find out all about Aboriginal culture. You can find maybe the historical points, but you can't find the performative elements that are inherent in Aboriginal performative perspectives. It would be extremely difficult, anyway" (Enoch qtd. in Bradley Smith 42).

Based on the play's successive productions and positive reception in Australia and abroad (London and Zürich) where it was performed before a non-Australian and non-Aboriginal audience, it is obvious that the work embeds specific edginess that has not weakened in more than twenty years. This edginess stems from the power of performative utterance, that is, Austin's claim that the performative as a category of utterance does not simply describe the world, but acts upon it (13), that words can be viewed as actions, and that in the moment of utterance they have the potential to change the reality they are describing. What the words enact, adapt, and act upon in *The 7 Stages of Grieving* is the uneasy territory of mapping cultural trauma. The uneasiness

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festival included 450 performances and 150 events performed by over 1,000 artists at more than 46 venues.

[3] Born in Mount Isa to a Maori mother and Aboriginal father, Mailman has worked extensively in Australian film, television, and theatre. Her film roles include *Radiance* (1998) for which she received the leading Australian film award for the best leading actress (she was the first Aboriginal actor to receive this award); *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2002); *Bran Nue Dae* (2009), *The Sapphires* (2012); *Mabo* (2012); *Redfern Now* (TV film and series); *Paper Planes* (2015); *Cleverman* (sci-fi TV series, 2016); *Black Comedy* (TV series, 2016); and many more.

lies in the play's unclear demarcation between postcolonial trauma and postcolonial recovery, because the "postness" of the latter is in the state of perpetual postponement. Hence, the success of the play lies in the immediacy of trauma inscribed on the Aboriginal body without a comforting retrospective gaze, offered to the audience though the voice of a nameless Aboriginal woman. There is no postness to her experiencing trauma as there is no postness to traumatic events: indeed, this is not an event-based trauma since it has been going on from the moment of colonisation, functioning as Fernand Braudel's *longue durée,* as a history "to be measured in centuries this time: the history of the long, even of the very long time span" (Braudel 27). This is a trauma in its raw state, a response to an ongoing experience of colonisation in a postcolonised country, which, according to Ailen Moreton-Robinson, is not postcolonised for Aboriginal Australians since

> Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are situated in relation to (post)colonization in radically different ways – ways that cannot be made into sameness. There may well be spaces in Australia that could be described as postcolonial but these are not spaces inhabited by Indigenous people. It may be more useful, therefore, to conceptualize the current condition not as postcolonial but as *postcolonizing* with the associations of ongoing process which that implies. (30, italics in the original)[4]

However, even though trauma is still in progress due to the implication of "the continuing nature of the colonising relationship that positions us [Aboriginals] belonging but not belonging" (Moreton-Robinson 38), it does not induce the "'unspeakableness' of trauma," which is supposed to be the most visible symptom of trauma, that is "a function of the initiating terrorization of the person, the need to black out in face of a pain that itself would obliterate the subject as such" (Lloyd 214). Rather, the condition of secrecy and silence, which, as David Lloyd argues is important for the

[4] The necessity to offer a more nuanced approach to "postcolonial" as an umbrella term which may mean everything and consequently nothing, was already raised in the 1980s and 1990s by some of the leading postcolonial scholars at the time, such as Simon During, Vijay Mishra, Bob Hodge, and Stephen Slemon. Even the famous Australian trio, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, who brought the term into the limelight in their 1989 seminal study, raise the downsides of its broadness in the 2nd edition of *The Empire Writes Back*, by stating that "some societies are not yet post-colonial (meaning free of the attitudes of colonization. The case of indigenous people in settler societies is an example of this latter argument)" (194). The case in point is the most important collection of essays by Aboriginal Australians, *Blacklines* (2003), where the term "postcolonial" is done away with already in the introductory essay.

perpetrator and the victim alike albeit for different reasons (214), is obliterated since the nameless woman in the play addresses the audience directly. As Wesley Enoch maintains, the play as voiced through the protagonist is a "celebration of our survival, an invitation to grieve publicly, a time to exorcise our pain" (16).

Public grief is conveyed through twenty-three acts or vignettes of intimate nature, based on Aboriginal lived experience. The text is a diary, a chronicle, a corroboree, all interwoven into "the greater fabric of song" (13). It blends Enoch's experience, as well as historical events and personae which have marked Aboriginal existence in Australia. Some stories are based on Enoch's personal history (the death of his grandmother in 1993 triggered the play and is recapitulated in "Nana's Story"), while others enact the historical events he witnessed in Brisbane ("Mugshot" refers to the case of Daniel Yock in 1993, who died in police custody, and as such is a part of the Aboriginal Death in Custody narrative; "March" refers to so-called silent March in Brisbane following Yock's death). Some stories enact the smoking ceremony ("Purification"), call forth the Stolen Generations ("Invasion Poem"), expose the assimilation policy ("Black Skin Girl;" "Aunty Grace") and the loss of Aboriginal land ("Bargaining"), and lay bare racism in Australia's contemporary society ("Murri Gets a Dress," "Story of a Brother"). Certain historical characters and events may change with each production. For example, the 1996 production mentions the notorious former Queensland Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen, while the 2015 production introduces the equally notorious former PM Tony Abbott. The 1996 introduces the enactment of the landmark historical event of 1788 ("1788"), the notorious year of invasion – or as the successive governments have insisted, Australia's settlement, while the 2005 production expands the play with the famous 2000 People's Walk for Reconciliation across Sydney Harbour Bridge, with over 300,000 people participating whereas then-PM John Howard refused to take part.

Owing to its engaged Aboriginal historiography that leaves no stone unturned, the play has been discussed in the framework of the so-called autobiographic theatre with its focus on "subjective narratives of personal histories based on lived experience" (Glow 73). Alternatively, Helena Grehan argues that this is "not solely a factually based work, but, rather, a work of 'faction', meaning a combination of fact and fiction" (106), which is in accordance with Enoch's claim (15). Hilary Beaton, who worked on the

play's 1995 production, says that the play bears resemblance to other autobiographical works but at the same time attempts to "reproduce the spontaneity with which these events occurred" (19) and make it "safe in the civic arena" in order for the work to be "determined on its artistic merit" (19), and at the same time speak to "its community, locally and nationally, in an attempt to create *a story of one's own*" (20). Since the play overtly emulates "the process of mourning and spiritual reawakening characteristic of the psychological trauma of human loss" (Maufort 196), the "Prologue" issues a customary warning in Australia used before the beginning (or in opening credits) of any form of cultural product that contains any material demanding specific cultural protocol towards Aboriginal Australians and Torres Straight Islanders. In this case, the text announces that the performance "contains names and visual representations of people recently dead, which may be distressing to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people" (Enoch and Mailman 39). This legitimacy of the play testifies to the key aim of postcolonial drama, which, as Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins maintain, is not "constructions of history *per se*" but constructing "the self *in* history" (109). That is why the play is the product of Mailman and Enoch's personal storytelling interwoven into the texture of Aboriginal experience, confirming the claim that "the postcolonial subject is figured as a split site defined by the remnants of a pre-contact history, the forces of the more official colonial record, and the contingencies of the current situation" (Gilbert and Tompkins 109). As Enoch and Mailman maintain, the play's primary concern is to interrogate the ways of coping with grief in a community and whether coping with grief can be the starting point of thinking about reconciliation (Grehan 106-7).

Indeed, the play cannot be understood without the term *reconciliation*, even though it is explicitly introduced only in the play's final acts. In the Australian context, reconciliation gained currency in the early 1990s, when it became an obligatory part of the governmental jargon, but also a term whose effectiveness at grass root level for the past twenty-five plus years leaves much to be desired, which ominously mirrors the effects of its terminological "companion" – multiculturalism, which has been a part of Australia's policies since the 1970s and stubbornly remains impervious to *logos*. Hence, it should not come as a surprise that the play does not attempt to provide easy-going answers or, as Marc Maufort claims, "fail[s] to clearly evolve towards a conventional

climax" (192).The only possible answer, that is, the unsettlingly logical answer lies in the adaptation and enactment of trauma, which is as much individual as it is social, which, consequently, does not pave the way to reconciliation, but the way to *consider* reconciliation. Thus, the story that unwraps "sets up the conditions for reconciliation to be modelled as/through compromise rather than consensus" (Gilbert and Lo 63). The first step on the path to *consider* reconciliation is to create "a space of shared experience as a space of acknowledged difference" (Ashcroft 113). When the difference of the other is recognised, the negotiation process of the meaning of reconciliation can go forward. This will be the moment when reconciliation *does*, and not only is. As will be argued, the play shows what reconciliation is, and what it could do if set into motion on a "performative journey".

The "performative journey" of *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, as Beate Neumeier calls it (284), combines and adapts the methods for coping with trauma, with the causes of trauma. As Enoch states in the text accompanying the 1996 publication, the play parallels "the 5 Stages of Dying by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross [sic] and the 7 Phases of Aboriginal History" (15). While coping methodology is based on the so-called Kübler-Ross model, popularly known as the five stages of grief or dying and based on Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' influential 1969 book, the causes of trauma are represented through the standardised seven phases of Aboriginal history: Dreaming, invasion, genocide, protection, assimilation, self-determination, and reconciliation. The five stages of the famous Kübler-Ross model can be described in short as: denial that can be reduced to the utterance "No, not me, it cannot be true" (Kübler-Ross 31); anger or "Why me?" (40); bargaining or "If God has decided to take us from this earth and he did not respond to my angry pleas, he may be more favorable if I ask nicely" (66); depression as a result of the past and impending losses (69-70), reflecting the feeling of "what's the use" (91); and acceptance, that is "the final rest before the long journey" (92). The irony of appropriating the Kübler-Ross model for coping with cultural trauma lies in its original application, which is that the model reflects the stages experienced by people suffering from terminal illness and provides a guideline for those who cater for them. Hence, death is imminent while the model enables understanding mood swings of the soon-to-be-dead patient.

This, at first glance, bleak coping model intertwines with the "periods" of Aboriginal history, but neither the model nor the periods are presented in the text. They remain unmentioned apart from the word "reconciliation" which appears at the end of the play, albeit in a subversive context. However, they do appear in the play's printed paratext, as a kind of "secondary signals whether allographic or autographic" (Genette 3), that is in Enoch's introductory essay and on the book's back cover. These two paratextual signals provide the play "with a (variable) setting and sometimes a commentary, official or not, which even the purists among readers, those least inclined to external erudition, cannot always disregard as easily as they would like and as they claim to do" (3). Moreover, the back cover suggests how the Kübler-Ross model should be applied to different stages of Aboriginal history. The first coping stage is divided between the two historical periods, denial with invasion and isolation with genocide. This is followed by paralleling anger with protection, bargaining with assimilation, depression with self-determination, and acceptance with reconciliation. Even though the only stage in Aboriginal history left untouched by the coping stages is The Dreaming since it is the only "trauma-less stage" as it stems from the pre-colonial period, it is still situated under the heading of "The 5 Stages of Dying" (Enoch and Mailman). It may signal the loss of culture or the loss of culturally strong places in Australia, which is tied to the dying of older generation, i.e. of those who can transmit culture-specific knowledge. This is why "Nana's Story" about the funeral of the grandmother appearing early in the play and whose marked grave remains on the stage, may be the most foreboding event for the future of Aboriginal Australia enacted in the play.

There is a paradox inscribed in combining the stages of dying with the stages of Aboriginal history in the play that empowers, especially if we take into consideration that the Kübler-Ross model is indeed meant to facilitate the dying process, not the reviving. However, apart from grief embedded in the model, another equally frequent companion to the dying process is, according to Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, a continuous presence of hope:

> It is this glimpse of hope which maintains them [terminally ill patients] through days, weeks, or months of suffering. It is the feeling that all this must have some meaning, will pay off eventually if they can only endure it for a little while longer. It is the hope that occasionally sneaks in, that all this is just like a nightmare and not true. (113)

Hence, "[n]o matter the stage of illness or coping mechanisms used, all our patients maintained some form of hope until the last moment" (236). Making sense of the suffering lies in the perpetual presence of hope which should give a meaning to the patient's nightmare. If we look for the enactment of hope in the play, it is found in unexpected places: in the performative power of the word "nothing" and the dripping of ice. The latter is the first prop introduced on stage in the "Prologue" which, following the culture-sensitive address to the audience, contains a very simple set design: "*A large block of ice is suspended by 7 strong ropes. It is melting, dripping onto a freshly turned grave of red earth. The performance area is covered in a thin layer of black power framed by a scrape of white. Within the space there are projection surfaces*"(Enoch and Mailman 39, italics in the original). In the 1996 production, the play begins with a blue light shining on the large block of ice hung by seven ropes above the stage. The ice is reflected onto the semicircular calico background, which is later used for a series of projections. The set is trimmed down to a bare minimum: a central black square with a stool on one side and a grave filled with red sand on the other (with a brown suitcase containing "cultural baggage" which is filled by the female protagonist with cultural memories and traumas during the play).[5] The central black square is framed with white spaces, so that whiteness is pushed to the margin (Enoch qtd. in Grehan 109).[6] The dripping of ice is audible and the ice keeps on dripping during the play. Even though the sound of drops falling on the stage mixes with the woman's sobbing in the following acts imply entitled "Sobbing," the drops accompanying her weeping represent hope because the ice that is melting during the play begs the question: "How do we make the ice (around our hearts) melt?" (Beaton 19), and by its literal melting, the ice answers it. Moreover, the ice melts on the stage covered in red earth which initially figures as the grandmother's grave. At the same time, by melting, it is making the ground and the nameless woman protagonist increasingly wet and muddy: the set that signals the land, and the woman who represents Aboriginal experience, will undergo a gradual transformation on the journey to share a story with the audience. As Joanne Tompkins

[5] The quoted Grehan's contribution offers a very detailed description and explanation of the set design.
[6] The 2015 production introduced a central circular form indicated with sand, as a camping site symbol used in Aboriginal visual art.

remarks, this is a journey that "leaves its traces on the Woman" (73), but it also leaves traces on the land.

In the opening scene, the words that are projected on the screen behind the stage and across the body of the actress represent a cornucopia of despair (grief, grieving, sorrow, loss, death, pain, distress, and so on), and the act ends with the nameless woman touching them on the screen while saying: "**Nothing/Nothing/I feel ... Nothing**" (Enoch and Mailman 41, bold in the original). Even though the uttered feeling of nothing may seem to render her petrified in pain, the transformation has already started since the ice has already started to melt. In other words, the answer to Helena Grehan's question as to whether the nameless woman can at this point manipulate the painful words projected on the screen and on her body (109) may be that the apparently dreary beginning of the play hints that she will be able to do so by the play's end. This is further emphasised when the so-called "Sobbing" act is succeeded by the "Purification" act, wherein the woman performs a smoking ceremony by burning eucalyptus leaves in order to ask for the permission of spiritual elders to share the story by singing in the Kamilaroi (Gamilaraay) language.[7] By performing a smoking ceremony used in Aboriginal Australia for burial, celebration, cleansing, and healing, "[t]he theatre is thus rendered a sacred place" (Tompkins 72), that is, the stage literally becomes Aboriginal country, which testifies to the claim that in Aboriginal theatre "[t]he land is as central to the action as any actors on stage or narrative" (67). It also tells the viewer, familiar with the meaning of the smoking ceremony, that the stories that follow appear on the land, which, irrespective of its scars, can heal and cleanse.

Apart from the initially indicated sacredness of the land (stage), the transformative power of the play is also channelled through Aboriginal storytelling techniques that destabilise the notion of the play's realism inherited from divergent artistic traditions.[8] As Enoch says, "the performance draws upon both 'traditional' and 'contemporary' arts and cultural practices" to explore "a form of cultural hybridity," which in turn changes what is deemed "traditional" and "contemporary"(15). Enoch

[7] Kamilaroi or Gamilaraay belongs to a group of languages from the inland north of New South Wales. The use of Gamilaraay has declined and the main source of learning this language lies in historical material. For preservation of Gamilaraay and its current status, see a relatively recent contribution by Giacon.

[8] For instance, Maufort goes so far as to argue that the play uses the convention of magical realism (192) and Mudrooroo's concept of distinctively Aboriginal realism (193).

says that the interesting aspect of the play is "the interaction of art forms, involving a lot of tradition, [...] a traditional *Aboriginal* art form which has dance, song, story, and visuals interwoven" (qtd. in Bradley Smith 42). Set into motion, the traditional forms and the Kamilaroi/Gamilaraay language in the play are not "merely relics or atavistic remnants of traditional cultural practices, but very much part of the lively, diverse and *contemporary* experience of Indigenous Australians" (Glow 7, my emphasis). By becoming alive on-stage,[9] they may exclude cultural outsiders, but they equally become a part of the outsiders' reality by imposing the instability that may trigger negotiation of new meanings, or a new type of hybridity, which Enoch refers to. This is why the play can achieve many "sharp emotional shifts that punctuate the performance and render complacency impossible" (Grehan 109), even for an international audience.[10]

It seems that the highest uncertainty of the play in the context of contemporary Aboriginal experience is preserved for the most important "word" that appears by the end of the work: reconciliation. In the act entitled "Everything Has Its Time," the Aboriginal Everywoman is on stage and her body and the stage become inscribed with the words: "Wreck, Con, Silly, Nation" (Enoch and Mailman 72). Then she addresses the audience: "Wreck, Con, Silly, Nation. Some of the people I talk to would write like this. What does it mean when some people can't even read or write the word?" (72). Exposed to the Aboriginal deconstructive gaze, this allegedly big word becomes an aporetic abyss which feeds on Derridean *differance* and Lyotardian *differend*, by continuously differing and deferring meaning and making communication incommensurable. The words vanish and are replaced by a single word – reconciliation. Born out of the marriage of untrue minds, reconciliation becomes a mongrelised term lacking transformative potential because it is devoid of performative power. This utterance lacks the verb and literally does nothing. This is Australia's "true constative, which asserts with striking uneasiness its truthfulness or falsehood" (Austin 46). The example that Austin offers ominously reflects the barren activity of reconciliation in the

[9] It is worth noting that in the 2015 production, Chenoa Deemal, who plays the leading role, speaks her language, Gugu Yimithirr spoken in North Queensland, instead of Gamilaraay, in order to make her portrayal of the role of the nameless woman more genuine.

[10] While discussing how the play was received in London, Enoch said that the audience understood it, albeit in a different vein: "In Australia it's guilt: in the UK it might be seen as the exotic or the other, but this is also about dealing with issues, social issues that they have, but which they can deal with at a distance through seeing our work" (qtd. in Bradley Smith 43).

Australian context, because he uses the agency (or the lack thereof) of the verb "to apologise:"

> [W]hat is the relation between the utterance, "I apologize," and the fact that I am apologizing?
> …
> Whereas in our case it is the happiness of the performative "I apologize" which makes it the fact that I am apologizing: and my success in apologizing depends on the happiness of the performative utterance "I apologize." This is one way in which we might justify the "performative-constative" distinction – the distinction between *doing* and *saying*. (46, 47, my emphasis)

Ironically reflecting the effects of the famous Sorry Speech, uttered by the then-PM Kevin Rudd to Parliament on 13 February 2008, with which the nation apologised "for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians," and "specially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country" ("Kevin Rudd's Sorry Speech"), the Premier's apology "without qualification" ("Kevin Rudd's sorry speech") turned into an apology without agency. In the same vein, the Aboriginal Everywoman remarks on the word "reconciliation:" "It isn't something you read or write. It's something that you *do*" (Enoch and Mailman 72, my emphasis), whereby the word "reconciliation" – the static constative – ends in a suitcase that she locks. The suitcase will not travel with her anymore; rather, at the end of the play she places it "at the feet of the audience" (73). Locked in the darkness with other cultural baggage she has unpacked before the unsuspecting audience – the baggage which is as Aboriginal as it is Australian – all that is left out in the open is a *silly nation wrecked by cons*. There is no easy-going transmissibility of trauma, no easy nexus between complicity, guilt, and agency: the audience is invited, as Grehan suggests, "to take the suitcase and to focus on its contents" (114). However, whether anyone will reopen or dare to open Australia's Pandora's Box is left unanswered.

But before she leaves the stage, the woman turns her gaze towards the audience again. As the final act, entitled "Relief," states:

> *The Woman walks into a pool of light. She stands, face uplifted, as if in gentle rain.*
>
> **Nothing**
> **Nothing**
> **Nothing**
> **I feel Nothing**
>
> *The Woman finally leaves.* (Enoch and Mailman 74, bold and italics in the original)

This is not a simple iteration of "nothing" from the beginning of the play. The final "nothing" reflects Kübler-Ross' final stage of acceptance: "It is almost void of feelings. It is as if the pain had gone, the struggle is over, and there comes a time for 'the final rest before the long journey'" (92). It is the result of the transformative power of the performative "nothing." The uneasiness, however, resides in the quality of this performative. Namely, Austin states that "the constative utterance is true or false and the performative is happy or unhappy" (54).[11] Judging from the reaction of the Aboriginal Everywoman, happiness is in the eyes of the beholder. Her long journey is not over, but it will be lighter since she has left her "cultural baggage" with the audience. Since she has done away with reconciliation because, as she says, "Everything has its time" (72), she "makes the non-Indigenous spectator aware of the discomfort of difference created by the communal event" (Neumeier 285). In the case of this play, the communal event is, to quote from Kevin Rudd's eponymous speech, "this blemished chapter in our nation's history" ("Kevin Rudd's sorry speech"), the "chapter" which started in 1788 and still has not finished, irrespective of its alleged end in 2008, based on the presumption that the constative "sorry" from the speech is true. The audience can face this discomfort of difference if they dare open the baggage left on the stage. Therefore, her repetition of "nothing" is unsettling because it is "'a repetition with a difference' foregrounding the transformative process that has involved and re-positioned the performer and the spectator differently" (Neumeier 285). Her body as a site of historical inscription of *constative* reconciliation and *constative* sorry speech is finally transformed at the end of the play into a body and voice which inscribes nothingness with the power of the performative. She leaves the stage calm, with her head uplifted. The only question is who has the right to join her.

[11] For a more elaborate discussion on un/happy performative, see Austin 53-66.

