FROM UNFAITHFUL ADAPTATION TO TRANSMEDIA EXPANSION: NOTES FOR A DEBATE ABOUT CINEMATOGRAPHIC (PER)VERSIONS

FRAN MATEU

INTRODUCTION: ADAPTATION AS A STARTING POINT

Although film adaptation is a medium *for* memory, it is also a medium *of* memory because it is the memory of a previous work (Richard, 2021: 162). Through this process, by means of successive transformations to its structure, narrative content and representation in images, a story becomes another, similar story expressed in the form of a filmic text (Sánchez Noriega, 2000: 47). Art, however, has always been reproduced or imitated, and the practice has been a technical activity since the production of the first woodcuts (Benjamin, 2003: 39). Such reproduction or imitation includes the process of film adaptation, a field explored by McFarlane (1996: 22) with the aim of identifying what can be transferred to the screen and what key factors, apart from the original work, influence the adaptation.

The process of adaptation is conceived of as an intersemiotic translation, where an interpretation takes place between signs of different semiotic systems. Based on this premise, Jakobson (1959: 233) proposes three possible types of translation. The first is intralingual translation, referring to the interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. Interlingual translation is "translation proper", i.e., an interpretation of verbal signs using the signs of another language. Finally, intersemiotic translation involves the transmutation or interpretation of verbal signs using the signs of a non-verbal system. Consequently, the process of film adaptation would be placed in this third category.

Adaptation and translation, however, raise questions of fidelity (Frago Pérez, 2005: 66-69). Similarly, interpretation, as a mechanism inherent in any translation process, may be defined various ways due to the potential ambiguity of Jakobson's classification. Eco (2016) stresses this idea, arguing

that Jakobson does not consider the transmutations between systems that are not verbal. And this classification poses another ambiguity: if all three types of translation are interpretations, they are three types of interpretation, and therefore, translation is a species within the genre of interpretation (Eco, 2016: 805).

Zavala (2009: 49) adds the category of intrasemiotic translation, which involves the adoption of the strategies of intertextuality (quotation, allusion, parody, etc.) in relation to texts (literary, visual, etc.) that refer to other texts. Genette (1989: 10) includes this category in the first group of his transtextual relationships. Moreover, Genette (1989: 14) defines hypertextuality as the relationship that links a text B (hypertext) to a previous text A (hypotext). This type of transformation may be simple or indirect (based on imitation or association), which Genette exemplifies with *Ulysses* and *The Aeneid*, two hypertexts of the hypotext *The Odyssey*. In the case of *Ulysses*, the transformation is direct, transposing the action of Homer's work to the city of Dublin in Joyce's time. However, *The Aeneid* involves a more indirect transformation, since the story is different but formally and thematically inspired by *The Odyssey*, imitating it and producing a mimesis where the imitated text and the imitating text establish a more complex transformation than that of a direct transposition (Genette, 1989: 15-17).

The above example is a transformation within the same medium (literary, of an *intramedial* quality), but hypertextuality can also apply to a process of adaptation between media, involving a case of *intermediality*, which Bolter and Grusin (1999: 21) define as *remediation*. This process operates within the cultural parameters of immediacy, hypermediacy, hypertextuality and digital technology. Adaptation can therefore be divided between intramedial and intermedial operations, since not all adaptation is necessarily a remediation (Hutcheon, 2006: 170).

IT IS COMMON TO HEAR EXPRESSIONS SUCH AS "THE BOOK IS BETTER THAN THE FILM" IN DISCUSSIONS OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEDIA, TIMEFRAMES AND NARRATIVE MECHANISMS

TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING AS AN EXPANSION PROCESS

When Peter Bogdanovich (1997: 100-101) asked John Ford whether he found it difficult to get good scripts, he replied that there was no such thing as a good script, since they usually overused dialogue and he tried to express himself visually. He also added that he preferred to take a story and *expand* it, rather than condense a novel. Ford's answer highlights the complexity of adapting one language to another, as well as the preeminence of visual expression and the modification of temporal relationships in the cinematic medium (Bordwell, 1985: 82). Indeed, it is common to hear expressions such as "the book is better than the film" in discussions of differences between media, timeframes and narrative mechanisms.