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The Croatian Version of Eric Idle's *Spamalot*, An Homage to a Translator

Abstract

Croatian translator Ivanka Aničić translated and adapted most hit musical productions put up on the Croatian stage in the first decade of the twenty-first century, such as *Grease*, *Les Miserables*, *The Full Monty*, *Footloose*, *Chicago*, and *Aida* as well as some others. Regrettably, this extremely talented and prolific writer died in 2011, when she was only 43 years old. One of her most successful and most difficult translations was that of the libretto of *Spamalot*, a musical comedy by Eric Idle, a member of the legendary comedy group The Monty Python Flying Circus. This irreverent parody of the Arthurian legend was adapted from the 1975 film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. The article compares the original text with its Croatian adaptation and determines translation strategies and procedures, paying special attention to culturally specific and identity references such as anthroponyms and idiomatic phrases. Additionally, it explores how elements of humour are adapted for the Croatian stage, namely, to what extent they have been localised, simplified, avoided, or intensified. This being an especially successful translation, the article is also an homage to the translator who left us all too soon.

Keywords: translation, adaptation, *Spamalot,* Eric Idle, Ivanka Aničić, musical.

Within the past two decades, a specialized area of translation for stage has become an important area of research in the English-speaking world (Aaltonen, 2000, Zatlin, 2005, Hale and Upton 2000, Bassnett, 2000). Translations for stage can be differentiated as those meant for print, intended to reach wider audiences, and those for the stage exclusively, which are not available to the general public.[1]

[1] We would like to extend our gratitude to the actor, singer, and translator Dražen Bratulić of the Komedija Theatre in Zagreb, who was kind enough to provide us with a copy of the stage script for the

Spamalot is a musical comedy adapted from the 1975 film *Monthy Python and the Holy Grail*. Like the film, it is a highly irreverent parody of the Arthurian legend. The original 2005 Broadway production was directed by Mike Nichols while music was composed by John du Prez and Eric Idle (Neil Innes is the composer of two songs in the film which were included in the theatre production). Eric Idle wrote the libretto. In Zagreb, it was produced on 14 December 2013 at the Komedija Theatre, directed by Igor Mešin and translated by Ivanka Aničić, to whom the show was dedicated as she had already passed away at the time.[2]

Aničić's work remains crucial in Croatian translation for stage as her brilliant translations were used for a series of productions since 2004: *Chicago* in 2004, *The Full Monty* in 2005, *Aida* in 2005, *Grease* in 2006, *Nunsense* in 2008, *Footlose* in 2011, and *Spamalot* in 2013. All but *Nunsense* and *Footloose* were translations for the Komedija Theatre exclusively.

Jiři Levy is among the earliest critics who devoted specific attention to drama translation. Regarding the translations "for print" and "for stage," he stated that numerous shortcomings of a translation can be corrected on stage (208) as the putting up on stage has rehabilitative potential for poor translations. Susan Bassnett-McGuire does not allow for poor translations on the grounds of performability. She claims that "it is only within the written that the performable can be encoded and there are infinite performance decodings possible in any playtext. The written text […] is a raw material

purpose of this research, as well as conductor Dinko Appelt for his help regarding data on the late Ivanka Aničić.

[2] Ivanka Aničić was born to Dražen and Magdalena Aničić in Zagreb in 1968. She obtained a degree in English and French language and literature from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb in 1994, and completed a postgraduate course in journalism at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Colorado, Boulder in 1996. She worked as a news correspondent from Moscow, Bonn, Berlin, and Brussels, for the BBC, *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and several other news agencies on the territory of former Yugoslavia. In 2000, she married a Scottish journalist Ian Traynor (1955-2016) and gave birth to a son, moved to Zagreb and started her prolific activity of translating cartoon feature films and musicals for the Croatian stage. She died of breast cancer in 2011. We are very grateful to her father Professor Dražen Aničić (Osijek, 1940) of the Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Zagreb for contributing to the article with the biographical data and the accompanying picture.

on which the translator has to work and it is with the written text, rather than with a hypothetical performance, that the translator must begin" (102). What should be stressed here is the type of life the translator wishes "to bestow on those originals and how they would try to inject them into the receiving literature" (Lefevere 7). Thus, we reach the key aspect of transfer and appraisal of adaptation, not in the sense of semantic exactness and vocabulary, but in terms of the transposal of original images into a specific context of a society, a language, and a culture.

The research of the Croatian adaptation of *Spamalot* focuses on several different translational strategies in accordance with the theoretical subdivisions of Nataša Pavlović (2015) and Bruno Osimo (2008), and results in the extrapolation of interesting examples of:

1. Addition of material absent from the source text (*dodavanje*, Pavlović, 80, *opisni prijevod* 78);
2. Dynamic vs. formal equivalence as explained by Eugene Nida (Pavlović 46-7)
3. Omission of original terms when there is no equivalent in the target culture (*izostavljanje*, Pavlović, 80);
4. Neutralization of elements referring to socio-cultural particularities, ideology, values, and ambiguous information (*neutralizzazione*, Osimo 212);
5. Domestication of culturally specific references (*kulturni ekvivalent ili zamjena*, Pavlović, 76);
6. Overtranslation, as giving information that is not found in the source text, in the sense of interpretative embellishments and translator's inventions (Osimo 215, *leksička kreacija*, Pavlović, 85).

The paper will take into consideration only examples of the sung words, as the factor of music poses an additional difficulty for a translator, and the success of which reveals her mastery. Aničić's translation of *Spamalot* is yet another proof of her linguistic competence and translational brilliance.[3]

[3] As reported by her father, Aničić had a basic musical education that enabled her to fulfil the special versifying requirements regarding accents and beats.

Addition and localization

Translational interventions in a theatrical text can be observed already in the *Dramatis personae*, and in the case of this adaptation, it is important to notice that all of the anthroponyms remain unchanged as they are related to the well-known Arthurian legend. Nevertheless, in the script there are two exceptions regarding the names of characters not traditionally connected to the legend, but invented by Eric Idle and bearing an additional layer of meaning. The first is Sir Not-Appearing-In-This-Show (dressed as Don Quixote),[4] a name that combines the meta-theatrical reference to the show and the description of his clothing that carries the important and universally known literary reference to Cervantes's protagonist. The Croatian translation shows the literal transposition of the meta-theatrical reference (*Sir Nema-ga-u-ovoj-predstavi*) and domesticates the Cervantes reference into a known Croatian historical name, that of *Sir Gubec Beg.*[5] Aside from the explicit usage of the historical character of Matija Gubec's name, the reference is also a homage to a famous Croatian musical by the same title (*Gubec-Beg*).[6] The second example of anthroponymic transformation is found in the name of the lake fairies, the Laker Girls. The source text connotations leave no doubt as to the basketball provenance of the name (the famous NBA team) and specifically to the team's cheerleaders. The Croatian version, *Jezeruše,* loses all of the sports implications and acquires a subtler as well as a more derogatory connotation of kept women (in Croatian "sponsored" women), as it rhymes with the domestic neologism *Sponzoruše*.

The next quotation can be considered a good example of addition causing slight semantic change in the text and is part of the scene in which the audience meets the characters of Sir Lancelot and Sir Robin:

LANCELOT (I, 4)	
My name is Lancelot	K'o Lancelot sam znan
I'm **big and strong and hot**.	I **bildam** svaki dan.

[4] Appears briefly in I, 7.

[5] Gubec Beg or Matija Gubec was the leader of the Croatian-Slovene Peasant Revolt of 1573 against a particularly cruel feudal lord Franjo Tahi. While the peasant army was defeated, his legacy remains preserved in local folklore.

[6] A rock-opera produced in 1975, written and composed by Ivica Krajač and Karlo Metikoš, based on A. Šenoa's novel *Seljačka buna* [*The Peasant Rebellion*] and the historical facts of the 1573 rebellion against the tyranny of the foreign nobility. http://www.josipalisac.com/2015/03/40-godina-od-praizvedbe-gubec-bega/ (Accessed on 10 Oct. 2017)

Occasion'lly I do	Al' nekad **zeznem stvar**
Some things that **I should not**	**I obuzme me sram**
ROBIN	
I want to be a knight	A ja sam **vitez plah**
But I don't like to fight	I **č**esto me je **strah**
I'm **rather scared** I may	U borbi svakoj ja
Just simply **run away**.	Prvi **bježim ća**.

The character of Sir Lancelot describes himself with three adjectives completely omitted in the translation, but semantically implied in the verb *bildam* (in reference to bodybuilding). The message Lancelot conveys in the next two verses is translated in one Croatian verse, thus leaving us with an additional verse needed to complete the song. This additional verse changes the previous description and the characterization of Sir Lancelot by adding the originally inexistent element of shame. In the verses by Sir Robin, we notice a slight change in the translation, caused by the use of different verbal modes: the source text offers a conditional clause situation whereas the target text states a present tense fact. The main element of the character's fear is transposed literally, and there is a peculiar solution in the last verse of the target text, where the English *run away* is translated with a common Croatian coastal dialectalism *bježim ća*. The same dialectal expression is used again in a chorus number at the end of Act I.

Dynamic vs Formal Equivalence

The analysis of this translation begins with an example that would best fit into the definition of dynamic equivalence, as explained by Eugene Nida and transmitted in both Osimo (121) and Pavlović (47), of a translation that has the same or similar effect on the target text audience as the one felt by the audience of the source text. This is especially important in a theatrical piece, even more so when the verses are sung and dependent on a fixed musical score. This musical number is a combination of two previously used themes by the Monty Python Flying Circus, the 1971 Fish-Slapping Dance sketch and the *Finland* song (sung by Michael Palin) featured in the 1980

Contractual Obligation Album.[7] It is the opening number of the musical and its function in the libretto is to create an effect of estrangement, and the Croatian version needs to fulfill this particular task:

CHORUS AND SOLOISTS (I, 2)

Schlip schlap you simply can't go wrong	**Pljus, Pljas**, to može bilo tko
In traditional fischschlapping song	Islandski je ples stari to.
Finland, Finland, Finland,	**Island, Island, Island**
The country where I quite want to be	Ta zemlja meni skoro je sve
Ponytrekking or camping	U njoj **jašem, kampiram**,
or just watching TV.	**Ili gledam te-ve**.
Finland, Finland, Finland	Island, Island, Island,
That's the country for me.	To je **zemlja za pet**.

On the one hand, the dynamic equivalence in the translation is achieved by using the name of a country that rhymes with Finland, namely Iceland (Croatian: *Island*), thus maintaining the familiar sound of the refrain (the song was famous long before *Spamalot* was created), and combining it with the Croatized form of the fish-slapping onomatopoeia: *Pljus pljas* for the *Schlip schlap* of the original. The verses carrying information on the country, on the other hand, are translated almost literally, and would be considered a perfect example of formal equivalence, according to Nida's dichotomy. The only slight semantic modification occurs in the last verse where the Croatian version offers an idiomatic phrase *zemlja za pet* (literally, an A grade country, meaning a great country) instead of the more personal reference in the original.

The fragment of the song shown below is yet another example of dynamic equivalence and has been chosen to testify to a successful transposition of the numerous meta-musical elements found in the original verses. The title of the number is *The Song That Goes Like This* (in Croatian *Song što dođe tu*) and is meant to be a parody of the common Broadway love ballads, with elements of the 1980s pop-culture power

[7] For more information on the album, visit the official website: www.montypython.com (Accessed on 10 Oct. 2017).

ballads.[8] The musical form is that of a duet between the characters of the Lady of the Lake and Sir Galahad in which the melody slowly rises to higher ranges creating difficulties for the performers. All of the technical changes in music are commented in the verses, with additional references to the actual enacting under way. The Croatian translation offers a series of meta-musical references very close to the original ones: *prijelaz* for *bridge, dur* for *key,* the key of H for the original E; and it also transmits the acting stereotypes: *Kreveljimo se* for *overact, u zagrljaju tvom* for *while we both embrace*:

LADY OF THE LAKE AND SIR GALLAHAD (I, 7)

[…] A sentimental song	[…] Romantičan je song
That casts a magic spell	**pjevušit će ga** svi
They all will **humm along**	dok suze mami on
We'll overact like hell!	**Kreveljimo se mi!**
Oh, this is the song	Jer to je taj song
That goes like this.	što dođe tu.
Now we can go straight	**U zagrljaju tvom**
Into **the middle eight**	**ja pjevam snagom svom**
A bridge that is far for me	**A taj prijelaz je težak, joj**
I'll sing it in your face	Pa ajmo onda ful
While **we both embrace**	**U neki drugi dur**
And then **we change the key**	Jer već nam curi znoj!
Now, **we're into E**	**Evo nas u H**
That's awfully high for me![…]	**Ehm, previsoko je, da.** […]

The translator's interventions allow for the song in its Croatian version to succeed in delivering the same poetic message with the same humorous innuendoes as conveyed by the original.

[8] The libretto has many more meta-theatrical references, such as the reference to the stage in the famous *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life* song taken from the film *Life of Brian,* or the *You Won't Succeed on Broadway* song and the Lady of the Lake's lament *Whatever Happened to My Part.*

Omission and Neutralization

The following example, the *Camelot Song*, was originally written for the 1975 film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and the music is by Neil Innes. It is important because it gives the musical its title, but also because it is a source of several interesting translational situations: meta-theatrical references, idiomatic phrases, and nonsense verses. The meta-theatrical references of the original appear in the first four verses and are all about dancing (although the term *chorus* may refer to singers as well): *we dance, routines, chorus scenes, footwork.* The Croatian counterpart contains only two (out of four) references and one of them is musical, as *zbor* (choir) cannot be used in the context of dancing, whereas the other, *folklor*, (folklore) indicates a specific form of traditional dancing very prominent and appreciated in Croatian culture. The artistic imagery is in strong contrast with the stereotype of the knight's unquestionable historical virility and will later on be underlined once more by Sir Lancelot's declared homosexuality. The verses that provide for the musical's nonsensical title contain food references and the Croatian translation was unable to transpose those in the target text, as it needed to preserve the Camelot-Spamalot rhyme. However, the Croatian verse *Jer ćeš ovdje vidjet Spamalot* is nonsensical enough to deliver the same idea and the translation uses a food reference later on in the verses of the same song with the same purpose of creating nonsense.

KNIGHTS (I, 8)

We're knights of the round table	Za okruglim mi smo stolom
We dance whenever we're able	I s tom smo sretni rolom
We do **routines** and **chorus scenes**	Jer cijeli dvor je **muški zbor**
With **footwork** impeccable.	Sa viteškim **folklorom**
We **dine** well here in Camelot	Ti moraš do**ć** u Camelot
We eat **ham and jam and spam a lot**.	Jer **ć**eš ovdje vidjet **Spamalot**.

In the second part of the same song there is a rhyme that can be interpreted idiomatically: *we're not just bums with royal mums*, and the Croatian version conveys exactly the same meaning by using the appropriate colloquial/slang expression *s nekom žnorom* for the English *royal mums*. The only difference between the messages

conveyed is in the omission of the ironic original reference to the *fable* in the second verse that in Croatian becomes its exact opposite, meaning *we get up at sunrise*, and is related to the aforementioned idiomatic image of the knight's hard work. The last verse in the example represents a piece of typical Monty Python estranging nonsense. It is performed by a soloist (while the entire song is a chorus number) and its content has nothing to do with any other part of the musical. Its sole purpose is to surprise the public and to create a rhyme with Camelot. The Croatian counterpart is adequately a completely nonsensical utterance, yet one that introduces the food motif, *jest kompot* (to eat compote), that we have seen earlier in the original, thus completing the source text imagery.

[…]	
We're knights of the round table	Za okruglim mi smo stolom
Although we live a fable	I dižemo se zorom
We're not just bums	**Uz svoj smo trud**
With royal mums	**Mi stigli tud**
We've brains that are quite able	**A ne sa nekom žnorom**
We've a busy life in Camelot	Svi i htjeli doć u Camelot.
I have to push the pram a lot	**Ja jako volim jest kompot**

The next example exhibits the translational strategy of neutralization of parts of the original motifs, meanings, or implications. It is an overall reduction or simplification of text probably due to the requirements of the musical score and of the fact that it needs to be sung. The scene is the last one in the first act (I, 11) and the song is that of the French knights in a French castle insulting King Arthur and his party. The source text offers a series of insults addressed respectively to the English, to their mothers, to their army. The target text reduces the offences to the English and their knights in a sequence of rhyming diminutives followed by a series of rhyming infinitives. This kind of rhyming solution can be considered of lower quality and requires less interpretative effort by the translator. Furthermore, the Croatian version offers an offensive verse non-existent in the original, *I male su vam frulice*, with a sexual message intended again to question the knights' virility while losing completely the *joke*, *artichoke*, and *arse*

motifs as well as the idiomatic phrase *you'll all turn blue.* Nevertheless, the last two verses of the song represent a perfect translational match and the Croatian dialectal expression mentioned earlier *Bježi ća* is used again.

THE FRENCH (I, 11)

You **English** are all bugger folk	**Englezi, vi** ste curice
Your **mothers** are all rugger folk	Prebijedne kreaturice
Your **army** is a bloody joke	**Ko vitezi** ste nulice
You couldn't beat an artichoke	**I male su vam frulice**
If battle you choose to renew,	I nemojte se vratiti
We'll taunt you **till you all turn blue**	Jer skupo ćete platiti
We turn **our arses** as you part.	Jer još ćemo vas grditi
In your direction we all fart!	**U vašem smjeru prditi**.
Run away!	**Bježi ća**!

Overtranslation or Expansion of the Semantic Field

The need to explain, add to, or embellish the target text is very common in translation and depends mainly on the purpose of the final product. Theatrical translations, especially adaptations for the stage, tolerate a greater freedom and authorial input by the translator. In the case of *Spamalot*, the translator has minimized such interventions and has come very close to what Lawrence Venuti refers to as the "translator's invisibility" (Venuti 1995). There is, however, an example in which Aničić adds to the imagery of the original, in a very discreet and successful manner, so that we perceive her intervention as quite natural and becoming, although she slightly expands the semantic field of the source text. The quotation is from I, 10 and it parodies the banal self-help advice combined with the Arthurian Holy Grail motif. The verses introduce two maritime metaphors, that of a *drifting life* and of life as *sailing,* which are developed in the translation into three different maritime references, but very in a very sophisticated manner and pertinent to the original message. The first is a simile on solitude: *kao škoj kad si sam* (when you are as lonely as a rock),[9] then there is a sound effect: *kad je svud mora šum* (when the sea murmur is heard everywhere) expressing the

[9] It is a reference to isolation caused by being separated from the mainland by water.

idea of the original drifting, and finally the advice: *nađi tad nade val* (go find the/your wave of hope). The last one is structurally connected (with the choice of the same verb) to the following conclusion: *nađi gral* (go find the grail). It is clear that the motifs are clever additions and modifications of the original ones and such additions that enhance the meaning rather than demeaning it.

ARTHUR (I, 10)

When your life seems **to drift**	**Kao škoj** kad si sam
When we all need a lift	Kad je svud **mora šum**
Trim your **sail**	Nađi tad **nade val**
You won't fail	Nađi gral
Find your grail.	Nađi gral.

The remaining three examples in this paper have all been chosen to prove the translator's skill in conveying different layers of meaning with the right dosage of eccentric humor.

First, there are the verses at the closure of the first act, a funny comment by the character of King Arthur on the thickening of the plot, followed by a meta-theatrical invitation to the audience to take a break from the show. The plot reference: "We're stuck in a nasty position" has been translated with a more specific one in Croatian: "Ta opsada nas je smela" (this siege has confused us), whereas the reference to the upcoming intermission has been transposed almost literally excluding only the original motif of the *drink*, but maintaining the less appropriate *pee* motif in the Croatian expression *ve-ce* (toilet) and conveying the humorous erroneous announcement of *act three* (simply because it rhymes with *pee*).

ARTHUR (Finale, Act I)

We're stuck in a nasty position	Ta opsada sad nas je smela
Why don't you take **a short intermission**?	**Jedna pauza** (baš) dobro bi sjela
Have **a drink and a pee.**	**Na ve-ce** hajte vi,
We'll be back for **act three**…	Pa će bit **čin broj tri**

The other example of a very good transposition of literal and implied meanings comes from Act II, Scene 8. It is the invitation of the character of Prince Herbert for Sir Lancelot to confess his homosexual orientation. The verses skillfully combine the traditionally very masculine elements, such as parts of an armor (scabbard, tabard) on both the literal level (Sir Lancelot is wearing an actual armor) and the metaphoric level (he is hiding his true identity underneath it), with the antithetic image of a butterfly breaking out of its cocoon. The Croatian version follows the imagery of the original, slightly expanding the armor motifs with a generalization: *štita i macho rekvizita* (a shield and macho requisites) and stressing the butterfly motif a little bit more than the original. In Croatian, the butterfly wants to "fly up high" (*vinut se u vis*), not just escape, and it carries an additional adjective *krasni* (beautiful).

HERBERT (II, 8)	
Lancelot you might as well just **fess up**	Lancelote sad je čas da **priznaš**
Really you're a **different** sort of guy	**Drukčiji** si uvijek bio ti
Move aside your **scabbard**	Ispod toga **štita**
For underneath you **tabard**	I **macho rekvizita**
There is waiting **to escape**	Želi **vinut se u vis**
A butterfly	**Krasni leptir**.

The last example chosen to exemplify Aničić's exceptional translational skills and masterful interpretation is the one that combines literal and idiomatic meanings in both the original and the adaptation. The character of Patsy the squire sings these five verses in reference to his being of a lower social class. The original *working class* is simplified in Croatian to *niži sloj* (lower class), but also amplified with one more class reference in the next verse (*kmet* – serf) more related to the Middle Ages than the estranging working class. It is followed by a series of idiomatic phrases, beginning with *horse's ass*, translated with the same image of the horse but referring to horse's manure (*konjski gnoj*) instead of ass, which conveys the same if not a worse image of worthlessness. The next idiomatic phrase of the original: "he sells me down the river" is rendered with a typical Croatian proverbial idiomatic phrase: "ne vrijedim niti boba" (literally, I am not worth a broad bean). The last verse contains two rhetorical questions

(as opposed to one in the translation) and offers the image of chopped liver, once again symbolizing something worthless. In the translation, we find the common idiomatic phrase "potrošna roba" (literally, expendable) that similarly to the original's "working class" transcends the boundaries of the medieval time frame and conveys a touch of modern times. Thus, it can be stated that in this case of multiple challenges, Aničić has managed to translate the source information into appropriate linguistic and contextual form.

PANSY (II, 9)

Seems quite clear to me	Znam da u **staležu** je stvar
Because I'm **working class**	Jer ja sam **niži sloj**
I'm just the **horse's ass**	Tek **kmet** i **konjski gnoj**
He sells me down the river	**Ne vrijedim niti boba**
What am I? **Chopped liver**?	(Zar) **potrošna sam roba**?

Conclusion

The translation of musicals for stage is a specific and so far uninvestigated branch of translation studies that requires a disciplined adjustment of the verses' prosodic features to the musical score, demanding thus multidisciplinarity from the translator, as (s)he needs to have both linguistic and musical competence. The analysis of the Croatian translation of *Spamalot* has shown the full range of the late translator Ivanka Aničić's talent and has confirmed that her premature departure represents a loss for Croatian culture. Aničić has managed to convey all of the source text information and implications with a very low degree of domestication and a small percentage of overtranslation and clarification, omission and simplification, at the same time never losing or missing the particular Monty Python's aesthetics and humor. Consequently, her translation becomes valid and complete in its written form regardless of, and beyond music and performance,[10] as her translated words, to paraphrase Bassnett quoted above, encode the performable and make its decoding possible, her skill competently injecting the text into the receiving culture.

[10] Unfortunately, the show is no longer playing in the Komedija Theatre.

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Metastases of Croatian Reality. Discourse on Fascization: The 2006 Novel by Ivo Balenović and the 2009 Film by Branko Schmidt[1]

Abstract

Since Croatia's establishment as sovereign state, the national cinema has abounded in film adaptations of both Croatian and foreign literature. However, in most cases the adaptations are marked by a kind of historical and thematic distance from literary sources, as well as from the reality to which a literary work refers. The distance was achieved, on the one hand, in the chronological sense, and, on the other hand, through the neutralization of any kind of ideational actuality of literary subjects raised. However, Alen Bović's two novels *Metastases* (2006) and *Vegetarian Cannibal* (2010) have changed this. The two novels seem marginal at first, but upon close reading, it becomes clear that they accurately represent Croatian society and its metamorphoses. The paper identifies these metamorphoses as the appearance of fascist tendencies in certain parts of the Croatian mental and societal landscape. The paper aims to provoke a discussion about these tendencies in Croatian society and identify the reasons for their occurrence. For this purpose, both Bović's novel and Schmidt's movie serve as a case study for this line of argumentation. The highly subjective nature of the paper seems to be the only possible approach to the topic, which requires deconstructing the sacralisation of many historical facts from our recent past. While the paper points at the differences between the novel and the film, the topic of adaptation is treated from the viewpoint of social and philosophical analysis. Metastases in Croatian artistic, socio-cultural, but mostly in political public space should create an impulse for catharsis and for a final attempt to defend the Mind and Spirit, and also humanity in the times that are unfavourable for critical and philosophical thinking. Indeed, what could be the purpose of our Being if not to read, write, think, and watch movies about such things? Metastases in the "wilderness of Croatian reality" are urging us to do just that.

Keywords: Branko Schmidt, *Metastases,* Alen Bović, Croatian film, fascization, neo-Nazism, humanity, critical thinking, philosophical thinking.

[1] This is a considerably shorter and translated version of the author's paper that was originally published in the Croatian language in *Hrvatski filmski ljetopis*, no. 90-91, 2017, pp. 87-106.

Hypotext

The Croatian cinema – from the beginnings of its new categorization as national cinema since 1991 – is relatively rich in film adaptations of literature, primarily with adaptations from the national tradition, as well as from world literature. In most cases, these adaptations have taken an appropriate historical distance, both in respect to the literary template and towards the reality to which the hypotext refers.[2] The distance occurs both chronologically and in terms of neutralizing any idea of contemporaneity. Speaking in general terms, this was the case until two (only seemingly) marginal novels were published; *Metastases* (2006) and *Vegetarian Cannibal* (2010) by Alen Bović were not enthusiastically lauded in literary circles,[3] and the fact remains that their author does not have an exceptionally prominent place in Croatian literature. However, when the two novels are analysed in the wider social and psychological contexts in which they were written, it is clear that their author dared to question what was unquestionable, namely the national sentiment, or in other words, Croatian patriotism. The legacy of Croatian War of Independence is a hallowed category which is seemingly always showing itself as sacred and untouchable within the context of the nation's self-reflection. Certain brave attempts to touch that *sacred tissue of statehood* are most often seen as provocations, excesses and – in the most frequently used platitude of the so-called "public discourse" – a *controversy*.

Ivo Balenović (1969), a gynaecologist by profession, embarked on two career paths in parallel. Aside from being a doctor – in which profession he uses his real name – he also became a writer who wished to protect himself from a possible negative reaction to his work and, generally, towards his social being, which is why he chose to publish his works under the pseudonym of Alen Bović.[4] Why was this necessary? Well,

[2] This so-called distance was broken in a more important, influential way with the movie *Kino Lika*, directed by Dalibor Matanić (2006), and adapted from the eponymous novel by Damir Karakaš (2001). Matanić`s movie is in a free critical dialogue with the literary text and exhibits an undoubtedly critical-ironic distance from the reality depicted in it.

[3] There are, however, notable exceptions to this: the positive reviews of the novel written by Jagna Pogačnik (2006) and an even more encouraging article by Maja Hrgović (2006). Conversely, in his review, MatkoVladanović is much more reserved towards Balenović's literary debut: "For unknown reasons, as per usual with bestsellers, Balenović's novel has made waves, reaped up mostly positive and panegyric critiques, and, finally, achieved excellent sales results" (Vladanović, my translation). However, not one of these critiques, not in a single line, has detected descriptions of "fascistogenic" phenomena in Croatian society in Balenović's debut novel.

[4] He wrote the first two novels under the pseudonym of Alen Bović (in 2006 and 2010). Subsequently, he published two short novels under his real name, Ivo Balenović (in 2012 and 2013).The latter two, which

first of all, because the issues that he decided to deal with as an author are full of political and social "controversy" as well as connotations that could potentially disturb the "public opinion."[5] This was also necessary since what the author discusses in his literary works surpasses the limits of literary theory and sears painfully into the neurotic tissue of national statehood and its genealogy of "autarchic and independent, sovereign state of Croatia," as it was defined by the country's first president.

The main issue the textual analysis will address in Bović's first novel is its discourse of violence. It is in this realm that the novel shows itself to be contemporary, and it becomes clear just how truly deep and dangerous the subjects on which the author writes are. Most importantly, the author does not employ a strictly literary discourse, but also a narrative technique through which he follows the logic of a movie montage, which is a consequence of the fact that the novel features an obvious cinematic inspiration. Namely, Bović was inspired by the film *Trainspotting* (dir. Danny Boyle, 1996), which, in turn, is based on the novel by Irvine Welsh. Therefore, in the case of *Metastases*, there is an inversion in the usual process of adaptation; Bović's book follows the movie pattern, and not the other way around.[6]

Cinematic literary techniques are well known in literature and film history of the twentieth century. For example, Alfred Döblin used this in his iconic novel *Berlin-Alexanderplatz* (1929) – perhaps the most important work created during the Weimar Republic – wherein he structured the narrative according to a film montage pattern. Fassbinder later added his own film framework to the whole thing, and created a TV series consisting of 14 episodes.[7]

Metastases experienced its first media transposition in the Kerempuh Satirical Theater in 2007, when it was directed by Boris Svrtan. The play was an irrefutable success, running for over 100 performances. Still, the ***hypertext*** that we are interested in here is associated with the media of cinema and is in fact the film adaptation of Bović's novel. In the film adaptation, the malignant disease which the novel describes has

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can be described as phantasmagoric satirical novels, did not make any noticeable impact and were not adapted into films.

[5] Interestingly, Pogačnik does not recognize it and wonders: "It is not clear why would a debut author hide behind a pseudonym"(my translation). It seems clear, however, that the reason lies in the author's discomfort about the possible reaction to his diagnosis of the rising fascization in Croatian society.

[6] The methodology was previously recognized by both Jagna Pogačnik and Maja Hrgović in their analyses of the *Metastases* novel.

[7] On Fassbinder's adaptation see: Krivak (2013).

evolved to its extreme limits. By following the taxonomy provided in the book by Željko Uvanović (et al. 2008), the cinematic adaptation by director Branko Schmidt and his script co-writer Ognjen Sviličić would be a transformative hypertext which governs itself by the principles of actualizing reinterpretation (25).[8] In line with Fredric Jameson's argumentation, it can be said that, in the case of *Metastases*, within the "cultural logic of late capitalism" and its cultural dominant, "Art Work" was replaced by the ***text*** (xvii), either literary or the film's screenplay.

Metastases of Croatian Reality

Balenović's novels were among the first to point a finger at a collection of malignant symptoms in Croatian society; he was most definitely the first to cut decisively into the throbbing tissue of self-awareness of national statehood. Of course, the most dramatic issue here is the discourse of fascization of Croatian society, and the issue has never been more contemporary. The novel *Metastases* (2006) is almost prophetic, capturing the *timing* and *kairos* of the sociological and artistic nature of the issue over a decade ago. Schmidt's film was made three years later. Had the novel been published a few years before, we would not have seen *Metastases* on silver screens of Croatian cinemas – most certainly not.

The reason was because the moral powers of Croatian society, grown and bred during the Croatian War of Independence and petrified by the state-building idea of the unquestionably righteous "cause that we fought for" – sanctified by the holy Catholic Church – would without doubt stand up against the blasphemous message that lies behind the play, the novel, and finally, behind the film, aptly titled *Metastases*. In the public discourse of the 1990s, "the Croat" – at least in the then prevailing idealized and fantastical perception of self – does not swear, does not beat women and those weaker than himself, does not steal, and therefore does not kill; to put it in extreme terms, he practically does not even make love to his wife, and the young Croats almost seem to come into this world by means of immaculate conception.

[8] "Thus, a film adaptation is by no means a translation (the translation should be faithful to the spirit and the word of original text), but a transformative hypertext, actualizing and popularizing reinterpretation in the spirit of cinematographic art" (Uvanović 25, my translation).

However, the times have changed. The central character of *Metastases*, in both the novel and film, not only commits the above mentioned atrocities, but also lacks any characteristic that would make him even (remotely) humane. At the very end of the film, he commits an armed robbery of a betting shop, where he is surprised by the clicking sound of a pistol being cocked right in front of his face.[9] The novel is much more explicit than the film; the written word glides more easily over the (exaggerated) descriptions of brutal graphic violence, such as the following:

> "Kill 'em Yugoslav motherfuckers!" I yell and whack the first one next to me. The faggot folds at my feet, so I kick his head a few more times with my boot. Them pussies scream, a couple of 'em drag queens are trying to put up a fight, waving their pathetic little hands, but I'm workin' my bat... No time to pick and choose. I'm poundin' them everywhere, on the head, in the kidneys, balls... Fuck 'em up wherever I can. (...) I feel the vibration of bone crunching through my bat, I feel it in my hand... His teeth are crushed, eyes foggy and wide open. Looks kinda unnatural, like he ain't feeling well... But the motherfucker didn't deserve any better, fuck him, he'd no business bein' here and lookin' for trouble, right? (*Metastases* 132-3, my translation)[10]

In the passage, Balenović tried to reconstruct an actual event. The event involved around sixty violent skinheads bursting into the *Močvara* nightclub in Zagreb,[11] armed with melee weapons and brutally assaulting the patrons. Symptomatic of national hatred, the event occurred during the screening of a Slovenian documentary film about a Macedonian ex-soccer player, Milko Đurovski, a former member of two Serbian soccer clubs, Partizan and Red Star Belgrade. Numerous members of the audience were beaten up and injured, and the club was completely demolished. Therefore, the primary target were the Serbs (perpetual enemies since the beginning of the War of Independence), but Slovenians as well. The sequence did not make it into the film adaptation of the novel,

[9] Incidentally, the "betting shop" is still one of the fundamental financial and socializing moments of numerous, and not only veteran, members of the population.

[10] The original text written in Zagreb's urban slang: "Ubi pičke jugoslavenske! - viknem i roknem prvog do sebe. Peder mi scuri pod noge pa ga još par puta maznem čizmom u glavu… Pičke vrište, par pederčića pokušava pružit neki otpor i samo mašu rukicama, a ja ih mlatim palicom… ono ne biram…rokam ih u glavu, bubrege, jaja… jebem im mater di stignem. (…) osjetim vibru pucanja kosti kak mi se širi prek palice na ruku… Zubi su mu smrvljeni, a oči mutne i širom otvorene. Izgleda nekak neprirodno, ko da nije dobro… ali pizda ionak nije bolje zaslužil, jebem mu mater, nije imal kaj tu tražiti i provocirat?" (Bović, *Metastases* 132-133).

[11] The nightclub was closed soon after and moved from the city centre to the outskirts, near the river bank of Sava.

probably because it is not easily adapted to film due to its extreme violence and "inflammable" content. Also, the existing discourse against Slovenians, that is the "Alpine Serbs," as they are referred to, is worth noting. It is illustrated in another sequence from the novel that likewise did not make it into the film. The scene portrays three friends – Dejo, Filip, and Krpa – travelling to the seaside. The entire episode, once again charged with exaggerated violence, culminates with Krpa raping a Slovenian girl and later justifying it in the following manner:

> "She was asking for it herself, the Slovenian bitch. She would not dress like that if she wasn't. Besides, these Slovenians are damn fuckers, that's what they are. I can't remember the last time I've been to Slovenia that the fuckers didn't rip me off. As soon as they see our licence plates, they make up some shit to charge you for… If it was up to me, our flag would be waving on top of their Triglav. In two hours' time, I'd crush the entire country. Without Serbs and Mussies, they wouldn't even be able to put their football team together. Fuck 'em all and their mother fuckin' Janez Janša."[12] (Bović, *Metastases* 184)

This discourse is not only violent and nationalistic, but also explicitly Nazi-oriented**,** as in the mention of war machinations, most often linked with Nazi and Fascist expansions during World War II.

In his study *Koliko fašizma? (How Much Fascism?)*, Rastko Močnik speaks of fascism as a "possibility of dominance of extreme right wing politics and fascization of the dominant culture" (85, my translation). One of his additional objections approaches fascism as a "psychologization of politics." Finally, there is a real danger of fascism becoming a massive phenomenon, since that is a structural possibility of every neo-liberal society of today, paradoxical only at first glance. In line with this conception, fascism is not a static phenomenon, a purely "historical category," but has the character and qualities of a process. It is precisely in this sense that we can speak of "fascization." It is truly a cancerous, metastatic process of the destruction of liberal-social foundation

[12] The original text, as follows: "Sama je tražila, mamu joj jebem slovensku. Ne bi se tak obukla da nije. Osim tog, ti Slovenci su zadnje pičke, jebo im pas mater. Ne sjećam se kad sam bil u Sloveniji, a da me pičke nisu oglobile. Čim vide našu registraciju odmah ti zmisle neki kurčevi prekršaj… da se mene pita sutra bi se naša zastava vijorila na vrhu onog njihovog Triglava. Za dva sata bi pregazil cijelu Sloveniju. Da im nema Srba i Muslića ne bi si mogli ni repku složit. Jebo ih Janez Janša, da ih jebo" (Bović, *Metastases* 184).

of the society.[13] Although Fascism remains tied to the Christian religion, whereas Nazism is ultimately pagan and Teutonic in nature, Nazism and Fascism are still so organically linked that it is legitimate to use the expression Nazi-Fascism.

It is also a common mistake to think of Nazi-Fascism as a clearly defined, distinguishable totalitarian order. Above all, it is an auto-destructive urge embodied in the cry of Franco's fighters in the Spanish Civil War (1936-9): *Viva la muerte!* The oxymoron provides an excellent insight into Krpa'sover-the-top, ultimate violence in *Metastases*. His violence symbolizes the ultimate auto-destruction.

The tale of four friends – Krpa, Kizo, Filip, and Dejo – is a story about the very substance of the degenerated national tissue, of a national illness that still, in many ways, represents the current social condition in Croatia, but it can also be seen as a part of a painful sobering process.

Namely, the fate of one central character in the film, the notorious alcoholic Kizo (played by Robert Ugrina), who ends up in a hospital bed (and the novel suggests that it is his deathbed as well), will be of crucial importance as a catharsis and an awakening. Moreover, the character of the bigoted, violent Krpa (portrayed exquisitely by Rene Bitorajac) can perhaps also be seen as sobering. In his advanced metastatic state, he carries the seed of auto-destruction within and hits the proverbial rock bottom, inviting the audience to realize the misconceptions borne out from the war – those of the national, state building community. Krpa is simultaneously such a realistic and true character that in this characterization he is also *surreal*– the essence of nationalist violence completely laid bare. Krpa spends his time venting frustrations that only seemingly keep his head above the water in the stale "mud-pit of Croatian patriotism," or latent fascism, as the author's *advocates diabolic* suggests. All the prerequisites of the latter are available: the hatred towards the Serbs, the "Commies," the Gypsies, homosexuals, women, all those who are different. Despite the plethora of stereotypical characters, the story eludes trivial stereotypical representations and turns out to be both realistic and true.

The film won the Great Golden Arena Award at the Pula Film Festival in 2009. The meaning and the importance of the film were recognized by critics and audience alike. However, the interpretation of the film differs among viewers, particularly among

[13] For the operational concept of fascism used in this paper, see: Mathias Wörsching (2014).

viewers of different social classes. The so-called "lower middle-class" in Croatia, probably, will take it as a *slice of life* film, which approaches social problems and situations in an entertaining manner.[14] They will not detect the latent fascism within the story, nor in a commercial for Ožujsko Beer, nor in the recent commercial for the Croatian power supplier, HEP. A more educated and a more demanding audience will see it as a hyperbolized "artistic" representation of the social swamp, as well as a full-blooded genre film. This paper contends, *in ultima linea*, that this is a representation of a violent display of social pathology which contains certain undoubtedly fascist elements. Even though the adolescent audience at the screening in the *Cinestar* Multiplex Cinema openly expressed their "fan cheering and support" of the character played by Bitorajac, every subsequent screening of the film will be of value primarily for the political representatives, their cultural ideologists, and the Catholic Church – both the clerical one and the secular one – in Croatia, as it may result in new-found epiphanies. For instance, the film is infused with subtle criticism of false clerical patriotism as it shows Krpa saying that he attended the Sunday Mass just before he went home to "beat the shit out" of his civil partner. Yet, it seems that the most significant episode, one central to the movie is a visit to the Altar of the Homeland. After Dejo, a Serb whose father was an officer in the former Yugoslav army, accidentally uses a curse word insulting to Croats and Catholics, Krpa takes him up the hill to the Altar ("Hallelujah the Hills" is the title of a great experimental movie by Adolfas Mekas) to make him apologize. Is it not stated in the Bible that the blind shall see? Would that not be the true *happy end* before the Altar of the Homeland?

The literary source, that is, the *hypotext* embodied in the *Metastases* novel, has transformed within its film adaptation into an intense, almost punk-like, *hypertextual* cry. Krpa, played suggestively by Rene Bitorajac, has taken on nearly all the paradigmatic characteristics of a lost, but also violent protagonist of Croatian transition. Fascism – in its Croatian embodiment – as a structural determinant of all European "democracies" has gained its artistically recognizable representation: violence towards women and homosexuals, chauvinism, homophobia, soccer fan hooliganism, and finally, the auto-destructive violence that gets directed towards the people that are

[14] The "slice of life" is a phrase mostly associated with the movies by the genius of contemporary British cinema, Mike Leigh.

closest to you; *Metastases* is all that. A malignant tissue that destroys the social organism. Thus, how does one stand up to it? And is it even possible?

The fundamental condition of resistance for the public is to first recognize *fascist-like behaviour*, wherever it may appear. Our main task is to ***reconstruct the public space*** (Močnik 153). The (hopefully only) temporarily lost public space must be rebuilt on foundations that will again recognize the universal qualities of solidarity and republicanism as a fundamental value of contemporary civic society and civilization. It is not just a formal ethical imperative: it is primarily a *political task*. For, *nota bene*, politics is, since its inception, a constant and focused struggle for the benefit of community.

But before that, one must defeat "cultural fascism," which received legitimacy in a newly found Croatian political reality in the early 2016. In the words of Rosa Luxemburg, to speak the truth (already) means a revolution. Deleuze and Guattari have suggested that "fascism is a mass movement, a cancerous body more than a totalitarian organism" (239, my translation), which makes the use of the term ***metastases*** very appropriate. *Metastases* have opened up a cathartic topic in the Croatian artistic, social, cultural and political space. We should read, write, think... and watch films. What would be the point of our Being today, if we do not embark on the self-defence of Spirit? We are forced to preserve it, since we live in the times that are in no way inclined to humanities. *Metastases* in the "contemporary Croatian reality" show us how such a task truly is something of urgency and something that matters. DIXI ET SALVAVI ANIMAM MEAM.

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Staying Human and Humane Within and Without a Civilizational Frame: An Analysis of Adaptations of *Things Fall Apart*, *Lord of the Flies*, and *The Road*

Abstract

The novels *Things Fall Apart*, *Lord of the Flies*, and *The Road* seem to investigate the roots and stability of their respective civilizations, and contrast them either to the absence of any civilizational frame or to civilizations with a very different worldview. While investigated as isolated life units, they all seem to make sense, but when endangered by other influences or when exposed to open criticism from the opposing side, things start, to paraphrase Achebe, falling apart. Under the attacks of a more powerful world-view, the fabric of a civilization that seemed so well-rounded and self-sufficient proves to be permeable, filled with inherent contradictions and weaknesses. This paper will endeavour to investigate the manner in which the presented societies function on a community level and how individual characters adapt or fail to adapt their personal worldviews and moralities to the irrevocably changed civilizational frame surrounding them. Without the guidance and control of their respective civilizational frames, most characters in the mentioned novels display a bleak vision of human nature, as envisioned by Hobbes in his *Leviathan*. Apparently, most people need a civilizational frame to stay both human and humane and avoid being reduced to the level of savages or beasts. While the novels attain a high level of literary quality by presenting humanity in all its complexity, the corresponding screen adaptations fail to do so. The directors of the movies seem to focus more on the civilizational frame itself than on what makes people human, disregarding Kundera's famous prescription that a good novel/film should always provide us with a new glimpse into the nature of humanity.

Keywords: Chinua Achebe, William Golding, Cormac McCarthy, Milan Kundera, Thomas Hobbes, humanity, civilizational frame, screen adaptation.

This paper will focus on the manner in which general civilizational frames are presented in the novels *Things Fall Apart*, *Lord of the Flies*, and *The Road*, and how the complexity of the respective civilizational frames is transferred, broadened, or narrowed in the film adaptations of the novels in question. The civilizational frame is understood in this paper as a given civilizational moment in the development of a society the writer

has chosen to explore, that is, the way certain cultures and people perceive both themselves and the world around them. While still in development, every civilization and its members are open to foreign influences, yet once a civilization matures and becomes aware of its own power, its guiding religious, political, and social postulates ossify, rigidify, and are enclosed into a kind of a frame resisting alterations, influences, and challenges from the outer world. At such a point, the members of the corresponding civilization do not perceive their world-view as one among the other world visions, but as the only lens through which the world can be "rightly" perceived and interpreted. In this paper, the ossified state of civilizations at their very peak is to be understood as the civilizational frame (Elias 9-30).