As a precursor to the study of this distinction, Bluestone (1957: 61-62) points out that there is no need to compare a literary work to a film since the literary material should only serve as inspiration for the construction of something new. Along the same lines, Stam (2005) notes that film adaptations are subject to accusatory assessments related to their fidelity to the original work (lacking creativity) and their free recreation of the source material (betraying it). This phenomenon occurs because readers create a plethora of images in their minds to support the ideas in the book and to give them life, leading them to affirm that reading the novel has given them a more enriching experience than the film (Moya Santoyo & Mantecón Martín, 2007: 158), which in turn gives rise to the creation of a hierarchy of prestige that unfair-

ly places one medium above the other (Sánchez Noriega, 2000: 48).

In many cases, however, a film adaptation may be on a par with the original work and even surpass it (Cascajosa Virino, 2006: 15). Moreover, the differences between literature and cinema are so numerous that Luhr (1977: 174) argues that they render an ontological comparison impossible; McFarlane (1983: 11) goes so far as to suggest that we should be surprised by the fact that films based on novels even exist. Returning to John Ford, it is worth highlighting his preference for *expanding* a story instead of condensing it so that all the elements he considers necessary from the original work find a place in the film, in addition to all those *infidelities* that the *new author* deems appropriate for his film version to work ontologically. This idea of expansion is also close to the ecosystem of transmedia narratives.

Kinder (1991: 40) first used the term *transmedia* to describe the multiplatform and multimodal expansion of media content. Jenkins (2006: 95-96) defined transmedia storytelling as a process where the elements that make up a narrative expand horizontally and systematically across multiple media (digital and traditional), providing users with a unique entertainment experience where each platform ideally contributes to the development of the story by making best use of its intrinsic characteristics (doing what it does best). In addition, users participate in this expansion by consuming and creating content (UGC or user generated content) as prosumers (Jenkins, 2006: 166).

Pratten (2011: 1-2) echoes Jenkins's view that transmedia storytelling consists of telling a story via multiple media and, preferably, with a degree of audience participation, and that the enjoyment of all the media involved must be greater than the sum of their parts. Each medium therefore interacts with the rest while at the same time being capable of standing on its own, allowing users the option of deciding how far into the experience they want to go (Weaver, 2013: 8). Thus, while adaptation theory forms part of a general theory of repetition (Naremore, 2000: 15), transmedia narratives do not tell the same story across different media and platforms but allow the horizontal expansion of the macro-narrative design of an initial work, which Jenkins (2009a) calls the "mother ship".

This expansion may be strategic, resulting from careful planning, or tactical, which is dictated by the favourable conditions of the media ecosystem reacting to environmental inputs (Scolari, 2014: 74). Examples include the expansion of franchises such as *The Matrix* (Wachowski Sisters, 1999) (strategic) and *Resident Evil* (Capcom, 1996) (tactical): in both cases, the story is disseminated via different media and platforms, and a more

Image 1. Transmedia expansion of *Resident Evil* franchise. © Capcom & Costantin Films

enriching narrative experience can be achieved by consuming all of them (video games, movies, short films, comics, etc.). Similarly, a transmedia expansion, whether strategic or tactical, can be initiated on any medium: *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (Peter Jackson, 2001) expanded from literature, *Star Wars* (George Lucas, 1977) from film, *Lost* (J. J. Abrams, Jeffrey Lieber, Damon Lindelof, ABC: 2004-2010) from television, *Batman* (Leslie H. Martinson, 1966) from comic books, *Pokemon Red Edition and Blue Edition* (Game Freak, 1999) from video games, *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (Gary Goddard, 1987) from toys, *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* (Gore Verbinski, 2003) from a theme park, etc. However, strategic expansion, which has been reinforced since the beginning of the global pandemic in 2020, is becoming increasingly common, with content that from the outset is designed, produced and distributed via different media and platforms (Arana Arrieta, 2021).