The expression "civilizational frame" is used because it symbolically represents the closed and rounded-off world vision unaware or neglectful of the existence and power of other civilizational frames around them, as well as of the existence of savage and corroborative forces within one's own civilization. While Achebe portrays the moment of the collision between the Western civilization/worldview and the traditionally organized tribe culture in Africa, Golding and McCarthy describe the rapid degradation of supposedly civilized beings into savage beings on a much lower level than the tribal culture presented in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. This is more than evident when one of Golding's young protagonists says, "We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we're not savages. We're English, and the English are best at everything. So we've got to do the right things" (34). Both Golding and McCarthy very convincingly present potential scenarios where the dominant civilizational frame has been removed. Without a civilizational frame, most people turn into savages, inevitably recreating Hobbes's gloomy predictions such as *bellum omnium contra omnes* and *homo homini lupus*.

Hobbes perceives people as essentially prone to sin and savagery because most people are concerned with "self-preservation, and with the attaining of whatever each individual holds to be his or her personal and individual good" (Gaskin xx). Due to this constant, unrestrained strife, people are forced to live in the eternal "miserable condition of war, which is necessarily consequent to the natural passions of men, when there is no visible power to keep them in awe, and tie them by fear of punishment to the performance of their covenants" (*Leviathan*, Pt. 2, Ch. 17, Par. 1). Consequently, the

key prerequisite for the creation of any civilization is the existence of a powerful person and a governing system to which people can surrender their freedom so as to improve their life conditions as well as gain protection and the possibility of living with a certain amount of dignity and comfort. The horrid alternative, summed up as the constant "state of war" is described in the following passage:

> Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man; … In such condition, there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. (*Lev*. Pt. 1, Ch. 13, Par. 1)

Basically, the purpose of civilization, according to Hobbes, is to save people from their own nature and the unquenchable thirst for power. However, once a civilization becomes established and powerful, it stops serving the purpose of creating decent and humane life conditions for everyone and becomes an aim in itself.

The novels in question investigate both the beneficial and oppressive nature of any civilizational frame. The novelists make the reader aware of the potential dangers in situations when a certain civilizational frame becomes fundamentalist and stops serving the purpose of creating preconditions for survival, cohabitation, and cooperation of a large number of people. When a civilizational frame or any system of thought or societal organization becomes an aim in itself, it starts trampling on the common humanity and basic human rights. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* explores this exact situation, while *Lord of the Flies* and *The Road* deal with a Hobbesian vision of the original state of humanity, stripped of both the guidance and shackles of any civilizational frame. In these cases, McCarthy and Golding seem to indicate that even in the complete absence of civilization, common humanity is not to be trampled on if people wish to perceive themselves (and be perceived) as human beings rather than beasts. Common humanity is to be understood as a combination of Christ's prescription to not do unto others what we do not want done unto ourselves and the Kantian imperative that prescribes to "act so that you treat humanity, both in your own person

and in that of another, always as an end and never merely as a means" (Kant 38). What Achebe's protagonist Okonkwo, Golding's stranded boys, and the majority of people lack – with the exception of two main characters in McCarthy's *The Road* – is empathy, the skill and willingness to climb into someone else's skin and walk around in it (Lee 30). Adam Smith aptly sums up the need for empathy in any society:

> How selfish so ever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. (9)

However, most of the protagonists of the said novels do not possess the required amount of imagination and sympathy to climb into someone else's skin and vicariously experience their hardships and sorrows. Adam Smith describes the necessary preconditions for the development of sympathy towards one's fellow beings:

> By the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them. His agonies, when they are thus brought home to ourselves, when we have thus adopted and made them our own, begin at last to affect us, and we then tremble and shudder at the thought of what he feels. For as to be in pain or distress of any kind excites the most excessive sorrow, so to Conceive or to imagine that we are in it, excites some degree of the same emotion, in proportion to the vivacity or dullness of the conception. (9)

Whereas the three novelists succeeded in (re)creating the civilizational moments they wished to portray, the corresponding film adaptations have mostly been unsuccessful in doing so. They fail most dismally in eliciting sympathy from the audience towards the characters. Instead of attempting to merge the reality of the viewers with the realities of the characters on screen, the film adaptations – except for *The Road* – concentrate on the visual aspects and almost completely disregard the drama taking place within the characters, which is a precondition for the successful identification of the audience with the characters.

Generally, adaptations are considered to be interpretations of a source work filtered through the mind and imagination of the film director (Welsh and Morawski 32). In the case of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, the directors' imagination significantly narrows the scope of literary predecessors and focuses too much on the respective civilizational frames instead of on humanity itself. In contrast, McCarthy's *The Road* finds a much better representation in its screen adaptation, which complements the novel, builds on it in many aspects, and provides it with invaluable additions. For each of the novels one screen adaptation has been selected and both the novels and their respective film adaptations have been analysed with respect to the interplay between the civilizational frames and the common humanity those frames are supposed to support and promote. While the literary templates unequivocally add to our knowledge of what it means to be human, the respective adaptations mostly offer a very narrow view of humanity caused by placing too much value on the civilizational frame itself. As a result, the external characteristics of respective civilizational frames occupy the majority of screen time, yet the investigation of the recesses of human nature, in which the novels excel, receive a superficial treatment.

In order to understand the interconnections between the novels, and their various approaches to the civilizational process and its demands upon human nature, it is essential to delineate the general picture of the civilizational moments their authors attempt to encapsulate. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* describes the life of an African man Okonkwo, who grows up and reaches middle age just before the English missionaries and colonialists arrive in Igboland. He grows up hating his father and everything the man stands for (meekness, gentleness, peacefulness, sociability), and grows to be a strong and independent man, respected in society for his courage, physical prowess, and skill. He even becomes one of the village elders. In short, he rises from the bottom of the social hierarchy to the ruling top, but becomes entirely consumed by the social expectations of his civilisation, forgetting almost all the principles of common humanity and destroying both his life and the lives of the people he loves (or is supposed to love) most, merely because the customs and beliefs of the society he was raised in exact it. He rigidly follows the demands of his civilizational frame and does

not even think to try to bend the rules when they clash with the desires of his heart or the principles of basic humanity.

Furthermore, Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is in many aspects similar to Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and may be perceived as the mid-way between *Things Fall Apart* and McCarthy's *The Road*. Golding depicts a group of stranded boys who end up on an uninhabited island, forgetting "their manners" and forming a kind of savage tribal culture. With the power of the civilizational frame removed, the boys fare much worse and behave more savagely than the members of Okonkwo's tribe that the boys would almost certainly deprecate and discard as savage and backward. The third novel, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* presents a bleak vision of a post-apocalyptic world with no civilizational frame whatsoever. The life in McCarthy's novel is inadvertently best described by Hobbes as the permanent "state of war." Namely, Hobbes's vision of the savage and brutish coexistence of people in the original state almost perfectly coincides with the manner in which people are portrayed in *The Road*. There are no restraints and no future to strive for. People become robbers, killers, cannibals, beasts, and they are prepared to do anything simply to survive. However, there is an exception. The novel describes the journey of a father and son, both unnamed, from a town in the country to the coast where they hope to find means of survival as well as other people who still were able to retain their sanity and compassion. The main characters also want to survive, but not at the cost of their humanity. They are both fully aware that it takes more than mere surviving in order to be a person – they need to feel like people and they need other people to see them as people, not as ruthless rivals for food, or even as the very food. *The Road* unequivocally concentrates on basic humanity that should always be put before any system of thought or civilizational frame. If a civilizational frame does not promote humanity and does not reduce brutishness, then its existence has no justification. McCarthy seems to claim that basic humanity should always be the main postulate of the human world, with or without the existing civilizational frames, and if it is preserved, civilization will inevitably rebuild itself even in post-apocalyptic conditions.

All civilizations are based on the large-scale cooperation and coexistence of a vast number of people united by the form of the common myths every civilization is based upon (Harari 34), and in order to cooperate people should, according to Hobbes,

give up certain freedoms to a higher instance in exchange for relative safety and potential prosperity (Pt. 2, Ch. 17, Par. 19). The higher instance, irrespective whether a king, parliament, or state, should provide protection from the brutishness of others and guidance for a successful cohabitation with others. People, although they may claim differently, desperately need a frame to guide them in all situations, ranging from the regulation of everyday social and sexual behaviour to the general world perception. As Dostoyevsky points out, people are not capable of handling complete freedom of thought and behaviour (371), and they need guidance and rules to become and remain civilized beings. The interplay between the bounds and benefits of civilization is what differentiates one civilization from the other. Every civilization offers some benefits, but also tramples on certain freedoms since absolute freedom is unimaginable. Civilizations are made by people, but they also make people who they are. According to Golding, there is a beast in each and every one of us (77) and that is why it is so easy to slide into brutishness as soon as the prevailing civilizational frame is removed. Hence, the key point the three novelists seem to be making is that civilization is a necessary means for cooperation and coexistence that raises people above the level of beasts.

However, civilization is supposed to remain a "means" and not turn into an end because in that case it is bound to produce brutishness and savagery, much like the Hobbesian "state of war." Okonkwo's murder of his adopted son and the continuous mistreatment of his favourite daughter for the sake of social ascendancy and status exemplify such a scenario. The three novels in question seem to suggest that becoming and remaining a decent human being demands an enormous effort, while sliding into brutishness occurs rapidly and "naturally." Samuel Johnson similarly observes, "he who makes a beast out of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man" (qtd. in Wiltshire 7). The precariousness of civilization and humanity in general is masterfully expressed in a scene in *The Road* in which the father and the son meet another drifter. While attempting to describe what his son and the common humanity that his son embodies mean to him, the father says that he perceives his son a god, and the stranger poignantly replies that to be on the road with a god fragile like that would be a dangerous predicament:

> I've not seen a fire in a long time, that's all. I live like an animal. You dont want to know the things I've eaten. When I saw that boy I thought that I had died.
> You thought he was an angel?
> I didnt know what he was. I never thought to see a child again. I didnt know that would happen.
> What if I said that he's a god?
> The old man shook his head. I'm past all that now. Have been for years. Where men cant live gods fare no better. You'll see. It's better to be alone. So I hope that's not true what you said because to be on the road with the last god would be a terrible thing so I hope it's not true. Things will be better when everybody's gone. (McCarthy 145)[1]

Civilization is a very fragile thing and it does not take much for it to disappear. Kenneth Clark uses the fall of the Roman Empire as an example. He contrasts the monuments and achievements of the once unquestionable empire to the situation just a century or two after the fall where in some parts of Europe there were literally no traces of the old civilization or any other (3-9). Juval Noah Harari repeatedly stresses that civilization is always based on abstract and intangible principles, that is myths which arise from the ability to create imagined reality out of words (39-40), and Terry Eagleton aptly sums it up when he says that "culture cannot be precisely defined because its essence lies in its transcendence of the specific. Its vacuity is thus in direct proportion to its authority" (125). The more vacuous the underlying principle is, the more powerful it becomes, but also more easily destroyed. It has to be continually nourished and nurtured in order to prosper and survive. In other words, civilization is just an evolutionary phenomenon that is perpetually subject to the battle for survival in the same way physical organisms are. The struggle for survival is incessant and unmerciful and does not care about beauty, morality, and cultural elevation of concepts propagated by a certain civilizational frame. The only thing that counts is the power and vigour of a certain concept.

Thus, it is no coincidence that Yeats's poem "The Second Coming" can be applied both to Achebe's book, which actually borrows its title from one of the lines, and the state in which humanity finds itself in McCarthy's *The Road*. Yeats prophetically says:

[1] Grammatical mistakes are present in the source text and they significantly add to the conspicuous absence of any rules and order in the world presented in the novel.

> Turning and turning in the widening gyre
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity. (187)

Yeats describes a situation when a person or a civilization ossifies, becomes decadent, turns into an unquestionable centre and stops fighting and developing. As soon as this occurs, it loses the evolutionary fitness and something savage yet strong and vigorous is born in the periphery, in the wilderness, and takes over the supremacy. Problems with both successful people and civilizational frames appear when they reach the top of their power and become virtually unquestionable. At this point, civilizational frames stop serving the purpose of promoting humanity and reducing brutishness, and become a rigidified system, that is, a goal in itself and for itself. Every fundamentalism is a forceful reduction of the complexity and humanity of others and this is what happens to Okonkwo, the main protagonist of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and unfortunately, to the film adaptation of the said novel as well. The following extract succinctly presents the issue:

> Every fundamentalism is indubitably sure of its "truths" so those truths stop being tested, evaluated, re-evaluated, improved, worked upon and in time, what once may have even been a useful evolutionary means turns into a weapon to be used against all those who happen to think differently. A "centre" does not adapt to the world but attempts to adapt the world to its view. When a culture or a civilisation starts showing these fundamentalist symptoms and becomes too sure of its ways it stops growing and almost certainly enters into its decadent phase and is eventually replaced by something more vigorous. (Marijanović and Raguž 188)

Okonkwo follows the same route to the creation of his fundamentalist self. In the beginning, he struggles to master the demands of his culture/civilizational frame. He starts from the bottom and reaches one of the leading positions but, unfortunately, loses his humanity on the way. He becomes ready to do anything to satisfy the social demands, which become a kind of god to him. He beats his wives, kills his adopted son, fights other people, represses his innermost feelings, pushes away his favourite daughter

just to become and remain respected and feared in his tribe. He tramples down on both his and the humanity of others in order to reach the top and stay there. He learns the ways of the world, but they turn him into a ruthless beast and cause misery both for himself and the people around him.

Okonkwo is a fundamentalist and sees his civilizational frame in fundamentalist terms because he learnt as a child, based on the example of his father, that feelings of ease, compassion, and a peaceful and undemanding existence are deemed weak; they can never bring richness, fame, and respect to an average person, much like in today's world. Despising everything his father stood for, Okonkwo carefully studies what his civilizational frame values and discovers it to be incessant work, a business attitude, emotional sterility, complete absence of compassion, becoming a wrestling star. Looking at this list, no one would ever say that these are the prevailing values of a tribal civilization of pre-colonial Africa. In the end, Okonkwo faces a series of disappointments, experiencing the bitter truth that there really are some things that one should not "learn" to do. His lack of humanity leads to his punishment by his own culture. He endures the punishment stoically, never questioning his civilizational frame. However, the final blow comes at the very end of the novel when he is compelled to witness how easily his son accepts Western civilization and how his beloved civilizational frame is replaced by the modern world, represented by English missionaries and English law. Everything he believes in and stands for is shattered and he kills himself for the same reason the wife of the main protagonist kills herself in *The Road*. Both of them simply cannot and do not wish to function in another civilizational frame.

The main mistake Okonkwo makes, and that is putting his civilizational frame in the foreground and his humanity and the humanity of others in the background, thereby rendering his civilizational frame unquestionable and god-like, is repeated in the screen adaptations. They seem to make the same mistake. The very beginning of the Nollywood movie *Things Fall Apart* makes it evident that it is less about people and the nature of humanity than about the civilizational frame(s). The movie is more similar to a tourist commercial presenting the splendour of African folklore than to a work of art that should help the audience understand African people, their values, ways of thinking, and the intricacies of the social structure. As Kundera says, a good novel is good

because it provides us with a new glimpse into the nature of humanity, into that which makes people human and says things which only a novel can say (*The Art of the Novel*). The same principle should apply to films. However, the film in question depicts certain external notions of African culture but not much more. Ukachi Nnenna Wachuku and Chisimdi Udoka Ihentuke aptly describe the inaptitude of the director to adequately use all the possibilities of the film medium and thereby complement the novel:

> The application of special effects in the film is perfunctory. This brings a measure of awkwardness and artificiality into many scenes. Such scenes as the wrestling between Okonkwo and Amalinze, the war between Umuofia and Mbaino, the beating of Ekwefi by Okonkwo and the attempt to shoot her, the killing of Ikemefuna, the accidental shooting of Ezeudu's son during the burial of his father, the destruction of the church and several other scenes are found wanting of the necessary effects. A reader of the novel would probably enjoy the novelist's narration of these scenes more than a viewer of the film version. The transitional effects are also faulty, and the lighting poorly executed, with the result that many scenes are played in the dark. (131)

Basically, the film insists on African folklore and provides only a superficial view of the outer appearance of African culture as it may be perceived by strangers. To paraphrase Kamila Elliott, the transcendental signifier fails to find both the signified and any other potential incarnation (qt. in Sakellaridis), meaning that the intricacies concerning the depth of the human soul, the nature of humanity and the interactions between an individual and society, vividly present in the novel, are incapable of finding their counterparts in the film adaptation. The profound complexity of Achebe's vision has been lost and no new or substantial value has been added. Tambay A. Obenson points out that a film such as *Avatar* would do the novel some justice and that a director such as James Cameron or Ridley Scott might produce out of it a visual masterpiece that would equal its predecessor ("Today") because the text seems to be an indeed fruitful ground for a film adaptation. It tells a story of Africa, of a personal journey of a man living at the time when two civilizational frames intersect, wherein one fails and the other assumes dominance – a typical epic context. Okonkwo's physical conquests, coming of age, mastering of business activities, becoming a ruthless beast dependent on its civilizational frame in order to function, and the obvious parallels with the modern world which superseded the old one all seem to be a promising film material, but only if

the protagonists' psychological drama and his very humanity are continuously kept in mind. If this segment is neglected, the entire subject is reduced to folklore.

The series lasts longer than five hours. People are overdressed to show the richness of Africa's ethnological heritage, the songs and dances are never interrupted – they are performed in full duration, thereby becoming a purpose in itself. In short, David Orere, the director, repeats Okonkwo's mistake – he is immersed in the civilizational frame and forgets all about humanity, about becoming a man and, more importantly, remaining a man – the issue shared by all three novels in question. Okonkwo stops being a man in his original civilizational frame and experiences deep troubles due to his fundamentalism and rigidity, becoming desperate and taking his own life after this familiar civilizational frame is removed. The novel appears to contradict Huntington's "clash of civilizations" and points out that both the social and personal suicide of the African peoples take place primarily due to internal dichotomies arising from the values of traditional societies (Madubuike 70), and that "things definitely fall apart" after the collision with a technologically advanced and more powerful civilization.

However, the same seems to be the case with the succeeding Western civilizational frame. Members of the victorious Western civilizational frame seem to be perpetuating Okonkwo's error – putting their respective civilizational frame before common humanity. All people of some consequence, such as priests and representatives of the authorities, assess others on the principle of black and white. In their view, white colour is equated with the good and black with the bad, the animalistic, or generally something of low or no value. The only exception is father Brown, who tries to make the two civilizations coexist fruitfully and meld them together. Okonkwo's life drama does not deserve much attention either by the priest or the civil governor, who thinks that Okonkwo's destiny might deserve a short paragraph in his book on African people. The situation is much like in Remarque's *Im Westen Nichts Neues* where the main protagonist's friends and fellow soldiers are shot in a day, ending their war agony in a tragic and terrifying way, but their personal drama and suffering seems to have no significance on a larger scale. Significantly, the radio news report says, "All quiet on the Western front" (n.p.). In both books, common humanity and personal drama get almost no representation, while the civilizational frame and the folklore stand in the limelight.

Following Achebe's representation, Western civilization is unquestionably more powerful than Okonkwo's tribal culture, but his depiction of both the government and church officials of the colonisers suggests that the two civilisations are essentially the same, as far as common humanity and the care for other fellow beings are concerned – the only difference being the level of the technological advancement. In his *Lord of the Flies*, Golding unequivocally presents the feebleness of this, supposedly highly developed, civilizational frame. In the text, the representatives of a "higher culture" descend into savagery in a very short period of time. The veneer of civilization proves to be extremely thin and as soon as the civilizational frame loses its power, they form another one; unfortunately, it is based on brute power. The two boys in the novel, described in positive terms, Ralph and Piggy – to use Yeats's words – "lack all conviction," sounding and looking like bookish snobs who simply talk too much and are capable of doing nothing, while the brutes exhibit exceptional vigour, endurance, and depth of conviction. The novel clearly shows how hard it is to reach a certain level of civilization and how easy it is to lose it. The underlying presumption of the text is a bold claim that raw animality is the only thing inherent to every human being, and that civilization and humanity require perpetual effort and work on the part of the majority of people if they are to be both built and maintained. Civilization proves to be a very fragile thing prone to radical transformation or even utter disappearance unless properly and vigorously maintained. As Harari says, without cooperation there is no civilization and the more advanced a civilization is, the more abstract its underlying principles (31).

Western civilization has reached a very high level of development that simultaneously denotes two things: one, its fundamental principles have become very abstract and two, being abstract and intangible, those unifying principles are consequently very fragile and easy to erase unless constantly maintained. The novel illustrates this concept since high and lofty civilizational ideals, represented by Ralph and Piggy in the novel, appear very weak and unconvincing when compared to the brute animality and physical strength of Jack's unit. Ralph loses credibility at the first opportunity by betraying Piggy's deepest secret just to gain some immediate popularity. The boys fail to ensure all the conditions Harari prescribes for the success of a civilization. Alternatively, if approached from another angle, Jack and his choir boys succeed in finding the unifying ideas not by concentrating on basic humanity but on the

basic animality inherent to every human being. The boys get and become what they are looking for. Much in the same way as people in the Middle Ages were obsessed with the Devil and consequently "found" both him and his followers everywhere, the boys in *Lord of the Flies* seek the beast everywhere, honour it, kill for it and eventually, as Simon prophetically says, they become beasts themselves (Golding 77). Nietzsche concurs in *Beyond Good and Evil* that "whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. If you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you" (89).

The omnipresent brutality and animality lurking beneath the veneer of civilization receive thorough treatment in the novel, especially if Golding's subsequently made statement is taken into account. Namely, Golding states that there is no significant difference between the boys and the navy ship officers (Epstein 290). The boys who have become full-blooded savages and are about to kill Ralph, immediately turn into a bunch of sobbing children when faced with an acknowledged and undeniably higher power, but the sad fact is that Golding presents the officers as being essentially the same, just more refined and sophisticated due to experience and age. The navy ship officers and the crew are on their way to kill someone else somewhere and are basically doing the same thing which the children did in a more sophisticated way, playing adult games and displaying adult savagery. Consequently, Golding underscores the same idea Achebe – they both seem to claim that there is no civilizational of a higher value than any other, that civilization is not more inherent to certain people than to others, and, most importantly, that civilizations have no value at all if they become aims in themselves and start trampling on basic humanity. As soon as one's own civilization becomes idolized, a civilizational frame turns from a tool enabling cooperation and cohabitation on a large scale, as Harari says, into a purpose in itself and becomes a decaying Yeatsian centre destined to fail no matter how powerful it may seem at present.

Once again, the corresponding 1963 film adaptation of *Lord of the Flies* seems incapable of handling the complexity presented in the novel. It fails to add any dimension to the explored issues and it does not even help one to visualize things better and to gain a more precise overview of the island itself. Consequently, it proves unsuccessfully in fulfilling Kundera's prescription and thereby adding a new glimpse

into the nature of humanity. The literary template does not profit from the other medium to a significant extent and only the scene of the accidental savage killing of the boy Simon, by his temporarily maniacal friends, profits from the combination of music and visual effects. It seems that this is the only scene that improves upon the experience of reading the book and it is a shame that the rest of the film is not done on this level. Taken as a whole, it is hard to imagine that anyone who has seen the film will ever be able to become interested in the book due to the fact that it irrevocably and detrimentally reduces and narrows Golding's vision.

Unlike the adaptations of *Things Fall Apart* and *Lord of the Flies*, the film version *The Road* has plenty to offer and it is easy to imagine a lot of people being encouraged to read the book after having seen the movie (as was the case with the author of this paper). The movie stands its own ground and functions well both as the screen adaptation of McCarthy's book and as an independent work of art. The atmosphere of a post-apocalyptic world, devoid of almost all traces of civilization, is vividly presented, as it is a Hobbesian vision of the world in which the animalistic instinct for survival virtually erases humanity and humaneness from the face of the earth. Hobbes's saying *bellum omnium contra omnes* seems to be the only and omnipresent rule governing human behaviour on earth. In both the novel and the film, as Andrew Keller Estes points out, this "world is one of black and grey, the few surviving humans mostly seem intent on enslaving or cannibalizing each other and all are slowly ground down by environments even more inhospitable than the harshest deserts of *Blood Meridian*" (189). An Internet Movie Database comment succinctly sums up the successful transfer of the literary plot to the screen, as perceived by a member of the film's audience, that it is worth quoting at length:

> As it turns out, if you liked the book very much and worried about how its uber-bleak and incredibly dark and (especially) gray landscapes would appear, it provides that perfectly. And if you haven't read the book... it still works as a movie, as a simple-but-not story of a father and son survival drama-and clinging on to their humanity-first, and then a post-apocalypse thriller far second … It's against this backdrop of rain and sludge and grime and decay that imbues this intense bond between the father and son so greatly, and the complexity that comes with not just staying alive but retaining humanity and dignity and doing right and wrong by the people they encounter. This may not be news to people who read the book. I still, having read it two years ago (which sadly

> seems like long ago in usually remembering specific images of a book), can't get the descriptions of scenes out of my head, or the stark manner of how characters talked and dread and existential horror was relayed. But, again, the film not only respects this but gives it further life. (Mister Whiplash n.p.)

The Road, due to its complete absence of any civilizational frame, focuses on humanity itself and by doing so inadvertently points to the weak spots in the film adaptations of *Things Fall Apart* and *Lord of the Flies*. In the former, the civilizational frame becomes everything. It turns into an aim in itself and consequently a means for promulgation and preservation of humanity; that which essentially all civilizations are meant to be, turns into a god and becomes idolized and worshipped for its own sake, completely disregarding basic humanity. Okonkwo turns into a beast not because of the absence of civilization, but due to placing too much value upon it. History abundantly proves that even the best and most ingenious ideas can be perverted when they stop promoting humanity and become ends in themselves. Whenever this occurs, humanity is disregarded and trampled on. Christianity, communism, science, capitalism, to name just a few most prominent ones, have all "lived" to benefit humankind, but also to trample on it whenever and wherever they were idolized and worshipped for the sake of themselves. In history, whenever ideas and civilizational frames became more important than humanity and humaneness tragedies ensued.

Lord of the Flies clearly shows how fragile and thin any civilizational veneer is, but it also proves the necessity of one if humanity is to be preserved. Harold Bloom quotes Golding's own summary of the issue:

> "The overall picture," Golding wrote about *Lord of the Flies*, "was to be the tragic lesson that the English have had to learn over a period of one hundred years; that one lot of people is inherently like any other lot of people; and that the only enemy of man is inside him." Golding wrote that the concept was really not new but people desperately needed to be reminded of it. (11)

It is very easy to imagine the boys from Golding's book turning into the inhuman and inhumane beasts from *The Road*. McCarthy's protagonists suffer a great deal to preserve the traits that differentiate them from the beast-like people around them. There is no civilization around them, the two of them bear no names, and consequently, there

are no nations, no states, no nationalities, no religions, and none of the "usual markers" according to which people are divided. The only dividing means left is one's (in)humanity, and nothing else. McCarthy uses the conspicuous absence of civilization to point out the untouchable things that no civilization should ever trample on if it is to be called a civilization at all.

To conclude, it is highly paradoxical that, of the three described novels and their corresponding adaptations, only the adaptation of *The Road* is highly focused on humanity itself, notwithstanding or perhaps due to the fact that it completely lacks any civilizational frame. The need for civilization is the more stressed the more conspicuously it is absent from the novel and the movie. In the world brimming with violence and cannibalism, the main characters concentrate on their humanity, on "the fire in them" and try to remain normal human beings. They do not ask anyone any more if they are of their nation, religion, area, country, civilization, or hemisphere – nothing of the sort. The only question one can imagine them asking is, "Are you a normal human being?" If this image is contrasted with the paradisiacal island Golding's boys are stranded on, with all the vital ingredients for survival present, the results are most surprising. While lacking nothing vital, the boys incessantly search for a beast and eventually find it, while the two characters from *The Road* search for humanity among cannibals and literal human beasts and indeed manage to find it. Unfortunately, the first two film adaptations fail to capture the complexity of being human, falling far behind the source literary works to which they owe their existence. However, the adaptation of *The Road* proves that a work of art, no matter whether an adaptation or not, should always attempt to follow Kundera's prescription and add a new glimpse of humanity and never concentrate simply on the external aspects, even if it be civilization itself. In *The Road*, there is no civilization at all but there is an overabundance of humanity, with all of its complexity and ambiguities. *The Road* proves that an exceptional work of art is always an attempt to understand humanity in a new way and never a monument to a civilizational frame or a certain idea, no matter how powerful or influential it may be at the time.

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PART IV: The Pedagogy of Adaptation – Experiences

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Research and Teaching Excellence, Adaptation Studies, and the Novel: A Pedagogical Narrative

The complaint that universities are in a state of crisis has been expressed almost daily through the print and online media: rising learner fees – especially in Great Britain – huge debts, organizations top-heavy with administrators while making do with zero-hours contract staff to teach undergraduates. All departments are forced to demonstrate impact in financial as well as academic terms to justify their continued funding. Academics spend a considerable bulk of their time fund-raising while trying to publish in prestigious academic journals for the Research Excellence Framework (REF), or related structures in Europe designed to ensure quality of output. Now in Great Britain there exists the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) concentrating on criteria such as the learning environment, course outcomes, curriculum design, and the creation of meaningful aims and objectives. Some colleagues have experienced problems, especially those accustomed to the information-loaded lecture where they play the "sage on the stage," disseminating information to a largely passive audience. There is also the question of the extra administrative duties such as filling out forms and other material designed to ensure their continued effectiveness as educators (Spicer). In this bureaucracy-heavy academic atmosphere, it comes as no surprise to find the humanities fighting for their future (in Britain and elsewhere) as they try to respond to governments more interested in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subjects. What use can literature be for learners trying to make their way in an increasingly competitive professional environment? In my academic context – the Republic of Turkey – the balance is heavily

weighted in favor of engineering and medicine, both subjects perceived as pathways to "safe" jobs in both the private and public sectors.[1]

Since 2007, I have worked at a Faculty of Education, preparing undergraduates for future careers as high school educators in English. The department's impact on Turkish educational culture is tacitly understood as fulfilling a need to fill places in high schools, especially in rural areas where the shortage of staff is acute. In a context where language learning is heavily weighted towards grammar, the main shortcoming consists of learner inability to communicate proficiently in the second language. I fulfill a complex role in the departmental vision – although a qualified high school teacher with extensive experience of teacher training, I have been given license to use adaptation studies as a basis for constructing innovative pedagogies designed to enhance speaking and communicational abilities. Many of my ideas have been explained in depth in the co-authored book *Adaptation and Learning: New Frontiers* (with Tony Gurr), where adaptation is approached as a mode of personal transformation, as we become accustomed to changing circumstances within our lives.

Taking the latest government initiatives into account (although the TEF and REF do not exist in Turkey, there are similar guidelines issued by YÖK – the Higher Education Ministry), I am faced with problems both institutional and personal. How can I justify my admittedly unconventional research in terms of impact? What part does literature do in the greater scheme of things where money is tight and science-based research has a far greater chance to obtain it? This piece offers some tentative answers through a study of a course I recently finished on "The Novel," offered to a group of third year undergraduates in my department. Let me begin by saying that it will be a highly personal reminiscence of recovering from a serious illness that put me out of action for the whole of the previous semester. I am not writing confessional criticism, but rather reflecting on my experiences to make the basic pedagogical point that educators and learners should collaborate in a process of co-creation, irrespective of the course they might be pursuing. This strategy can be used to define (and redefine) aims and objectives, while increasing learner involvement

[1] See Ş. Birgül Tantekin-Ersolmaz, EkremEkinci, and GülsünSağlamer, "Engineering Education in Turkey: From [the] Ottomans to the Republic." Unpub. Paper. American Society for Engineering Education, 2004.

in their own learning. The autobiographical aspect of this piece also explains how my role as an educator changed as the course unfolded: I was no longer the "sage on the stage" but a member of a creative team engaged in the task of assessing a novel's value as a tool for language learning. Perhaps I had more experience of the topic, but that did not entitle me to a privileged role within classroom exchange. On numerous occasions, I assumed a silent role, observing paralinguistic features such as body language and eye contact among individual groups of learners. My task was rendered easier by the learners' willingness to determine the future direction of the course through continual review of its stated aims and objectives.

That support was vitally necessary. At the beginning of the semester (February 2017), I was dreading the thought of returning to class. I had taught it several times in the past, and had successfully used adaptation techniques to encourage learners to create their own versions of familiar texts – *Brave New World*, *Great Expectations*, and *Animal Farm*.[2]As they worked on them, they learned how to communicate better as well as increasing teamwork abilities: the *Animal Farm* adaptation had been performed at the faculty student conference (Çalıştay), but future drama presentations were banned by the organizers, who insisted on remaining with the conference-paper format. This February was different. I had been hospitalized with an infection of the lungs, while having to endure an operation to restore detached retina in both eyes, not to mention a series designed to keep a potentially cancerous tumor in the brain under control. I remained cheerful but fragile as I became less and less convinced that I could face classes any more. In 2013, I had undergone a previous cancer operation that left me vocally impaired: I could no longer speak in public without a voice microphone. The most recent bouts of illness had only exacerbated that condition. I took what might have seemed a radical pedagogical decision in the first 2017 class by explaining in detail what I had endured, and asking the learners directly to be involved in co-creating the syllabus to save my voice and help me get through to the end.

[2] See Laurence Raw and Sevgi Şahin, "Toward a Pedagogy for Adaptation Studies." *Redefining Adaptation Studies*, edited by Dennis Cutchins, Laurence Raw, and James M. Welsh, pp. 71-85. Scarecrow Press, 2010.

The learners were not surprised but shocked: what was *Laurence Hoca* (Teacher Laurence) doing by interpreting the concept of student-centered learning from such a radical perspective? In truth, I was not as radical as they might have assumed. Much of my recent pedagogical research derives from Robert J. Nash's model of a Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN), an approach to learning combining academic and personal elements (Nash). Drawing on the insights of postmodern philosopher Edmund Husserl, Nash foregrounded the sense of "ownness" as an academic model. Rather than subscribing to a critical movement (e.g. Modernism), we would be better advised to cultivate our own approaches, drawing on whatever material we consider appropriate and evaluating it in terms of personal experience (Young). One of the major benefits of the SPN is flexibility: our opinions change as we read and discuss more, particularly in a collaborative environment. What I really wanted to do was to encourage my learners to develop SPNs of their own through adaptation, understood in this sense as reviewing previously held ideas and altering them if they considered it necessary.

Let me illustrate the point through one example. I have lost count of the number of academic studies that cite learner lack of self-belief as one of the main obstacles towards effective foreign language learning. Hüseyin Öz and his fellow-researchers, writing in 2015, include several negative remarks about the tendency of teachers and learners alike to avoid L2 (second language) exchanges, "even if they possess a high level of communicative competence" (269). The authors are on rockier intellectual ground in finding solutions to the problem, apart from increasing the amount of speaking activities in class. This strategy might work in pedagogical terms, but does not address the fundamental issue – that learners fear what will happen if they should make a grammatical or pronunciation error. I prefer to think of the issue by drawing on my own personal SPN. At the beginning of the novel course, I tried to deal with my own lack of self-confidence by admitting that, as I could only speak quietly for short periods at a time, I would be happy for learners to work independently for part of the lesson. As the weeks passed, so the learners became accustomed to my periods of reflective silence and filled them up with their own thoughts expressed in Turkish and English (Tinglish, perhaps). Out of such moments an important pedagogical point emerged. The more freedom learners have for

self-expression, the more willing they will be to adapt through learning and use that experience to revise their SPNs. This mode of learning brings into question the legitimacy of the (highly ritualized) academic "discussion" in which educators throw out certain points and one or two learners respond, leaving the remainder of the class in silence.

Creating a syllabus collectively involved my offering a choice of five short novels – *Brave New World, The Great Gatsby, Of Mice and Men*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and *Animal Farm* – and asking learners to choose two of them. As many of them had not encountered the books before, I suggested they should familiarize themselves with their plots, either through finding Turkish translations or reading English summaries online. At no point did I ask them to read the novels in English unless they wanted to. This was an unorthodox decision (one which surprised many learners) but perfectly justified in terms of the course's agreed aim, which was not to study the novels in depth, but to discover ways in which they could be used to improve communicative abilities, and thereby increase learner self-confidence. *Animal Farm* was a popular choice due to its shortness and straightforward plot. Even if individual learners had not read it, they could always obtain summaries from their classmates. *The Great Gatsby* was also chosen due to familiarity: most of the class had seen the recent Baz Luhrmann film.

Once the choices had been made, the class divided themselves into groups of three or four and reflected on the following questions: "what would you like to do at the end of the course that you cannot do now?"; "what abilities do you need to develop to achieve your aim?" and "how can the course contribute to your future development?" They were encouraged to negotiate, using any language they wished (English or Turkish), and feedback their answers to the entire group. Their responses were both practical and surprising. Some treated their encounters with literary texts as opportunities to develop cross-cultural awareness; others believed that by sharing insights they could develop listening and a willingness to entertain opposing views. One male learner believed that discussing literature would offer life-lessons not found in other types of text, hence offering greater opportunities for personal adaptation.[3]Based on these objectives, we discussed the

[3] My answers to the questions were expressed in the following statements. What would I like to do by the end of the course? I wanted to learn how to *be*, to savour the moment without feeling that I had to do anything

novels once more and came up with a series of plot-related questions that were of significance to the group as a whole. We are all committed to outward show at work (educators wear respectable clothing and cultivate an air of seriousness); to what extent is this need to perform similar to or different from the guests at Jay Gatsby's parties, where outward show matters and inner truths are suppressed? When we respond to learners in specific ways, are we expressing the truth or simply carrying out a performative ritual, or both? How can we acquire sufficient confidence to forget the performance and simply be ourselves? In *Animal Farm*, we would consider whether true democracy – where everyone has a voice and can speak out unhindered – could exist in a classroom or any public gathering area, or whether educators simply put on a performance to get everyone's attention. Also, what the consequences are of a dictatorship where the educator has sole control over the classroom event, and the sole criteria for success depends on external forces such as a good mark at the TEF. To answer these questions competently, each group within the class had to communicate with one another and subsequently create an activity designed to illustrate their views. When all the activities had been performed, the class would gather and consider the pedagogic implications of what they had done, and whether anything could have been improved. The course required both textual and personal adaptation, as learners rewrote the texts of the novels in their own words, creating their own situations, and subsequently reflected on their experiences and what they had learned from them. We tried to make the syllabus answer some of the criticisms raised by Richard Arum and JosipaRoksa's *Academically Adrift* (2011), a study of college curricula in American universities. For the authors, the majority of syllabi rely on discipline-specific material taught through out-of-date teaching methods that restrict learner participation. Opportunities for transdisciplinary initiatives or acquiring abilities for future employment are rejected in favor of content-based learning (59-91). Through our activities, we tried to comment on the novels while developing real-world abilities such as communication, reflection, and negotiation.

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except watch learners make their own learning. What abilities would I like to develop? The art of self-reflection. How can the course contribute to self-development? I should learn to value different forms of pedagogy if they help me to understand learner attitudes better.

These activities bore a strong similarity to those I had planned for previous editions of the same course in the past, with plenty of time and space for discussion, rehearsal, and performance. I had participated in the performances as director and performer while offering advice about body language and vocal intonation. Now things were different: learners had to work predominantly on their own. They could still turn to me for advice and comment, but I simply lacked the energy to move repeatedly from classroom to classroom. My new laissez-faire approach to pedagogy involved considerable risk; uncertain or unsure what to do next, learners might have come and asked me. However, things did not turn out that way: as the learners had already collaborated on planning the syllabus aims and objectives, they had a much clearer grasp of their responsibilities. The outcomes were mind-boggling. For the first time in living memory, I saw groups with texts in their hands – Turkish as well as English – searching for appropriate material on which to base their performances. One learner acted as note-taker while the other learners continued their research. They subsequently used the notes as a basis for the subsequent performance. Their commitment to the tasks was so intense that they seldom asked me for reassuring comments. I could sit silently in a corner observing their body-language of groups so engrossed that they actively forgot what time it was. I had to tell them that the lesson had finished and they could go to the canteen if they wished.

The experience offered salutary lessons for anyone preoccupied with pedagogical issues and their realization through the TEF (or related frameworks). Curriculum planning and the identification of course aims and objectives, if planned collaboratively, encourage learners to invest in their own learning with the educator assuming the role of coach/ advisor. I did not really "teach" the course at all, but tried to maintain the collaborative environment through asking questions. Sometimes I only needed to be in the classrooms listening to the excited buzz of fifteen voices and observing how learners adapted to the new environment without actively knowing it, as they enhanced their creativity through talk and action.

The course also revealed a truth often ignored in humanities courses; if you work on texts with particular relevance to learners' lives as well as your own life, there is a strong likelihood of new insights emerging. This might sound as a woolly-minded phrase: perhaps

an example might illustrate the point better. Everyone was impressed by the sheer extravagance of Gatsby's parties, full of social butterflies drinking and socializing, occasionally pausing for a dip in the swimming-pool or a clandestine flirt with someone else's partner. This sequence reminded me of an occasion during my teenage years when my parents took me along to a society party, plonked me in a chair, and left me to my own devices while they went off to cultivate future business contacts. Many learners likened the Gatsby scene to similar material in the Turkish *diziler* (soap operas) broadcast regularly on prime-time television, involving members of İstanbul high society in similar intrigues. With that parallel in mind, several groups created their own party-scenes with the emphasis placed on suppressed jealousy and conflict. The sheer violence of the performances revealed that learners knew precisely what such parties were for – to settle old scores with their enemies in an ostensibly festive atmosphere. We could understand why Gatsby found these occasions so uncomfortable, despite his surface charm.

There followed a wide-ranging exchange of views concentrating on what this sequence told us about pedagogy and self-awareness. Many learners understood the need for surface impression; to assume a persona to ensure acceptance in a community. Educators do this all the time, especially in their early career. They try and find ways of imposing their personality on a group without challenging the behavioral norms of that group. That process involves getting to know people – not only through conversations but listening to and observing them as well. I understood the value of sitting silently and observing the learners; in turn, they learned that although I was not speaking too much, I was still heavily involved in the classroom event. Psychological adaptation is not just a matter of changing your own world-view; you need to observe it in other people as well, it being a process that involves your entire mind and body.

In the *Animal Farm* section of the syllabus, learners decided to concentrate on the relationship between Mr. Jones and the farm animals. Some learners highlighted the neo-colonialist relationship between the two by donning masks and communicating through animal noises alone, rather than English. This not only suggested a degree of independence from Jones's authority, but also provided an explanation for his sadistic behavior – as he could not understand, he imposed his authority through violence. After the Revolution, the

pigs followed the same strategy; they spoke English while the rest of the animals communicated through animal noises. The performance was highly entertaining yet uncomfortable, making me aware of how as a native speaker I could easily impose my authority over the class in a manner similar to the pigs by speaking English at my normal pace and not listening to others. They added an ending – not present in the novel – where another native speaker came into the room, listened to the animals but did not say anything. Only when they had finished speaking did he get up and state that he would support them. I was astonished; seldom have I ever seen a classroom exchange with such a personal message attached. It proved the value to me of watching and responding to learner initiatives rather than assuming a leading role in the classroom exchange.

In a recent article citing the decline of humanities in an environment dominated by the REF and TEF, Alex Preston emphasizes the importance of learners having access to the most significant cultural issues of the time as a means of developing their powers of discrimination and appreciation ("The War"). Literature syllabi should not consist of a selection of texts from Beowulf to Virginia Woolf, but should prompt ontological reflection on why we are here and what our futures might be. Our novel course dealt with such issues but in different ways. Adapting familiar texts into dramas offered cross-cultural insights for learners with limited experience of travel abroad but with plenty of ideas about the West as communicated through visual and digital media. Reflecting and performing the texts in groups helped individual learners to broaden their visions. Perhaps most significantly, especially in a work-focused environment where success depends on employment after graduation, our scheme of work concentrated on the link between pedagogy and personality: think about your relationship to others as well as others' relationship to yourself, and you will learn how to adapt to new situations.

Around halfway through the course, with everyone buzzing with new ideas and reshaping them through feedback, we encountered what seemed to be a large psychological stumbling-block; how to demonstrate the success of our course through assessment and grading? In the relaxed atmosphere of the classroom we had forgotten that graduation depends on grades and a satisfactory grade point average (GPA). More negotiations led to a two-tier plan inspired by the questions asked at the beginning of the course: what would

you like to know that you did not know before; what abilities needed to be developed to complete this course successfully; and how does this course contribute to your professional development? Everyone answered these questions twice: during the middle and at the end of the course; and used the answers as a basis for constructing an SPN, combining reflections on what had been done during the semester with narratives of some of the best work. The SPNs would be shared amongst the learners and passed on to me, and the grades would be determined through negotiation. This mode of assessment depended very much on learner honesty about their performance – the belief that the course had more value than being just a means to obtain high grades. Although they did their best, I am not sure this method worked successfully, the democratic mode of assessment appealed to everyone – me included.