ADAPTATIONS VS. TRANSMEDIA NARRATIVES

What is the place of adaptations in the context of transmedia narratives, in the sense of expanding the story along with user participation? Jenkins (2011) points out that adaptations, however faithful they may be, always result in changes to character profiles, with new scenarios or situations. New modes of storytelling would therefore require a redefinition of the concept of *adaptation* in cultural studies (Jenkins, 2006: 296). Similarly, although for Jenkins (2011) adaptations form part of transmediality, he also suggests a distinction between *adaptation* and *extension*. While adaptation tells the same story in a different medium, extension adds some new element to the adaptation, but the two processes are inseparable.

BEFORE THE CONSOLIDATION OF TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING, IT WAS COMMON TO VIEW EXPANSION AS A NATURAL PART OF ADAPTATION ITSELF

It is important to differentiate a simple adaptation that contributes nothing new from the more common adaptations, which usually involve modifications to the original work. Although for Jenkins the second case would not constitute a transmedia phenomenon, there would be a certain degree of transmediality due to the additive or expansive quality that may alter the adaptation to a greater or lesser extent (Jenkins, 2009b). However, Dena (2009) makes a more radical distinction between *adaptation* and *expansion*. According to this author, in addition to the fact that adaptation is never redundant in terms of content, transmediality is not dependent on expansion alone, but on the knowledge and skills necessary to develop a transmedia project. However, before the consolidation of transmedia storytelling, it was common to view expansion as a natural part of adaptation itself. Stam, Burgoyne and Flitterman-Lewis (1999: 238-239), for example, suggested that film adaptations were hypertexts derived from hypotexts that had been transformed through processes of selection, specification, updating and amplification.

Similarly, the fourth of the transmedia principles proposed by Gomez (2007) states that content is unique, adhering to the specific strengths of each platform, and that it is never reused between platforms, which would mean that adaptations do not form part of transmedia storytelling. Aarseth (2006) places adaptation at the core of any franchise, with the qualification that perhaps the term has simply become obsolete. On the other hand, Long (2007: 22) argues that retelling a story in a different medium is an adaptation, while using different media to create a single story is transmedia storytelling, opening up the possibility of user participation. Although this distinction is foun-

ded on the premise that each medium does what it does best (Jenkins, 2006: 95-96), Long (2007) acknowledges that adaptations are never identical to the original work.

Adding to these various diverging perspectives, Fernando, Vásquez & Salinas (2013: 152) argue that when a work expands it tends to initiate a transmedia system or a *crossmedia* system, although in the second case, rather than an expansion it would be closer to the idea of adaptation in terms of telling the same story. On this point, Renó (2013: 151) points out that *crossmedia* refers to the repetition of the same message, which is adapted to different media, while *transmedia* storytelling produces different messages for different media. However, Piñeiro & Costa (2013: 927) suggest that in *crossmedia*, each medium provides specific information for the construction of the unified story, but the recipient must consume the whole to understand it.

On the other hand, Mittell (2009) believes that transmediality has more to do with deepening than with horizontal expansion, as it should offer fans the ability to delve further into the narrative. The *forensic engagement* of fandom, although it may sometimes involve relatively small communities, encourages them to go deeper into the stories, which may often embrace this verticality, with a focus on deepening the text rather than on spreading it outward. This idea, however, does not imply a hierarchical relationship with Jenkins' horizontal expansion; instead, it constitutes a complementary model (Mittell, 2009).

Regarding the adaptation process, Mittell (2017) also notes that there are techniques that work better in some media than in others. For example, the first-person point of view (POV) produces a different effect when reading the thoughts of a character in a novel, compared to representing them visually in a film, while the user interactivity offered by video games is a facet of storytelling that cannot be transferred directly to television or comics. It is therefore important to be aware of the possibilities and limitations of each medium (Mittell, 2017: 7-8). This is an approach that emphasises the individual nature of each medium in order to tell the story as effectively as possible, i.e., maximising the potential of each one (Jenkins, 2006: 95-96).

THE CASES OF *TINTIN* AND *READY PLAYER ONE*

Scolari (2011) argues that transmedia narratives go beyond the adaptation process as intersemiotic translation, especially in view of the idea of expanding without reusing content. However, he also argues that adaptations should be included in the category of transmedia narratives. An example of this process can be found in *The Adventures of Tintin* (Steven Spielberg, 2011). Theoretically, this film could be considered an adaptation of a comic book, but the adaptation is in fact based on three Hergé comics: *The Crab with the Golden Claws* (1940), *The Secret of the Unicorn* (1943) and *Red Rackham's Treasure* (1943). In other words, a single story was developed out of three comics, giving rise to transformations in the narrative structure. According to Scolari (2011), there are also transformations at the actantial level. For example, Sakharine is a character depicted in the comics as a harmless antiquarian, while in the film he becomes the main antagonist. In addition, the opera singer Bianca Castafiore, featured in other *Tintin* comics but absent from the three mentioned above, nevertheless appears in the film.

The Adventures of Tintin could be classified as a free adaptation of pre-existing content (Genettian hypotexts), but there is also an expansion, since the film develops new situations that do not appear in the comics, such as the fight between the two cranes or the dizzying motorcycle chase sequence, and certain characters are given different roles, while some supporting characters absent from Hergé's comics are added, such as Mr. Hobbs. Although the film might be a relative fai-

Image 2. Sakharine in the comic book and the film adaptation. © Editorial Juventud & Sony Pictures Entertainment

lure in the transposition of the form and aesthetics of the Belgian cartoonist's comics, its spirit of mainstream family adventure appeals to a transnational audience, thereby extending Hergé's legacy (Revert Gomis, 2013: 25).

With *Ready Player One* (Steven Spielberg, 2018), the same director embarked on another adaptation, this time of the novel of the same name by Ernest Cline, who also wrote the screenplay together with Zak Penn. The participation of Cline in the adaptation of his own novel might be expected to ensure greater fidelity to the original, but this is another case where the film version goes its own way. Both plots depict the virtual world of the OASIS and are structured around a series of challenges (reduced to three in the film) in which the characters must obtain a set of keys in order to inherit James Halliday's legacy. However, while Cline devotes almost the first third of his novel to depicting the depressing situation of the real world in the future it portrays, Spielberg opts to enter the virtual world right from the start, only showing the real world very briefly at the beginning of his film.

This results in the amusement and visual spectacle offered by the OASIS dominating the film version, as well as the temporal condensation of the first part of the story. In addition to this condensation, the narrative is also actantially altered. In the novel, for example, the challenge to get the copper key takes place on the planet Ludus, where the characters must go to the role-playing game *Dungeons & Dragons* and then face the sorcerer Acererak in a game of *Joust* (John Newcomer, 1982), one of the first two-player cooperative video games (Wolf, 2008: 94). In the film, Spielberg replaces this challenge with a frenetic car race through the streets of a virtual Manhattan peppered with all kinds of pop culture references. Evidently, having two characters playing an old video game unfamiliar to most of the audience and with a relatively static mise-en-scène would have been out of keeping with the fast-paced action and visual spectacle offered by this film adaptation.