The second final assessment was inspired by the "signature dish" segment from BBC/Channel 4's *The Great British Bake-Off,* where contestants have a limited time to prepare their "signature dish" before presenting it to the judges. Learners were divided once more into groups of three or four and told to come up with a poster for 5-6 graders in high school (11-13 years old) that not only summarized the plot of one of the two novels studied during the semester, but which could stimulate further visual activities. I had two reasons for using this as an exam: first, most learners have highly developed visual rather than verbal imaginations; and second, I wanted to encourage my learners to project themselves into a classroom situation where pictures mattered more than text. They had the freedom to create anything they wished, but they would be graded as a group rather than individually. They had to collaborate, negotiate, and produce something collaborative if they wished to succeed.

The results, as expected, varied in quality. Some labored long and hard to create posters of cinematic quality; others had simply cut out and pasted images from magazines or the internet. What did impress me, however, was the sheer breadth of imaginative vision from these Generation Z representatives, possessing a range of visual skills that would have been unheard of in the late seventies (when I was a student). Their efforts taught me a lot about adaptation studies; however much we restrict our focus to textual issues, many of the latest releases (*Poldark*, *The Handmaid's Tale*) depend for their effect on visual energy.

The majority of the learners admitted in feedback that they had learned a great deal about their classmates, their educator, and themselves. They had never previously understood the depth of the link between psychology, teaching, and learning. An enhanced sense of self-awareness gave them a greater sense of what could and could not be done in class. One learner likened the experience to that of a scientist in a laboratory full of groups dedicated to alternative modes of writing and graphic display. Another appreciated the transdisciplinary potential of the class: negotiation and compromise were not solely the preserve of educators, but also part of everyday life. Perhaps the most heartfelt reactions came from two learners who had remained among the more silent members of the group. They claimed that they had never before thought they could speak English as well as they could, thereby underlining the potential of transformative, collaborate pedagogy to transform everyone's lives – if they wanted to.

The class taught me not to fear the unknown. My self-esteem might have been low at the beginning, but learner support sustained me. It is alright to admit your weaknesses in class if you are prepared to try your best in class. More than ever, I understand just how complex the pedagogical process can be; it not only involves knowledge of one's subject, but also engages us at the paralinguistic level through body language, eyework, and tonal variation. Perhaps there ought to be a rethink about the TEF focusing less on outcomes and more on process. The two are actually inseparable: the more you put in, the more you get out of a class. An understanding of that relationship should encourage educators to foreground the impact of the courses they teach. In our course, we discovered how literary texts can prompt cross-cultural awareness, while developing transferable abilities in presentation, negotiation, and listening. In an academic environment increasingly devoted to money, the course developed those abilities in every learner, enabling them to emerge from the experience with an enhanced belief in their individual potential and the value of interpersonal exchange.

In terms of adaptation studies, the course foregrounded the psychological elements of the discipline, which have been shamefully neglected in modern scholarship. While textual, sociological, and digital elements of the discipline are undoubtedly important, we must not overlook the relationship between adaptation and personal development. The more

we adapt, the greater our personal awareness of the various worlds we inhabit and our ability to deal with them.

As I finish this piece, I realize what extraordinary advantages I had while teaching this course. The class never exceeded twenty learners, and we had the chance to work in two largely bare classrooms that could be instantly transformed into whatever the learners wanted – a farmyard, a bourgeois living-room, a garage. I had taught the class previously, and they were accustomed to my drama-based pedagogic techniques. As a senior member of the department, I had *carte blanche* to organize the classes as I wished. What needs to be considered is whether the methods I have described might work in a large lecture hall where all the seats are fixed. While there are obvious disadvantages in terms of the educator/learner relationship (it is difficult for one person to get to know 80 learners in one semester), I believe that collaborative pedagogy still works, so long as there is a firm agreement amongst educator and learners about the course aims and objectives, plus a willingness to have active learner input in the assessment. The major issue is not the type of room the class have, but a willingness to adapt; if everyone is prepared to leap into the psychological unknown and reflect critically (not adversely) on their experiences, then anything is possible. Who knows, maybe these strategies could become part of REF and TED?

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Herr der Staubfilter – Lord of the Filters
Adaptation as a Student Project

Abstract

What started as a small project of making a short play with the aim to promote learning and teaching German language in the Bosnian education system ended up as a quite successful short film adaptation project implemented by a group of fourteen students of the German Department at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Zenica. The topic of the film is water, air, and soil pollution in Zenica, one of the most polluted cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The students dealt with the ecological topic by writing a script for a 23-minute-long film that is in fact their adaptation of Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* film series. Apart from writing the script, the students also filmed it and acted in it, added Bosnian and Croatian subtitles, and later also English subtitles. Throughout different project phases, the students demonstrated their creativity and gathered new and empowering experiences. The film was initially presented to the secondary school and university students and was very well received. Afterwards, it was also presented to the general public as a part of a local film event. The aim of this paper is not only to present a student film project in its making, but also to demonstrate how the pedagogy of adaptation works in practice.

Keywords: short film, adaptation, students, learning experience, creative work, pedagogy.

1. The Students' Motivation for the Project

As the group of fourteen fourth-year students[1] of German Language and Literature were informed of the possibility of taking part in a filmmaking project as an extracurricular activity in the 2015/16 academic year, they all showed a great motivation for participation. The students immediately found the idea of doing something beyond their usual assignments at the German Department appealing and joined the project. Student projects are generally an underdeveloped segment of work at

[1] The following students of German Language and Literature in the 2015/2016 academic year at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Zenica participated in the project: Karolina Grbavac, Ismar Vehabović, Ivan Arapović, Ajla Isić, Marija Buljeta, Josip Laštro, Belma Mehmedović, Armin Pezer, Andrea Čolić, Čerima Garanovič, Željka Širić, Nela Knežević, Robert Ramljak, and Dženita Škiljan.

the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Zenica, the history of which is relatively new since it was established as an independent public university in the post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina, which explains why such novelty that the teachers were proposing was welcomed by students.

The basic project framework initially envisaged the making of a short play in German language that would address environmental issues. One goal was to promote learning and teaching of German language in schools, and the other to raise awareness on the pollution and the need for environment protection among younger generations. The ecological issues are highly relevant for the town of Zenica, situated in the central part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the surrounding municipalities as this has for many decades been the most industrialised region in the country. With regard to its steel factory, Zenica was and still is one of the most polluted cities in Europe.[2]Due to the levels of toxic gas emissions, the private company Mittal Steel that now runs the ironworks in Zenica is obliged to install the industrial dust filters that would considerably reduce the current emission of dust and toxic substances, but they refuse to do so. Many protests and appeals by citizens, environmental associations, and other interested groups failed to prompt the polluter to comply with the standards of environmental protection. The student project presented in this paper was to give a small contribution in raising the voice against the precarious environmental situation.

In less than a week, the students came up with an adaptation idea for a short film with the title *Lord of the Filters*.[3]They believed that a film adaptation was more adequate than a play as it was possible to film at various problematic (polluted) sites which they wanted to draw attention to and raise awareness of the pollution of soil, water, and air in Zenica. The idea was a result of several related circumstances: first, the students were looking at the iron factory on a daily basis through their classroom windows, since it is located in the vicinity of the faculty building. Second, the iron factory is an old construction with high chimneys that reminded the students of Mordor,

[2] Prior to war, the Zenica steel factory employed about 25,000 workers as a socialist work organisation. Today, it has been transformed into a private company Arcelor Mittal, run by the foreign investor Mittal Steel, a global player in the production of steel. The factory nowadays works with a reduced capacity and with about 3,000 employees. *http://zenica.arcelormittal.com/.*

[3] The entire*Lord of the Filters*film can be seen at the following links: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33KvZCeQ3tQ&t=7s*with English subtitles, and at *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnPAPI2ljDQ*with Bosnian and Croatian subtitles. A short movie trailer can be found here: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UptjGYMf5Vc.*

as represented in *The Lord of the Rings* film. Third, needless to say, they were all fans of both *The Lord of the Rings* novel and its film adaptation. Therefore, it all somehow fell into place when the project idea for a film was suggested, resulting in *Lord of the Filters* or, originally, the German-titled *Herr der Staubfilter*.[4]

Figure 1: Group of 14 Students – Authors of the Film *Lord of the Filters*

Figure 2. Group Photo of the Students – Members of the Project and the Film Poster

[4] The title *Herr der Staubfilter* echoes the official German translation of the movie title: *Herr der Ringe* for *The Lord of the Rings*. The Bosnian and Croatian title of the film, *Gospodar filtera*, is influenced by the official Bosnian translation of the film's title, *Gospodar prstenova*.

2. Making the Adaptation

Making the short film adaptation included several steps: adapting the script, visiting the sites, acting, translating, producing the film, as well as collaborating with sponsors and different experts throughout the process. The students did not have any previous experience with this type of work and it was clear that this was a learning-by-doing process. Nevertheless, it was also obvious that the students were highly motivated to learn and complete the project, which helped them overcome and find solutions for various challenges they encountered along the way.

2.1. The Script

The process of writing the scenario was the most difficult part of making the film adaptation. Nevertheless, the students enjoyed the creativity entailed by the process of writing the script in several different versions. First of all, they had to re-watch *The Lord of the Rings* film series and re-read the novels to identify the parts that would fit into their own film. It took a long time to select the scenes and integrate them into the script. Next, they had to rewrite[5] the script until it took the form of the original text that was the product of adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*. Since the working group included fourteen students, the lack of ideas was never an issue. However, even after the brainstorming process and intensive group discussions, certain parts of the adapted script were still hard to incorporate accordingly with the rest. This required a lot of work and took a great amount of time, creative thinking, and devotion on the students' part.

The main characters of the film are the fairy, the monster, the old hobbit, three young hobbits, and the wizard. The most important motif taken from the source film was the Ring, and the hobbits had to make a journey to take the Ring to Mordor. In the student adaptation, the filter was to replace the Ring and it needed to be installed in the ironworks, a feat that served as a representative of the original hobbits' quest. In addition, just as the world was saved by destroying the Ring in the source film, the town in the students' adaptation was to be saved by installing the dust filter in the ironworks, and that is how the environmental aspect and message was instilled in the script. In

[5] "**The creative approach**: Educators frequently ask learners to take a source text and rewrite it according to their own inclinations. This is a particularly fruitful approach, as learners have to make the kind of creative decisions made by professional screenwriters" (Raw 2, emphasis in original).

short, the scenario included a fairy who addresses the public on the issues of water, air, and soil pollution in Zenica. The images and video clips of demonstrators and activists fighting for the clean city are shown at various locations where pollution was also added to the film.

Figure 3: The skyline in Zenica without filters.

The character of monster is in possession of the filters, but they are not used for environmental purposes. The hobbits and the monster meet. They compete in several games for the filters. The monster loses and the filters now belong to the three young hobbits who take the filters home.

Figure 4: Three young hobbits and the Filter.

The wizard comes to their house and tells them that they need to take a long journey to the steel works in Zenica in order to save the city from further pollution by installing the filters in the ironworks. However, before embarking on the long journey, the hobbits have to learn about environmental protection, waste disposal, and recycling of waste. A

short course on this topic is provided by the company ALBA Zenica,[6] responsible for the city's waste disposal. The hobbits receive certificates for successful completion of the course, which enables them to finally take off on the journey to save their city with the help of filters. After the hobbits arrive at the ironworks and successfully install the filters, the sun shines over the city of Zenica, illuminating the blue sky, clean river, and green nature.[7]

Figures 5 and 6: Zenica is green after the installation of Filters.

Although the students were aware that the film adaptation should convey a serious message on environmental protection, they wished to present it by employing irony and humour which, according to their opinion, would be more appealing to schoolchildren as the target audience. That is why the authors of the script believed that individual characters should be funny and that they should make use of comic situations as an easier way to reach the target audience, and direct the secondary school students' attention to serious environmental issues. They tried to achieve these effects by having

[6] The joint venture since 1999 in the form of public private partnership between ALBA Zenica (a subsidiary of the German foreigninvestor ALBA in Berlin), Zenica Municipality, and the public communal company in Zenica.

[7] The rewrite of the script was awarded the third place at the worldwide online competition of the alumni members of the German DAAD Alumni Association within the project titled "#MissionResponsible" in June 2015. See: "Studenten gegen Luftverschmutzung"at:*https://www.alumniportal-deutschland.org/nachhaltigkeit/soziales/mitmachaktion-missionresponsible/.*

the hobbits and other characters speak in colloquial rather than in standard language, by making use of comical music as the audio-background to certain scenes, and by making the wizard appear in a pompous hip-hop style costume with thick gold chains around his neck, reminiscent of a rap music star. After completing the script, the student-actors had to master the rather difficult task of making the characters authentic and funny and, at the same time, convey the right message to the audience.

2.2. Costumes and Acting

Acting in the film was yet another unprecedented experience for the students. Their initial thoughts about acting were that it was an easy and mostly fun experience. However, it turned out to be surprisingly hard work. The first major issue that the students faced were the costumes. Namely, they had to choose costumes adequate for the representation of individual characters and, at the same time, the ones in which the students would feel comfortable while working on the set. Make-up was also a part of the costume. It was not a problem to put the make-up on, but it proved a challenging task to put on the exact same make-up each time they filmed the individual scenes. To overcome this issue, the students used their mobile cameras to take pictures of the actors in order to be able to copy the costumes and make-up for the filming sessions that would take place later.

The next major challenge was the acting. Primarily, the students had to learn the text. Consequently, they received a crash course in acting from Ermina Kurevija, their fellow student who is a professional actress. What the students learned as acting basics was that every actor or actress has a distinguishing characteristic, that is, something individual and personal about him or her. Therefore, some of that individuality is being transferred to the character that he or she portrays and that only he or she knows how to achieve. This unique feature could be anything: a certain kind of improvisation, a certain gesture, pronunciation, or even appearance. The student-actors tried to implement these newly gained acting skills into their film roles and, as it turned out, were quite successful in that endeavour.

During the filming, the actors often had difficulty controlling or suppressing sudden outbursts of laughter. At certain moments, the student-actors simply could not hold back their laughter, even in serious scenes, which forced them to retake certain

scenes over and over again until they had them right. However, the most challenging part of the acting experience for several students were the scenes in which there were no lines, no text to learn, but in which one instead had to convey the message with the help of body language, gestures, and facial expressions, and make them convincing for the audience, which proved to be an extremely difficult task.

2.3. Filming and Production

The set of tasks related to adaptation filming and production also involved a number of challenges that the students faced for the first time. The filming process took approximately one month, but the entire filmmaking process lasted around six months since there were numerous things to consider, such as varying weather conditions, searching for and deciding on the right sites for filming with the right background images, such as the blackened sky from the smoky industrial chimneys and so on.

Fortunately, the students' team also included a technical expert who participated in the actual filming and production of the adaptation. There were also a number of novelties in this phase that needed to be mastered, such as controlling the quality of scene and sound, editing of the sound and filmed material (scenes), translating and inserting subtitles with proper timing, and many other technical details that make up the production of a film.

2.4. Sponsors

Alongside the support from the University of Zenica, the project was also supported by ALBA Zenica, which has been responsible for keeping the town of Zenica clean since 1999 by taking care of communal waste disposal. The company also works in recycling technologies and services, from licensing and consultancy to recycling waste management and sales of raw materials. In short, they are not only helping to preserve the city's natural resources, but are also contributing to the protection of environment and climate. The teaching staff and the student-project members approached ALBA Zenica and asked them to support the project. It did not take much persuasion for its management to recognise the quality of the students' adaptation project and to decide to support their efforts. ALBA Zenica provided the students not only with material support, but its Managing Director Džavid Dautbegović also offered

his invaluable expert advice on environmental issues during the script writing process, and he also appeared in the film as an environmental expert.

3. Film Presentation

The making of the film adaptation was only the first part of the project implementation, which lasted from April 2015 until March 2016. The second part of the project implementation entailed presenting the film adaptation to the target audience, that is to secondary school students and the wider public, which took place in April 2016. After obtaining the consent of the Pedagogical Institute of Zenica to visit schools, and due to the project sponsors, it was possible to present the film to students in high schools in eight municipalities: Zenica, Žepče, Zavidovići, Maglaj, Busovača, Tešanj, Kakanj, and Visoko.[8] The students and their German teachers, school pedagogues, and headmasters received the film *Lord of the Filters* very well. There were lot of questions asked, referring to the script itself as well as to other phases of filmmaking. The audience also laughed at certain humorous parts of the film.

Figures 7, 8, and 9: Film Presentations in Tešanj, Zenica, and Kakanj.

Prior to each projection of the film, the students and the teaching staff would first present the film by providing the audience with a short project description, but also

[8] These municipalities cover two out of ten Cantons in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zenica-Doboj Canton and Central Bosnia Canton.

by giving an insight into the experience of adaptation. The students discussed, among other things, topics such as team work, challenges and obstacles, problem solving, creative work, brainstorming, new tasks and new experiences, learning about new topics and skills, reading, writing, and rewriting, translating, singing, dancing, reciting, improvising, laughing, helping each other, and other similar experiences.

The students' film adaptation was also presented at the "Open Day" event at the University of Zenica in May 2016, as well as to the general public at the "German Film Week 2016"in December 2016 in Zenica, organised by the Goethe Institute of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the City Museum of Zenica, and the German Department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Zenica.

Figure 10: Poster for *Lord of the Filters* at the German Film Week 2016 in Zenica

4. Concluding Remarks

The student project presented in this paper started out as a small project, initially planned as a play, but ended up as a quite successful student film adaptation. The work on the project lasted for over a year, from April 2015 until December 2016. It was conducted as an extracurricular activity, but the students of the fourth year of study, who carried out the project, were rewarded for their work in their evaluation in several literature and linguistic courses. The experience gained from this project has shown that such student adaptations are, on the one hand, quite time consuming, that they require hard work, creativity, different skills, and knowledge (Elliott 2).[9] On the other hand, such projects can be "something liberating, a chance to experiment and use the

[9] "As students create adaptations, bringing art, music, dance, theatre, digital, and social media to bear on adaptations, new kinds of insights are generated which students then unfold in critical essays, where they are set in dialogue with prior criticism, often producing some of the best work that they do in their entire university career" (Elliott 2, emphasis in the source text).

experience for personal and emotional development."[10] These experiences lead us to the conclusion that there is a great pedagogical gain in such projects where students work on their own, develop skills, learn to collaborate, create new texts, and work on them in many different ways, not only at their desks, but also through other forms of expression such as acting, reciting, singing, dancing, advocating, and so on. It is a powerful learning tool, an empowering process, and generally speaking, a rewarding work which should be fully integrated in the student curricula at the German Department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Zenica instead of being merely an extracurricular activity.

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[10] A quote from Laurence Raw's talk titled "Pedagogy of Adaptation" delivered at the international conference *Adaptation: Theory, Criticism, Pedagogy* that took place in Osijek, Croatia, from 23 to 25 February 2017.

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In Search of the Title: A Student's View on the Making of *Osijek Sweet Osijek*

The process of adaptation implies hours upon hours of hard work and effort, a time infused with laughter, joy, teamwork, and learning as the main ingredients of a successful movie adaptation. After all the work had been done, the filmed scenes were carefully edited and observed as a newly created whole. In the end, all of us were able to recognize the good and bad sides of what we had done, express his/her own ideas, and contribute to the final result. Even though great adventures happened along the way, which provided us with numerous stories, I have decided to base my paper on that which was happening "behind the scenes" in the process of making the students' movie adaptation *Osijek Sweet Osijek* at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek.

From the beginning, our project was influenced by the director's view of adaptation, even though he fully articulated it after the process of adaptation was well under way. Namely, I asked professor Željko Uvanović, the supervisor and director of the movie *Osijek Sweet Osijek* what, in his opinion, an ideal process of making a movie adaptation looked like. In the e-mail of 21 February 2016, he replied: "An ideal film adaptation of a literary work cannot be a faithful translation of the content on the paper to the one in the film medium. The scriptwriter and the film director should achieve the same or even a higher level of creativity in the filmic language in comparison to the one the writer had while writing his or her book. An ideal film adaptation should be playful – it should represent a kind of toying with the faithful message of the literary work and adding of a new meaning in the current social and cultural context. An ideal film adaptation features strongly connotative music, as well as the visual and acting language. An ideal film adaptation includes appropriate cast, the best possible equipment, and optimum editing in the post-production process. An ideal film adaptation of a literary work must be better than the book!"

A Survey of Students and Their Participation in Extracurricular Activities

The process of making the movie *Osijek Sweet Osijek* was full of unexpected events that completely transformed our initial idea and it truly represented the ideal of creativity and playfulness that professor Uvanović highlighted as important. Yet, while I was thinking about the changes that took place, I kept asking myself as to what other students thought about these activities and why most of them could not participate.

Generally speaking, the conditions for making this film adaptation were not even close to the ideal, so I will elaborate on some of the issues that the students and the professor encountered during production. The first and most important issue was the lack of students' interest for extracurricular activities. Professor Leonard Pon, who was the Head of the Department of German Language and Literature at the Faculty of the Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek at the time, provided us with information on the exact number of students of German in Osijek. There were 120 undergraduate students of German language and literature encompassing three years of study and 41 graduate students in two years of study. 68% of graduate students were enrolled in the teaching programme and 32% of them attended the translation programme.

While it may seem as if it would not be a difficult task to motivate at least ten percent of these students to participate in the making of a film, it turned out that the task was really daunting. It interested me why the students of this Faculty did not want to be a part of our filming crew; therefore, I conducted a survey on 85 students in the period between December 19 and 23, 2016. Some of the main conclusions and most interesting answers are presented in this paper. The first question that came to my mind while trying to detect the problem was why students chose to study German language and literature in the first place. 62% of them said that they decided to study German because they knew it from before and wanted to become professionals in that field. Moreover, 80% of the second year students answered that the easiest exams are in the domain of literature and all third year students, that is 100% of them, agreed with this statement. Nevertheless, this did not motivate them to participate in the project of adapting literature. In fact, 43% of the first year female students said that they like to read magazines or books in German language in their free time, while 33% of male students perceive reading of any kind as entirely useless.

It was shocking to read the answers concerning the following question: What is your favourite activity connected to the German language? The expected result was that the majority of students like to watch German TV programs, but it was truly surprising to learn that 33% of German language and literature students think that German language is repulsive! When I asked for their opinion on participating in making the movie adaptation *Osijek Sweet Osijek*, 80% of our students told me that they would never participate in extracurricular activities within the Faculty because they have no free time. "Thank you, but no thank you" was the most common answer. Even when they agreed to participate, they requested additional credit in some of the courses or exams. The fact that students were not intrinsically motivated to do some additional work in German was defeating. But we proceeded nonetheless.