In later challenges of the novel, the characters appear in the settings for the films *War Games* (John Badham, 1983) and *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (Terry Gilliam & Terry Jones, 1975), where they are required to recreate some of these films' scenes and dialogues. In the film, Spielberg replaces these films with *The Shining* (Stanley Kubrick, 1980), a horror classic familiar to most audiences (whether film buffs or not), and that fits diegetically in the plot due to the well-known fact that it is a film adaptation that greatly displeased Stephen King, author of the original work. King's dislike of Kubrick's adaptation is the key that allows the characters to get into the virtual Overlook Hotel, recreated down to the smallest detail, where they must face a series of grotesque

Image 3. Video game *Joust* and its replacement with the race in the film adaptation of *Ready Player One*. © Williams Electronics & Warner Bros

and frantic situations that do not occur in Cline's book, while also allowing them to explore their internal conflicts. Another example can be found in the case of the main character, Wade Owen Watts (whose avatar goes by the pseudonym of Parzival in the OASIS), who discovers the whereabouts of the copper key in the film, while in the novel it is Art3mis who makes this discovery. On the other hand, Wade is the one who transforms into Ultraman in the final battle of the novel, while in the film it is Daito, who in the novel is killed halfway through the story. There are many other changes that result in the novel and its film version taking different routes to tell what is essentially the same story, to which end Spielberg, as he did in his adaptation of Hergé's comics, resorts to aesthetic spectacle, frenetic action and the transnationalisation of the audience.

The two cases discussed above are film adaptations on the mainstream circuit that each explicitly exhibit transmediality. Although they are direct transpositions (Genette, 1989), both films depict a multitude of different situations that give greater depth to the story and its characters (Long, 2007; Mittell, 2009), contributing an additive or expansive quality (Jenkins, 2009a) without constantly reusing content (Gomez, 2007; Dena, 2009). Adaptations should therefore be included in the category of transmedia narratives, covering both strategic and tactical transmediality. In this sense,

Image 4. Frames from the challenge involving *The Shining* in the film adaptation of *Ready Player One*, absent from the novel. © Warner Bros

if we establish an excessively restrictive vision of transmedia storytelling, important elements of a narrative universe may be left out, since even the most linear adaptation may include a new perspective on a character or element that can enrich and expand the story (Jenkins, 2009a; Scolari, 2011), as is the case in the two examples outlined above.

CONCLUSION: DIVERSIFICATION AND TERMINOLOGICAL AMBIGUITY

Tintin and *Ready Player One* are two paradigmatic examples of the adaptation, and consequent expansion, of narrative universes to the cinema screen. The adaptation process has also been the subject of a terminological variety that renders the task of making clear distinctions increasingly complicated. Different degrees of proximity to the original work are thus classified using expressions such as translation, adaptation, version, recreation, rewriting, recomposition, transliteration, transposition, remake, reboot, refraction, relocation, transplantation, tradaptation, free adaptation, retranslation, etc., as well as pejorative terms such as copy, manipulation, plagiarism, betrayal, perversion or infidelity. This reflects a lack of clear boundaries, with a terminological maelstrom, as Braga Riera (2011: 61-63) points out, resulting from diverse individual understandings of different terms, and where adaptation is not a functionalist conception of close imitation that faithfully reflects the structure, content or dialogue of an original text.

In conclusion, the lack of consensus makes interpreting the categories of different adaptation and transmediality processes an arduous task. On this ambiguity, Kinder (2021: 3) considers that in the current transmedia and postmedia era we might also question whether it is still productive to speak of specific media or platforms, since they get replaced so quickly that there is hardly time to fully explore their social and aesthetic potential. A future scenario is therefore emerging in which debates about adaptations or transmedia narratives may become meaningless due to their collateral omnipresence, and we will have to face new post-transmedia challenges: What characteristics will make it possible in the future to distinguish a truly original work from an adapted one? Will it be possible to differentiate a film version from a video game version? How will present and future content be affected by the arrival of new media, platforms, interfaces, etc.? In this fast-approaching future post-media landscape, will it make sense to keep talking about adaptations and transmedia narratives? ■

REFERENCES

Aarseth, E. (2006). The Culture and Business of Crossmedia Production. *Popular Communication*, *4*(3), 203-211. http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15405710pc0403_4

Arana Arrieta, E. (2021). Programas y programación en plena crisis. In M. Francés, G. Orozco & E. Bustamante (coords.), *La comunicación audiovisual en tiempos de pandemia* (pp. 191-210). Barcelona: Gedisa.