Issues Prior to the Filming of *Osijek Sweet Osijek*

The making of the movie *Osijek Sweet Osijek* was characterized by constant changes, and laughter. Since most of the students at the Department of German Language and Literature did not wish to participate in the filming, it took us a long time to finish. In the period from May to September 2016, Professor Uvanović attempted to organize meetings with students at which they were expected to exchange ideas and make plans for the movie, but every meeting was attended by different students, due to which it was impossible to establish a permanent crew. Humorously, Professor Uvanović reminded students that they might become famous and suggested that they might end up in Hollywood one day, but it did not help. What is worse, none of the students who came to the meetings ever read the literary template for the movie adaptation: namely, the novella *Kleider machen Leute* by Gottfried Keller. Since the professor could not find an adequate number of willing actors, the idea for the film had to be constantly adapted to new circumstances.

One such constant change referred to the changes of the title; one could say that Professor Uvanović was constantly searching for a new and improved title. The initial idea for the title was *Welcome to Germanistan*, wherein students needed to portray the Syrians coming to Germany. However, it was soon replaced with *Welcome to Multikulti* and the idea of people leaving Mexico in search of a better life. The following idea related to the title was *Wir sind auch Schweyzer*. In this version of the film, we were

expected to depict three families: a Serbian, a Croatian, and a Bosnian one, all of whom are going to Zürich because they lost their jobs in the Balkans. Yet, due to the lack of students willing to act, the idea for the screenplay was changed altogether. Consequently, the actors were to portray themselves, that is, ordinary students travelling from Osijek to Switzerland. However, the reason for their travel is not the lack of money or a job; they are leaving Osijek because "they have it good here" and they are of the opinion that maybe they will have it even better in Zürich. Alas, a lot of trouble is awaiting them out there, that is, bad jobs and poverty. This screenplay remained unchanged and only the title of the film was altered from *Es ging uns zu gut* to, finally, *Osijek Sweet Osijek*.

Behind the Scenes of Making the Movie *Osijek Sweet Osijek*

After the content of the movie finally became acceptable to everyone, it was necessary to start filming. But this was also accompanied by various challenges. To make the movie more authentic, it was decided that we should go to Zürich to film certain scenes there, as well as explore the hometown of Gottfried Keller. All other students gave up, therefore only Professor Uvanović as the director, cameraman, and supervisor, Lucija Krašnjak and I (as Laura and Ana, respectively, in the film) went on a trip to Zürich. The casting of Laura is particularly interesting in this movie adaptation due to one peculiar reason. Lucija Krašnjak, who portrays Laura, is not a student of German language and literature; she is not even a student of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. In fact, Lucija is a student at the Faculty of Agriculture. She joined us on the trip to Switzerland and was happy to become a member of the film crew. On the one hand, it is interesting that she had studied German language for only a short period in high school, yet it served her well in her role. On the other hand, this fact should be devastating to us and many students of German who refused to participate in the filmmaking.

The first scenes were filmed in Switzerland. Albeit a wonderful time filled with joy, understanding, and many interesting takes, one must admit that it was extremely exhausting. Because it was too expensive to travel to and stay in Switzerland, the film crew had to reduce the trip to only one overnight stay. More specifically, we travelled the entire afternoon and night by train from Zagreb to Zürich. We spent the first day of

our stay researching and visiting libraries, the theatre, and Gottfried Keller's birth house. The next day, the filming continued at 6 a.m. on the streets of the glamorous Zürich. The following afternoon was spent in additional research and the entire night in travelling back to Zagreb. The stay in Zürich was fruitful and resulted in many interesting scenes, such as those filmed in pyjamas in the middle of a busy street.

The filming continued in Osijek and Baranja. Since our film crew did not have access to any interior locations in Switzerland and since a longer stay would mean higher costs, the plot sequences that take place in Switzerland were actually filmed in Osijek. Namely, the extravagant salon featuring the Swiss ladies is actually the Osijek Croatian National Theatre and the tailor's shop in Zürich is in fact located in Darda, as well as the run-down house with an old stove.

So, in addition to teaching us all that adaptation is a demanding creative process which depends on the objective circumstances that the crew find themselves in, the experience of making an adaptation has also taught us that acting is not an easy job. It is difficult to portray various emotions and detach oneself from your own feelings at the moment. Sometimes, due to inexplicable reasons, one simply cannot portray sadness; instead, one ends up laughing uncontrollably. At other times, you have to change everything and adapt to the fact that, for instance, instead of performing in high heels you need to put on rubber boots, or even sing although you have no talent. This is especially pronounced in cases such as ours, where the entire crew consisted of three people who had to do everything by themselves.

Osijek Sweet Osijek **Is Not Just an Amateur Movie**

It seems like there is no end to discussing the technical issues and retelling of funny adventures that occurred during the filming process. Such an experience leaves a person with many memories and skills for life. Some of the skills that can be acquired during projects such as this are learning to deal with pressure and self-consciousness, which can be very helpful in life. Paradoxically, most students turned down the opportunity of participating in the project precisely because they were too self-conscious. They could not see the bigger picture and did not see this as an opportunity to grow, but merely as a potential source of embarrassment.

So, 90% of female students said they would never agree to being filmeddue to fear of public humiliation, while male students were not afraid of embarrassing themselves, but were frustrated by the prospect of having to learn their roles by heart. Female students were also afraid of looking ugly on the screen; they stated that the camera adds 6 to 8pounds. As a result, they believed that they would look thicker and because of that would feel uncomfortable the entire time. In contrast, male students were not afraid of their appearance and they said that all of them are unique in their own way. Still, they were not interested in putting in extra work. This speaks for the need to include more similar creative projects into our curriculum so that the students could not only learn new things, but also work on their insecurities.

In the end, it can be concluded that making a film adaptation implies hours upon hours of hard work and effort, but that it is a time infused with laughter, joy, teamwork, and learning. These skills, as well as all others that one acquires during extracurricular activities, cannot be forgotten. All students, but especially those within education or language study programmes need to find more free time to invest in their education because one day most of them will find themselves in classrooms full of children who expect new and interesting contents, not just a book, a lecture, and homework. Also, *Osijek Sweet Osijek* is not just an amateur movie; it represents the entire process of creating yourself and depicts the awakening of love for your hometown. Finally, in these times of massive emigrations from Osijek, it teaches one a valuable lesson that there is no place like home. Other countries and cities are not waiting for us open-handedly; they are confronted with their own issues, which may be larger and even more serious that those we come across in Osijek.

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A University Professor's Evolution of Practical and Theoretical Preoccupation with Film Adaptations of Literary Works in Research and Teaching

(An Epilogue)

1.

Had it not been for Maja Ivanović, an Osijek student of German Studies spending an exchange semester at the Department of German Studies of the University of Augsburg (attending the classes of Prof. Dr. Helmut Koopmann) in 2001, my interest in literature/film comparisons would have been sparked much later.[1] However, both the student's enthusiasm on the one hand and, on the other, the reticence of my superior, the now-retired Professor Vlado Obad, who did not seem prone to accepting supervision of this tricky type of Master's thesis, forced me to start dealing with this type of interdisciplinary, intermedial, and comparatist (concerning literature and other arts and media) issues. Following my appointment as an Assistant Professor in 2004, I introduced a new course in the pre-Bologna-reform program of German Studies called *Film Interpretations of Literature* and had two interesting candidates for Master's theses within it. Namely, Ms. Iva Drozdek defended her Master's thesis *Erica Fischers "Aimée & Jaguar" und Max Färberböcks "Aimée & Jaguar." Ein Vergleich* (Osijek, 2007) and Ms. Snježana Opačak's thesis was titled *Jean Bernards "Pfarrerblock 25487" und Volker Schlöndorffs "Der neunte Tag." Ein Vergleich* (Osijek, 2007). During the Bologna-reform transformation of study programmes, I retained the course by arguing that even in Germany, students of German literature write Master's theses on these topics (for example, at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Barbara

[1] The student in question defended her Master's thesis under the title *Die Figur des Oskar Matzerath in Günter Grass' Roman "Die Blechtrommel" und in gleichnamiger Verfilmung Volker Schlöndorffs* (Osijek, 2002).

Schauer defended her thesis titled *Günter Grass Prosawerk "Die Rättin" und die gleichnamige Verfilmung von Martin Buchhorn*[2] in 2000).

To this day, I have supervised approximately forty-five Master's theses dealing with film adaptations of German literary works out of more than one hundred Master's theses in German literature in general.[3] Regarding the topics, the students have chosen works related to the Holocaust (for instance, Anne *Frank's Diary*, Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*, Jurek Becker's *Jacob the Liar*, Salomon Perel's *Ich war Hitlerjunge Salomon*, Thomas Keneally's *Schindler's Arc*, B. Schlink's *The Reader*), to children's and young adult literature (fairy tales *Snow White* and *Hansen and Gretel*, Johanna Spyri's *Heidi*, Erich Kästner's *Lottie and Lisa / The Parent Trap*, Cornelia Funke's *Ink World*, Wolf Durian's *Bill of the Black Hand*, Michael Ende's *The Neverending Story*, Christiane F.'s *We Children from Bahnhof Zoo*, Tommy Jaud's *Full Idiot*, Benjamin Lebert's *Crazy*, Robert Musil's *The Confusions of Young Torless*) – and, of course, literary fiction. More canonical titles include Thomas Mann's *The Death in Venice*, Theodor Fontane's *Effi Briest*, Arthur Schnitzler's *La Ronde* and *Dream Story*, Bertolt Brecht's *Baal*, Heinrich Mann's *Small Town Tyrant / The Blue Angel*, Klaus Mann's *Mephistopheles*, Heinrich Böll's *The Clown*, Stefan Heym's *The Architects*, Elfriede Jelinek's *The Pianist*, Patrick Süskind's *The Perfume*, Max Frisch's *Homo Faber*, Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *The Visit of the Old Lady* and *The Pledge*, Heinrich Haller's *Seven Years in Tibet*, and Stephanie Zweig's *Nowhere in Africa*.

Moreover, in certain cases, the students compared one literary work with two of its adaptations (e.g. Dürrenmatt's novella *The Pledge*, the German adaptation *Es geschah am hellichten Tag*, and Sean Penn's *The Pledge*). In addition, there were two cases of a double comparison (comparing a work of German literature with a work of English literature as well as their film adaptations). The first case analyzed Thea von Harbou's *Metropolis* and its film adaptation of the same name in comparison with Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* and *The Blade Runner*. In the second case, the student analyzed Benjamin Lebert's *Crazy* and Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* in comparison with each other as well as with their film adaptations. In another case, a student explored the issue of novelization based on the comparison between Dennis Gansel's film *We Are the Night*, Jan Berger's script for the said film,

[2] The free-of-charge online version can be found at: https://www.grin.com/document/94745.
[3] Available at: https://sites.google.com/site/zeljkouvanovic/Home/mentorstva-ba--i-ma-radova.

and Wolfgang Hohlbein's literary template of the same name. Finally, I must mention the case where a student compared the historical accounts of Hitler's assassination attempt of 20 July 1944 with its accounts in English and German literary works, films, and documentaries. What an unexpected range of research creativity displayed by my students!

2.

At times, I have a feeling that my students have become too smart! I cannot help but be filled with academic satisfaction when they (albeit silently) protest against visiting professors from Germany who claim – during lectures on graphic novels as adaptations of literary works – that comparing literary works with their film adaptations is similar to comparing apples to pears, or a *Porsche* to *Škoda*! Indeed, there is no inherent comparability. One might compare two or more objects based on the *tertium comparationis* and the intuition that the comparison will bring about valuable insights: literary works and their adaptations such as theater performances, operas, musicals, video games, comic strips, music plays, sculptures, paintings, graphic novels, films and so on – and the other way around, toward the process of novelization.

What methods should be used in these comparisons? I would suggest only adequate methods, the "new" and "old," "progressive" and "regressive," "traditional" and "subversive," whichever the label, which suit the nature, structure, and contexts of the research object(s). It is widely known that film adaptations must be shorter than books in many cases and that the omitted textual elements prove economization tendencies of film as a medium in general. An added value of film adaptations are their contributions in the form of new interpretations, textual and dialogical variations, updated contexts, contemporary innuendos, innovative problem solving, music scores, special audio-visual effects, and excellent actresses and actors. Well, if the contrastive linguists and translatologists are satisfied with the level of justification for their contrastive analyses and comparisons, then the researchers in the area of intermedial adaptations must be even more convinced that the comparison between the source material and its (hopefully) creative transformations in other media is very meaningful – possibly as some kind of *Comparative Creativity Adaptation Studies*.

Of course, it will always be possible to label any video documentation of a literary work's theater adaptation a zero-case of film adaptation. However, here the focus is primarily on the creative changes of literary sources. It is a fact that "the best" students in literature classes excel at quizzes which test their memory in regard to what they have read, while others fail these quizzes for various reasons (among others, maybe because they dislike repetitions of identical stories or because it is in the nature of an innovative human being to change, enrich, and actualize the stories they are already familiar with?). Interestingly, it is the latter who could become successful in film adaptation projects because they do not instinctively copy/paste what they read, but they wish to show that variations and re-imaginings on the horizon of contemporariness are important contributions to approaching diverse, multifaceted truthful possibilities – as opposed to only one (dogmatic) truth to be repeated collectively. Similarly, high-quality scriptwriters seem to be able to creatively disregard the precise details in works by literary authors. Instead of being focused on factual fidelity to literature works, film adaptation crews tend to play with political and philosophical messages, settings, and main characters of literary works they transform or (partly) interpret into the medium of motion pictures.

3.

Undoubtedly, one might agree that books are similar to films (our imagination makes spontaneous moving pictures while we read) and films are, as it were, similar to books (audio-visual, graphic, verbal, costume-design, theatrical, musical, choreographical, camera-eyed, and montage-finalized texts). A film director possibly has the same problems as experienced by the editor of collection of papers – both are mosaic-building, multi-leveled team operations. Furthermore, what if a university professor undertook a task to shoot a feature film with his students as a creative film interpretation of a literary work? Could this be recognized as having the value of a research monograph or a collection of original papers? Could I, therefore, claim that my films, *Professor Romulus geht in die Rente* (*Professor Romulus Gets Retired*, 2015)[4]

[4] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkWwTtcCxrI – *Professor Romulus geht in die Rente* (*Professor Romulus Gets Retired*, 2015, 41 min.) – I worked as a producer, film director, and cameraman, I provided the main idea for the film adaptation of Fr. Dürrenmatt's drama *Romulus the Great*, I conducted the screenplay preparations, I authored most of the screenplay, I controlled all postproduction segments, choice of film music, and the publication on YouTube channel ssstaycoool on 8 October 2015.

and *Osijek Sweet Osijek* (2017),[5] represent legitimate promotion points for my university career? And if not, why?

On another note, I was a guest editor in the Matrix Croatica (*Matica hrvatska – ogranak Osijek*) journal *Književna revija* (vol. 2008, no. 1) with the thematic title *Filmske adaptacije engleske i njemačke književnosti* (*Film Adaptations of English and German Literature*), whereby I organized a team of translators who rendered into Croatian a selection of already published papers (in English and German) by Simone Winko, Paul Wells, Imelda Whelehan, Deborah Cartmell, Peter Schott, Thomas Bleicher, Markus F. Müller, Ralf J. Schröder, Julian North, Jacquelyn Kilpatrick, Roger Lüdeke, Benno Wagner, Michael Braun, Sven Hanuschek, Vivian C. Sobchack, Edward A. Kearns, Paul W. Rea, Hans-Edwin Friedrich, Thomas J. Slater, and Volker Behrens. In the same year, Matrix Croatica published my (co-authorial) book *Književnost i film. Teorija filmske ekranizacije književnosti s primjerima iz hrvatske i svjetske književnosti* (*Literature and Film. Theory of Film Adaptation of Literature with Examples from Croatian and World Literature*, 2008). My three chapters included *Intermediality: Literature and Film. Adaptation Studies in the context of Cultural Studies*, *Postmodernist Poetics in Literature and Film*, and *Time and Space in Film Adaptations of Croatian Dramas.* One co-authorial chapter (with Ms. Snježana Opačak, whose Master's thesis I supervised) titled *The Roman-Catholic Church during the Second World War – a Victim and/or a Helpless Observer (or Something Else)? Films* The Ninth Day (2004) *and* Amen, (2002) *and Their Source Text.* The fifth chapter is my translation of Robert Stam's seminal text "Introduction: The Theory and Practice of Adaptation" (2005). The final chapter of the book is my translation of Phyllis Zatlin's "From Stage to Screen: Strategies for Film Adaptation" (2005).

In German, there is a difference between the pension for clerks / civil servants ("Pension") and pension for other types of workers ("Rente"). In Germany, university professors are clerks ("Beamten") and they get a "Pension." The title of my adaptation suggests an unfavourable status changes that could take place in Germany in the year 2075.

[5] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dl23IQ0QHC8&t=95s – *Osijek Sweet Osijek* (2017, 44 min.) – I worked as producer, director, and cameraman; I provided the main idea for the adaptation of Gottfried Keller's novella; I authored the screenplay in collaboration with the student Amra Hodžić; I provided the idea and co-authored (with student Vanessa Ivanković) the song *We Want to Travel to Switzerland;* I lent the voice to Gottfried Keller at the Central Library of Zurich; I controlled all segments of post-production; I recorded the music and students' singing used in the film; I chose the additional film music; I published the film on YouTube channel *ssstaycoool* on 4 March 2017. The production was part of the research project UNIOS INGI 2015-11. There is also a shorter, subversive version of *Osijek Sweet Osijek* called *Nothing Compares to Zurich*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLrcO03KTJ8.

4.

My further publications dealt with topics such as the following: Patrick Süskind's perfumer Quasimodo becoming a lovable character in Tom Tykwer's *The Parfume* (1985), Grass's apocalyptic female rat character in both the novel *The Rat* and its film adaptation, E. T. A. Hoffmann's *The Sandman*, Ira Levin's *The Stepford Wives* and their film adaptations, Golda Meir's speeches, dialogues, and interviews in comparison with their counterparts in Ingrid Bergman's re-enactment in the film *A Woman Called Golda* (1982), an intermedial poetological comparison between pop-postmodernism in German literature and Pedro Almodóvar's films, religion and criticism of religion in Sally Perel's autobiography *Ich war Hitlerjunge Salomon* (1990) and Agnieszka Holland's film *Europa Europa* (1990) and, finally, Wladimir Kaminer's *Russian Disco* perceived through the prism of Oliver Ziegenbalg's adaptation.

Another three publications dealt with film adaptation issues in the Croatian literature: socialist collectivism in two film dramas by Krsto Papić (*Playing Hamlet in the Village Mrduša Donja* and *Living with My Uncle*) compared to their literary hypotexts by Ivo Brešan and Ivan Aralica, as well as the dramatic challenges of choosing between the left or the right wing in the Croatian Home Guard (*domobrani*) army section during World War II and in the post-war period in the films *U gori raste zelen bor* (1971) and *Četverored* (1999), and, finally, Miroslav Krleža as the adaptor of the novel *The Cricket under a Waterfall* (and of *The Finale*) and Mario Fanelli as the director of the film *The Way to Paradise* (1970).

5.

Unfortunately, I also have several unpublished conference talks on the issue of adaptation studies, for which I usually blame my administrative tasks, obligations as visiting professor abroad, family duties and, consequently, lack of time. Hence, let me list these conferences and the corresponding talks. First, I would like to mention the tenth annual conference of the Association of the Adaptation Studies, held at the University of London (Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Study), in the Senate House on 24 and 25 September 2015. The title of the conference talk was "The

Reflection of Zagreb's Exterior and Interior as Well as of Centre and Periphery of the Urban Life as Seen in Selected Adaptations of Croatian Literature."

Second, at the international conference within the research project at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz under the title *Medienkonvergenz*,[6] held from 3 to 5 December 2015, under the title *Adaptation and Perception: Media Convergence* I delivered a conference talk titled "On Some Divergences and Convergences of Bodies and Media in Philip Kaufman's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (1988) and David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* (1983) and *eXistenZ* (1999)." This conference talk was recorded with my camera and published on YouTube[7] (so that the reader can get the impression of the atmosphere from this quite interesting conference).

Third, I also delivered a talk (on 23 February 2017) at the First international conference of the English Department of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek on Adaptation Studies under the title *Adaptation: Theory, Criticism, Pedagogy* held from 23 to 25 February 2017 with the title "Changing Values of Johanna Spyri's *Heidi* (1880/1881) and Its Film Adaptations (1937-2015) within the American, British, and German-Speaking Cultures."

Fourth, I must admit that I still have not prepared the paper based on my presentation for the Association of Adaptation Studies' twelfth Annual Conference *Returns*, held at De Montfort University, Leicester on 18 and 19 September 2017 with my conference talk held on 19 September 2017 under the title "Alexander Sokurov's *Faust* (2011) as Free Interpretation of the Faust Legend, Goethe's Drama and Thomas Mann's Novel." However, I again have a YouTube proof of my 15-minute presentation.[8]

6.

As is well-known, one of the aims of international research conferences might be – in addition to experimenting with one's own ideas, new methods, new analyses of old and new research objects in new comparative and intermedial contexts, and experimenting with new syntheses (or already published papers) in front of the public of fellow researchers – making new contacts and expanding the existing networks (and the

[6] Available at: https://www.medienkonvergenz.uni-mainz.de.
[7] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5K8DmsdCUE.
[8] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXdnZExDRlk.

list of Facebook friends!). Had it not been for the aforementioned 2015 Mainz conference and my attendance there, the project UNIOS INGI 2015-11 would not have taken place. Thanks to meeting the most kind and most charming Professor Kamilla Elliott of the Lancaster University (UK) and her continuous interest in my work (well, she mistakenly thought I was from the Czech Republic due to my lecture on Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*), I had a special pleasure and honor of inviting Professor Elliott as the Invited Researcher in my project, which was then jointly formulated and titled as *Transculturality / Transmediality: British / American, German and Croatian Film Adaptations of Literature 1990–2015* (UNIOS INGI 2015-11) and financed by the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek in the period between March 2016 and March 2017.[9] The present collection of papers should be considered the (almost) final dissemination portal for a number of papers presented at the 2017 Osijek Adaptation Conference; nine papers have already been published in the thematic section of the journal *Anafora: Journal of Literary Studies*,[10] guest-edited by Dr. Ljubica Matek.

7.