Benjamin, W. (2003). *La obra de arte en la época de su reproductibilidad técnica* [1936]. Mexico City: Ítaca.

Bluestone, G. (1957). *Novels into Film*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bogdanovich, P. (1997). *John Ford* [1971]. Madrid: Fundamentos.

Bolter, J. D., Grusin, R. (1999). *Remediation. Understanding New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Bordwell, D. (1985). *Narration in the fiction film*. London: Routledge.

Braga Riera, J. (2011). ¿Traducción, adaptación o versión?: maremágnum terminológico en el ámbito de la traducción dramática. *Estudios de Traducción, 1*, 59-72. https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_ESTR.2011.v1.36477

Cascajosa Virino, C. (2006). El espejo deformado: Una propuesta de análisis del reciclaje en la ficción audiovisual norteamericana. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social, 9*(61), 715-735. Retrieved from https://rb.gy/vlx4p2

Dena, C. (2009). *Transmedia Practice: Theorising the Practice of Expressing a Fictional World across Distinct Media*

and Environments. Doctoral thesis. Sydney: University of Sydney.

Eco, U. (2016). *Decir casi lo mismo: La traducción como experiencia* [2003]. Barcelona: Debolsillo.

Fernando, D., Vásquez, M., Salinas, H. (2013). Sistemas intertextuales transmedia: exploraciones conceptuales y aproximaciones investigativas. *Coherencia, 10*(18), 137-159. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2T2AO0g

Frago Pérez, M. (2005). Reflexiones sobre la adaptación cinematográfica desde una perspectiva iconológica. *Comunicación y Sociedad, 18*(2), 49-82. Retrieved from https://dadun.unav.edu/handle/10171/8238

Genette, G. (1989). *Palimpsestos: La literatura en segundo grado* [1962]. Madrid: Taurus.

Gomez, J. (2007, October 7). *Jeff Gomez's 8 Defining Characteristics of Transmedia Production*. Christy's Corner of the Universe. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/3AXnT11

Gray, J. (2010). *Show Sold Separately: Promos, Spoilers, and Other Media Paratexts*. New York: New York University Press.

Hutcheon, L. (2006). *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York: Routledge.

Jakobson, R. (1959). On Linguistic Aspects of Translation. In R. A. Brower (ed.), *On Translation* (pp. 232-239). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press.

Jenkins, H. (2009a, December 12). *The Revenge of the Origami Unicorn: Seven Principles of Transmedia Storytelling (Well, Two Actually. Five More on Friday)*. Henry Jenkins - Confessions of an Aca/Fan. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/1ib6AvH

Jenkins, H. (2009b, September 10). *The Aesthetics of Transmedia: In Response to David Bordwell. Henry Jenkins - Confessions of an Aca/Fan*. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/1y4DA2S

Jenkins, H. (2011, July 31). *Transmedia 202: Further Reflections. Henry Jenkins - Confessions of an Aca/Fan*. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/1pQHLfh

Kinder, M. (1991). *Playing with Power in Movies, Television, and Video Games: From Muppet Babies to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kinder, M. (2021). Medium Specificity and Productive Precursors: An Introduction. In M. Kinder & T. McPherson (eds.), *Transmedia Frictions: The Digital, the Arts, and the Humanities* (pp. 3-19). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Long, G. (2007). *Transmedia Storytelling. Business, aesthetics and production at the Jim Henson Company*. Doctoral thesis. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Luhr, W. (1977). *Authorship and Narrative in the Cinema*. New York: Putnam.

McFarlane, B. (1983). *Words and Images. Australian Novels into Film*. Melbourne: Heinemann Publishers.

McFarlane, B. (1996). *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Mittell, J. (2009, February 25). *To Spread or to Drill?* Just TV - Random thoughts from media scholar Jason Mittell. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/1QmYDnE

Mittell, J. (2017). *Narrative Theory and Adaptation*. New York: Bloomsbury.

Moya Santoyo, J., Mantecón Martín, C. (2007). La novela, mucho mejor que la película. *Trama & Fondo, 23*, 149-160. Retrieved from https://cutt.ly/1QMuNkg

Naremore, J. (ed.) (2000). *Film Adaptation*. London: Athlone Press.

Piñero, T., Costa, C. (2013). De series españolas de éxito a producciones audiovisuales transmediáticas. Análisis de Águila Roja, El Barco y Amar en tiempos revueltos. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico, 19*, 925-934. http://dx.doi.org/10.5209/rev_ESMP.2013.v19.42175

Pratten, R. (2011). *Getting Started in Transmedia Storytelling: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. Amazon: CreateSpace.

Renó, D. (2013). Narrativa transmedia y la "des-gobernabilidad" periodística. *Comunicação e Sociedade, 34*(2), 141-146. http://dx.doi.org/10.15603/2175-7755/cs.v34n2p141-161

Revert Gomis, J. (2013). Tintín o el trazo difícil: un viaje accidentado al *mainstream* del cine. *L'Atalante. Revista de Estudios Cinematográficos, 16*, 20-26. Retrieved from https://cutt.ly/PQNL7ff

Richard, D. E. (2021). *Film Phenomenology and Adaptation: Sensuous Elaboration*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Sánchez Noriega, J. L. (2000). *De la literatura al cine. Teoría y análisis de la adaptación*. Barcelona: Paidós.

Scolari, C. A. (2011, November 10). *Narrativa transmedia y adaptaciones: el caso Tintín*. Hipermediaciones. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2U8y2mI

Scolari, C. A. (2013). *Narrativas transmedia: Cuando todos los medios cuentan*. Barcelona: Deusto.

Scolari, C. A. (2014). Narrativas transmedia: nuevas formas de comunicar en la era digital. *Anuario AC/E de Cultura Digital*, 71-81. Retrieved from https://goo.gl/gwyPT3

Stam, R. (2005). Introduction: The Theory and Practice of Adaptation. In R. Stam & A. Raengo (eds.), *Literature and Film: A Guide of the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation* (pp. 1-52). Oxford: Blackwell.

Stam, R., Burgoyne, R., Flitterman-Lewis, S. (1999). *Nuevos conceptos de la teoría del cine*. Barcelona: Paidós.

Weaver, T. (2013). *Comics for Film, Games, and Animation: Using Comics to Construct your Transmedia Storyworld*. New York & London: Focal Press.

Wolf, M. J. P. (ed.) (2008). *The Video Game Explosion: A History from PONG to PlayStation and Beyond*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Zavala, L. (2009). La traducción intersemiótica en el cine de ficción. *Ciencia Ergo-Sum, 16*(1), 47-54. Retrieved from http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=10416106

FROM UNFAITHFUL ADAPTATION TO TRANSMEDIA EXPANSION: NOTES FOR A DEBATE ABOUT CINEMATOGRAPHIC (PER)VERSIONS

Abstract

Film adaptation is conceived of as an intersemiotic translation in which there is an interpretation between signs of different semiotic systems. This process gives rise to different points of view on whether an adaptation can expand or compress the story it adapts, or whether it should be faithful to its source. If a film adaptation omits certain characters in a novel, panels in a comic strip or levels of a video game, could it really be called an adaptation of that work? If new situations or characters are also added in the adapted work, could it still be described as an adaptation? Considering these questions, this article examines some of the main ideas about film adaptation and its relationship with transmedia storytelling, which is associated with the notion of expanding the story. The differences between the two processes, although obvious, are also often obscured by a certain porosity of borders, giving rise to constant debate. This study adopts a methodology of historical-bibliographic review with a theoretical framework based on the perspectives of different authors, in addition to a brief consideration of the mainstream cases of *Tintin* and *Ready Player One*.