The Osijek conference on Adaptations[11] was not originally planned as an activity within the UNIOS INGI 2015-11 project. However, the project team was eager to formulate a CFP and assign the Department of English of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek as the organizer, with the Project and the Association of Adaptation Studies as the main professional promoters. Although the project team was more pessimistic than optimistic concerning the prospect of adaptation researchers coming to Osijek in February 2017, the response from both international and national researchers and students (BA, MA, and PhD students) was amazing. The Osijek Subdepartment of English Literature Studies, headed by my co-chair Dr. Ljubica Matek

[9] Available at: https://issuu.com/z.uvanovic/docs/univ_osijek_ingi_projekt_2015_uvano, https://www.unios.hr/provedba-i-rezultati-internog-natjecaja-sveucilista-josipa-jurja-strossmayera-u-osijeku-za-prijavu-znanstvenoistrazivackih-i-umjetnickih-projekata-na-program-gost-istrazivac-ingi-2015,
and http://www.glas-slavonije.hr/314542/25/Projekt-Britanskeamericke-njemacke-i-hrvatske-filmske-adaptacije-knjizevnosti.

[10] http://www.ffos.unios.hr/anafora/vol-4-no-2-2017.

[11] https://sokrat.ffos.hr/adaptation, https://sokrat.ffos.hr/adaptation/dat/s_53/File/BOJA%20ADAPTATION%202017%20Conference%20ProgrammeI.pdf, and https://issuu.com/z.uvanovic/docs/osijek_adaptation_2017_conference_p.

at the time, did the most excellent job during the entire conference procedure. I have never attended a better organized international conference – and even a precise certificate of attendance for all participants was issued!

8.

The abovementioned conference was the first international conference on adaptations in Osijek and in Croatia. Due to the Erasmus bilateral agreement between the Lancaster University and the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, we can most assuredly expect a continuation of collaboration with Professor Kamilla Elliott as well as additional conferences on various topics from the field of Adaptation Studies. In the end, I must congratulate my colleague Dr. Ljubica Matek on her immense intelligence, charm, and truly hard work on the project, on the 2017 Osijek Adaptation conference, on the editing of thematic block in the *Anafora* journal, and on the tremendous co-editing work on this collection of papers. I somehow feel that my mission of fighting for this comparative research approach has been fully justified and fertile. I hope that new colleagues and students will pursue this matter and reach new insights and results, and I can assure you that I will continue with this type of interest – and possibly try to make contacts with the world of film industry and professional scriptwriting. Why not, for example, join the James Bond productions, perhaps as the secret advisor for all adaptation issues…?

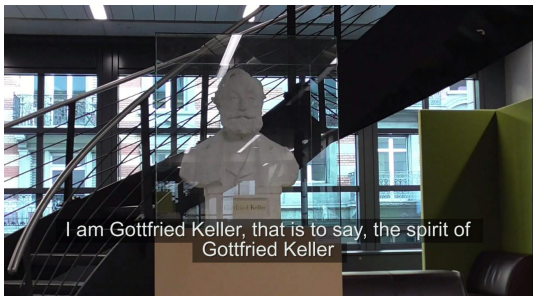
9.

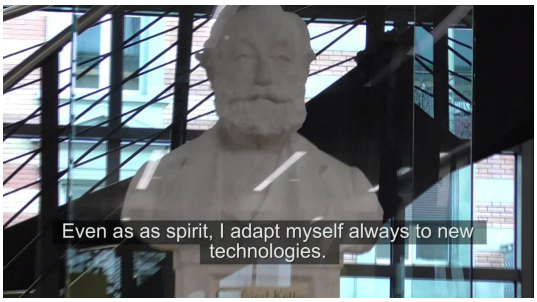
I would like to conclude this epilogue with my reflections on the differences between the adaptation *Osijek Sweet Osijek* (2017) and *Nothing Compares to Zurich*! (2017). After many peripeteia with casting, I managed eventually to shoot enough scenes for two diverging adaptation versions which used the same core scenes shot in Osijek and differed in the tone of voice-over of the spirit of Gottfried Keller in the Central Library Zurich as well in the function of the main film song *We want to go to Switzerland* ("Wir wollen in die Schweiz verreisen"). In *Osijek Sweet Osijek*, Zurich and the whole Switzerland transform to a trap of exploitation, disappointment and humiliation, so that the two Osijek students of German return to their beloved home town and the Slavonian folk songs accompany sepia-toned scenes of the beauty of

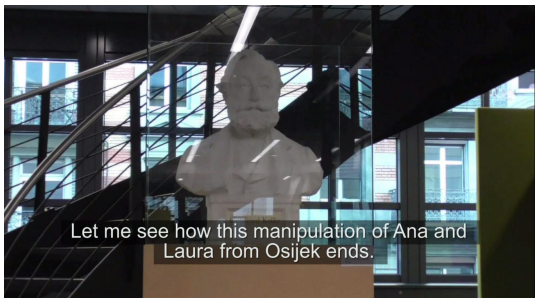
Baranja and the city of Osijek. In *Nothing Compares to Zurich!* I changed the tone of my voice for the spirit of Gottfried Keller who manipulates various people to immigrate to Switzerland. The song "We want to go to Switzerland" remains here the guiding line up to the end of the story about brain drain and human capital profits for Switzerland. Even the famous face of the main character of the film *Professor Romulus geht in die Rente* (2015) lives in Zurich: Antonio Matić pretends to be a Bosnian Osijek student singing German opera scores and Bosnian folk songs in the streets of Zurich! And the swans from the Zurich Lake contribute to the positive tone of this adaptation version. Practically, this film adaptation is an experiment, a manipulation of the film director, without a previous notice, kind of a subconscious surprise emerging all of a sudden, a post postproduction montage game version 2.0. I beg your pardon for that double game! Sorry! Hmmm, what to do? I show you finally several screenshot from both adaptations and say humbly: "That's all folks!"

Osijek Sweet Osijek

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dl23IQ0QHC8




Even as as spirit, I adapt myself always to new technologies.


Let me see how this manipulation of Ana and Laura from Osijek ends.

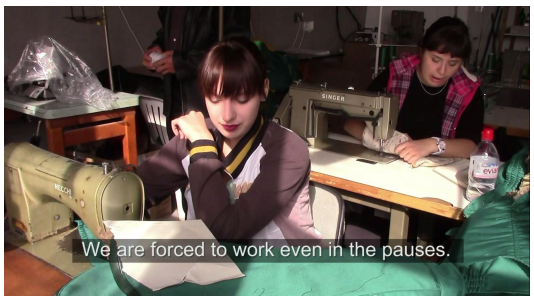

And now let us change the scene: from Zurich to Osijek!

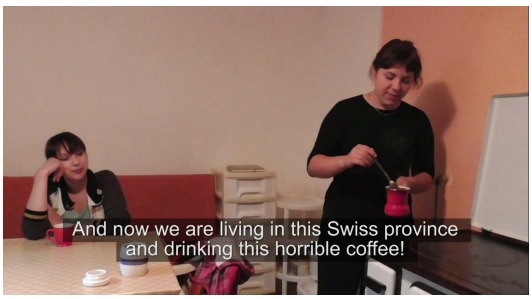

Would you like to travel with me to Switzerland?


Buchs SG
We want to go to Switzerland.


and promenade on the Golden Coast of Zurich.


O evilness, evelness, your name is Emilia Mueller!

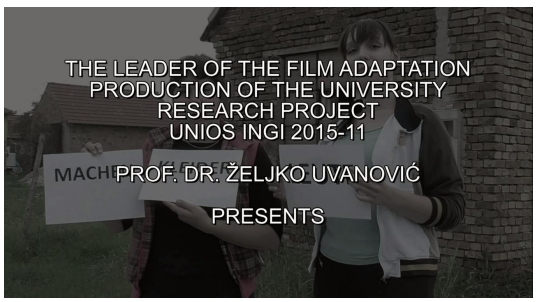

We are forced to work even in the pauses.

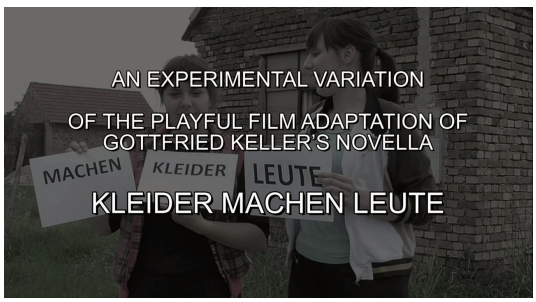

And now we are living in this Swiss province and drinking this horrible coffee!

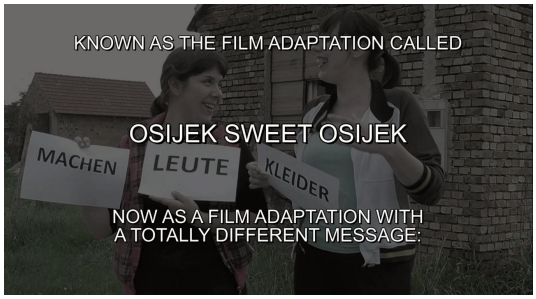

To be beggars?
- Yeah, two beggars from Osijek in Switzerland..

Nothing Compares to Zurich!

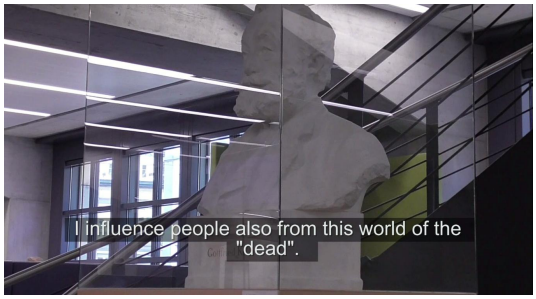
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLrcO03KTJ8

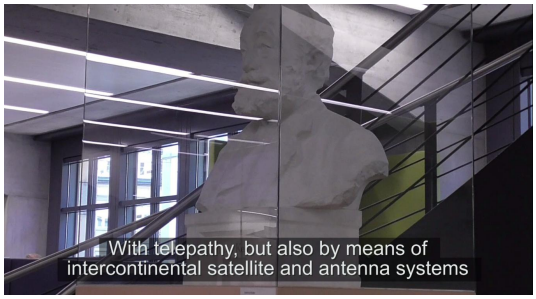





KNOWN AS THE FILM ADAPTATION CALLED
OSIJEK SWEET OSIJEK
MACHEN
LEUTE
KLEIDER
NOW AS A FILM ADAPTATION WITH
A TOTALLY DIFFERENT MESSAGE:


NOTHING
COMPARES TO
ZURICH!

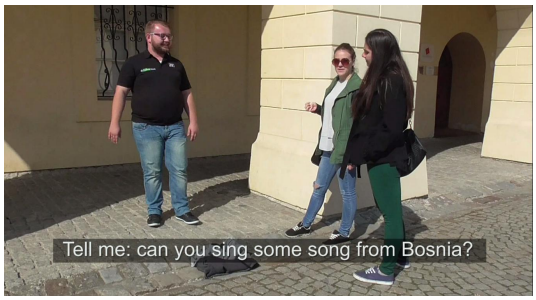

I influence people also from this world of the "dead".


With telepathy, but also by means of intercontinental satellite and antenna systems


We want to go to Switzerland!

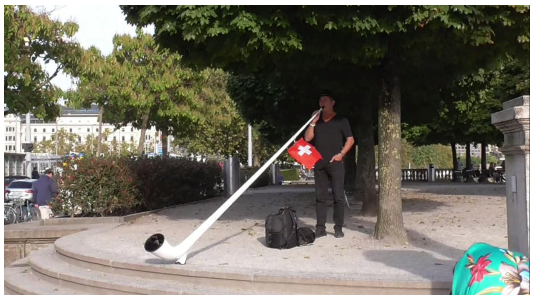

Excellent! The girls are behaving well!

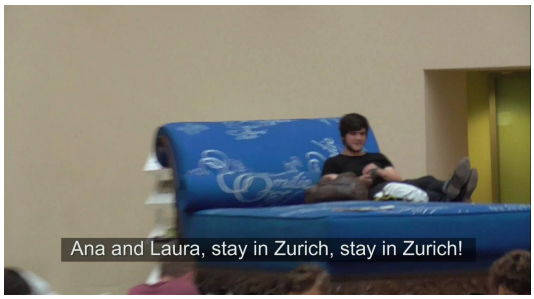

Like in a hypnosis,
they come to my birth house.

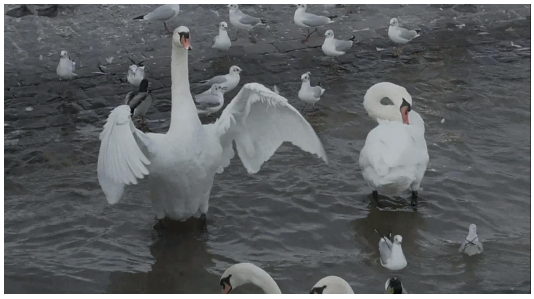

Tell me: can you sing some song from Bosnia?

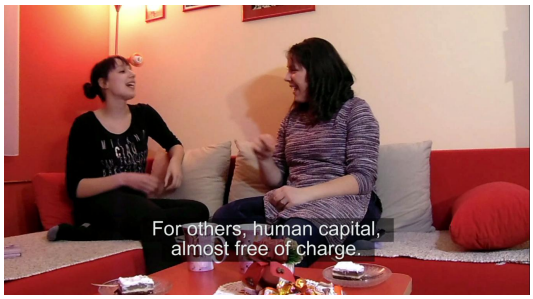

I should now sing something in German.


You stinking immigrant!









☺

https://sites.google.com/site/zeljkouvanovic

http://bib.irb.hr/lista-radova?autor=211164&lang=EN

PHOTO AND YOUTUBE VIDEO DOCUMENTATION OF SOME PARTS OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE OSIJEK ADAPTATION CONFERENCE AND OF ITS ECHO

https://sokrat.ffos.hr/adaptation

Official Opening of the Osijek Conference ADAPTATION THEORY CRITICISM PEDAGOGY 23-25 Feb 2017 (Vice-Dean Prof. Dr. Tanja Gradečak Erdeljić and Assist. Prof. Dr. Ljubica Matek):

https://youtu.be/Wc8N62iD0CY

- **Keynote Speakers**
- **Dr. Kamilla Elliott (2 keynote lectures)**

Talk about Theory of Adaptation (here 16 min beginning):
https://youtu.be/6jJyVwQ6Dl4

Talk about Pedagogy of Adaptation (here 15 min beginning):
https://youtu.be/m7cPstZ6jb0

- **Dr. Laurence Raw (1 keynote lecture)**

Pre-recorded conference talk:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6Kl9ytdrD8

ESSION 3a, oom 66, 2nd floor	SESSION 3b, Room 46, 1st floor
	Chair: Biljana Oklopčić Željko Uvanović // Changing Values of Johanna Spyri's *Heidi* (1880/1881) and Its Film Adaptations (1937-2015) within the American, British, and German-Speaking Cultures

Željko Uvanović, co-chair of the conference and leader of the project UNIOS INGI 2015-11

Ljubica Matek, co-chair of the conference and part of the research project team

Friday, 24 February 2017

–18:00	FILM PROJECT PRESENTATION	Auditorium, Room 60, 2nd floor
	• Željko Uvanović // *Osijek Sweet Osijek* (in German with English subtitles) Short program before the premiere of the film adaptation *OSIJEK SWEET OSIJEK* on Friday 24 Feb at 17.00: https://youtu.be/99eqtlcNzVs FILM *OSIJEK SWEET OSIJEK*: https://youtu.be/Dl23IQ0QHC8	

Saturday, 25 February 2017

-10:00	KEYNOTE LECTURE	Auditorium, Room 60, 2nd floor
	Chair: Željko Uvanović Kamilla Elliott, University of Lancaster // The Adaptation as Critic: Creative Critical Modes of Assessment in Adaptation Pedagogy: https://youtu.be/m7cPstZ6jb0	
-10:15	Break	
-11:25	Student projects and presentations	Auditorium, Room 60, 2nd floor
	Chair: Željko Uvanović • Amela Ćurković and Students // *Herr der Staubfilter – Lord of the Filters*, film project https://youtu.be/evI-w52RqUA	

	• Amra Hodžić // Prof. Uvanović's Difficulties in Making Adaptations and Adventurous Adaptations to Circumstances: https://youtu.be/4UFZoz1VIOI • Miroslav Dikanović // Setting the Tune in *Osijek Sweet Osijek* and *Professor Romulus Geht in die Rente*: The Making of: https://youtu.be/oVayiV0shDY	
11:25–11:50	Closing discussion and farewell address	Auditorium, Room 60, 2nd floor

Conference Discussion after the 3 students' talks Saturday 25 Feb 2017:

https://youtu.be/flGMDj94jpE

Kamilla Elliott's final words and conference closing on Saturday 25 Feb 2017:

https://youtu.be/0cNjdyEJHFE

Professor Kamilla Elliott (Lancaster University, UK) as guest researcher in the project UNIOS INGI 2015-11 – here with the project leader

STUDENT FILM PROJECTS

Professor Romulus geht in die Rente (Osijek):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkWwTtcCxrI

Pech mit dem dritten Ei (Mostar)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUL2sGBn_Cg

Herr der Staubfilter – Lord of the Filters (Zenica):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnPAPI2ljDQ

Osijek Sweet Osijek (Osijek):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dl23IQ0QHC8

Nothing Compares to Zurich! (Osijek):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLrcO03KTJ8

Media response:

GLAS SLAVONIJE:

MEĐUNARODNA KONFERENCIJA NA FILOZOFSKOM FAKULTETU

O adaptacijama književnih djela

Filozofski fakultet domaćin je prve međunarodne konferencije u Hrvatskoj o adaptacijama književnih djela, koja će se održavati na tom fakultetu od od 23. do 25. veljače. Riječ je o znanstvenom skupu pod nazivomAdaptation: Theory, Criticism, Pedagogy, koji organizira Odsjek za engleski jezik i književnost. Suorganizatori konferencije, doc. dr. sc. Ljubica Matek i prof. dr. sc. Željko Uvanović, ističu kako je riječ o prvoj međunarodnoj konferenciji u hrvatskoj posvećenoj isključivo adaptacijama književnih tekstova i njihovim prenošenjem u druge medije.

Na skupu će svoje znanstvene i istraživačke radove izložiti više od 50 domaćih i međunarodnih znanstvenika, nezavisnih istraživača te doktoranada. Među njima su prof. Kamilla Elliott, sa Sveučilišta Lancaster u Ujedinjenom Kraljevstvu, te prof. Laurence Raw, sa Sveučilišta Baskent u Turskoj, istaknuti znanstvenici u području adaptacija. Uz predavanja i izlaganja, sudionike i posjetitelje očekuju brojne druge aktivnosti, a jedna od njih je promocija filma Osijek Sweet Osijek.

Na konferenciji će biti prikazan film Osijek Sweet Osijek, rad skupine studenata Filozofskog fakulteta

- Riječ je o filmskoj adaptaciji jedne njemačke novele, a rad je djelo skupine studenata Filozofskog fakulteta. Donosimo aktualizirani scenarij o odlascima iz Hrvatske, pozivajući mlade da se vrate i ostanu u Osijeku - kaže studentica Amra Hodžić te poziva sugrađane na promociju 24. veljače (petak) u 17 sati u svečanu dvoranu Filozofskoga fakulteta. **V. Latinović** ■

ukratko

Svečana misa za Stepinčevo

● U povodu današnje dana bl. Alojzija Stepi večeras (10. veljače) sati bit će služena sve sveta misa u donjogr župnoj crkvi Preslav na Marijina. Svečanu tu misu tom prigodo voditi pater Ivica Jag župnik, gvardijan i vukovarski. **N.Z.E.**

OSIJEK SWEET OSIJEK

Profesor Uvanović i studenti snimili kratki igrani film

Studenti i profesori germanistike, kao i njihovi gosti, među kojima su bili i osječki gimnazijalci te sudionici Međunarodne konferencije "Adaptacija: teorija, kritika, pedagogija" u petak su u velikoj dvorani Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta Josipa Jurja Strossmayera nazočili nesvakidašnjem događaju - premijeri igranog filma "Osijek Sweet Osijek" koji je snimila skupina osječkih studenata predvođena prof. dr. sc. Željkom Uvanovićem.

Kako nam je objasnio profesor Uvanović s Odsjeka za njemački jezik i književnost osječkog Filozofskog fakulteta, riječ je o miniprojektu unutar znanstvenog projekta "Transkulturalnost/ transmedijalnost: britanske/američke, njemačke i hrvatske filmske adaptacije književnosti u razdoblju 1990. - 2015." u kojem su sudjelovali i studenti. Glavne uloge u ovom kratkom igranom filmu od 45 minuta tumače studentice Lucija Krašnjak i Amra Hodžić, a redatelj, scenarist i producent ovog filmskog uratka je prof. Uvanović u suradnji sa studenticom Amrom Hodžić. Leo Staković tumači ulogu profesora njemačke književnosti Horvata, a Ivan Oroz pojavljuje se kao voditelj jedne krojačnice u švicarskoj provinciji.

Riječ je o filmskoj adaptaciji djela švicarskog književnika Gottfrieda Kellera "Kleider machen Leute" (Odijelo ne čini čovjeka) koji govori o tome kako studentice Ana i Laura odlaze iz Osijeka u Švicarsku, no umjesto kao poljski krojač iz Kellerova predloška završe i ostanu u Zürichu, one se u ovoj bajkovitoj priči vraćaju u Osijek, nakon niza poteškoća, siromaštva i gladi u tuđem svijetu. Studenti glume na njemačkom jeziku, a podnaslovi su na engleskome.

Film je snimljen novcem osječkog Sveučilišta i Osječko-baranjske županije, a njegovoj je projekciji nazočio i dožupan Dragan Vulin. **D. Celing** ■

DAVOR KIBEL

http://www.glas-slavonije.hr/326242/3/Profesor-Uvanovic--i-studenti-snimili-kratki-igrani-film

OSJEČKA TELEVIZIJA

Broadcast **TV KOKTEL**:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkXwlZBUnuM

Research publication response in the Osijek

journal of literary studies *Anafora*:

a thematic section dedicated to Adaptation Studies

Anafora : Časopis za znanost o književnosti, Vol.4 No.2

Datum izdavanja: **Prosinac 2017.**

Objavljen na Hrčku: 24.01.2018.

BISHERIGE AUSGABE(N) IN DER REIHE

Contributions to Literature-on-Screen Studies and other Adaptation Studies / Beiträge zur Erforschung der Literaturverfilmungen und anderer Adaptionsfälle

beim Shaker Verlag Aachen

https://www.shaker.de/de/content/catalogue/index.asp?lang=de&ID=8&ISBN=978-3-8440-4126-2&search=yes

Volume 1 / Band 1