Key words

Adaptation; Transmedia Storytelling; Literature; Cinema; Tintin; Ready Player One.

Author

Fran Mateu, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Area of Aesthetics and Arts Theory at Universidad Miguel Hernández in Elche and a member of the Massiva research group. His lines of research focus on the relationships between cinema and other media. He is the director of the Elche International Fantastic Film Festival – FANTAELX, the author of various articles published in academic journals such as *Fotocinema* and *Quaderns de Cine*, and the coordinating editor of books such as *Space Fiction. Visiones de lo cósmico en la ciencia-ficción* (Cinestesia, 2020) and *Crimen y Fantástico* (Cinestesia, 2021). Contact: f.mateu@umh.es.

Article reference

Mateu, F. (2022). From unfaithful adaptation to transmedia expansion: Notes for a debate about cinematographic (per)versions. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, *35*, 201-212.

DE LA ADAPTACIÓN INFIEL A LA EXPANSIÓN TRANSMEDIA: APUNTES PARA UN DEBATE SOBRE (PER)VERSIONES CINEMATOGRÁFICAS

Resumen

La adaptación cinematográfica se concibe como una traducción intersemiótica en la que existe una interpretación entre signos de distintos sistemas semióticos. Este proceso pone de relieve diferentes puntos de vista respecto a si una adaptación puede expandir o comprimir la historia que adapta, o si debe ser fiel a su fuente. En el caso de que las adaptaciones cinematográficas omitan ciertos personajes de una novela, determinadas viñetas de un cómic o los niveles de un videojuego, ¿estaríamos realmente adaptando esa obra *stricto sensu*? Si, además, añadimos nuevas situaciones o personajes en la obra adaptada, ¿también se podría concebir como una adaptación? Bajo estos aspectos, este artículo examina algunas de las ideas principales en torno a la adaptación cinematográfica y su relación con las narrativas transmedia, que se circunscriben alrededor de la idea de expandir la narración. Las diferencias entre ambos procesos, aunque evidentes, también suelen hallarse permeadas por cierta porosidad entre sus fronteras, lo cual genera un continuo debate. Para ello, se emplea una metodología de revisión histórico-bibliográfica mediante la aportación de un marco teórico en el que se plasman las posturas de diferentes autores, además de citar brevemente los casos *mainstream* de *Tintín* y *Ready Player One*.

Palabras clave

Adaptación; narrativas transmedia; literatura; cine; Tintín; *Ready Player One*.

Autor

Fran Mateu (Elche, 1981) es doctor en Filosofía y Letras, profesor asociado en el Área de Estética y Teoría de las Artes de la Universidad Miguel Hernández de Elche y miembro del grupo de investigación Massiva. Sus líneas de investigación se centran en las relaciones entre el cine y los diferentes medios de expresión. Es director del Festival Internacional de Cine Fantástico de Elche – FANTAELX, autor de diversos artículos publicados en revistas científicas, como Fotocinema o Quaderns de Cine, y ha coordinado libros como *Space Fiction. Visiones de lo cósmico en la ciencia-ficción* (Cinestesia, 2020) o *Crimen y Fantástico* (Cinestesia, 2021). Contacto: f.mateu@umh.es.

Referencia de este artículo

Mateu, F. (2022). De la adaptación infiel a la expansión transmedia: Apuntes para un debate sobre (per)versiones cinematográficas. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, *35*, 201-212.

recibido/received: 29.08.2021 | *aceptado/accepted:* 07.12.2022

Edita / Published by

Licencia / License

ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com