

Literature and Cinema: Ways of Interaction in the 21ST Century

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Abstract

The research is based on the analysis of interaction of different forms of art: cinema and literature. Cinema is in very close connection with literature since the moment of emergence. In spite of this various discussions about the literature and cinema's interaction continue. There is no consensus about the status of film adaptation, its fidelity approach or the influence of film to the text reception. It is possible to speak about the variety of types of relationship existing today between cinema and literature. For a long time, it was considered that cinema plays a secondary role in comparison with literature. The only possible algorithm of interaction between these types of arts is "literary work-scenario-screen version". However, there is a strong tendency towards the impact of cinema on setting new trends in literature. Along with the traditional "literary work – scenario – screen version" algorithm we also consider "literary work – scenario – screen version – literary work" (when details which appeared in the screen version influence the following parts of a literary work) or "scenario – movie – literary work" (when a literary work is created on the basis of the original scenario or the movie). Today writers and directors look for new ways of transferring of one art form's peculiarities into another. As a result, we can speak about the existing interdependence between them.

Key words: *cinema, literature, interaction, intermediality, novelization, adaptation.*

Introduction

Due to the rapid development of science and technology the 20th and 21st centuries became the time of creation and development of new synthetic art forms. There were cinema, television, computer graphics and others in the past century. Now there are operas transferred to a format of the comic book, a picture which comes to life, a cosplay etc. (Dalton, 2019, Lyapustina, 2019, Wolff, 2018). It is quite obvious that the list of such arts is not exhausted yet. Emergence of each new art form crucially changes the internal structure of system of arts and relationship between the available types of them, because today any form of art does not develop separately they interpenetrate, influence each other. This leads to the fact that borders between different types of art wash away. Such interpenetration can occur at different levels (Bozhkova et al., 2019;

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Ahtarieva et al., 2018). For example, we can read in the book the description of painting, music or movie. Dan Brown's book *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) is constructed on the game with the most famous paintings of Leonardo Da Vinci. In the novel *Sherlock Holmes Vs. Martians* the writers H. L. Oldie (this is a pen-name of Ukrainian writers Dmitry Gromov and Oleg Ladygensky) tried to describe the sound of choral prelude *Ich ruf zu dir Herr Jesu Christ* by J. S. Bach. If we remember John Fowles' *The Magus* we can find there not only mention about Marcel Carné's film *Port of Shadows* (French: *Le Quai des brumes*), but also we see the film in the book. The main character Nicholas Urfe is watching the film called *Bitter Truth*, which flows into the performance. Since the moment of its emergence, cinema is in very close connection with literature: "Today the words "memory" and "writing" could be replaced with "literature" and "film" insofar as writers and literary critics, from the very beginning of film history, were deeply suspicious of cinema, especially adaptations of literary works." (Cartmell, 2012). Cinema as well as literature tells the stories but uses different tools.

Claim

This paper argues that the new ways of interaction have appeared in the 21st century. We defend the arguments in two reasons below and describe the evidences in the paragraphs that follow, among others: (1) Film Interpretation as the Most Popular Form of Interaction, (2) Influence of cinema on the book, (3) Three Reasons for Novelization.

Firstly, many movies represent the screen version of literary works. There is no consensus about this situation. The dispute between movie and book lovers is lasting for hundred years (Miles, 2013; Azmanova-Rudarska, 2019). Of course, there are a lot of people who think that cinema is a bad influence on the text reception (Shatunova et al., 2019). They believe that cinema can kill reading. But at the same time the cinema can help to draw attention to the literature, as it allows to a large number of people to know about the literary work (Sabitova et al., 2018; Frolova et al., 2019). Secondly, captions in silent movies were forcedly used and in fact it was literature.

For a long time, it was considered that cinema plays a secondary role in comparison with literature; the only possible algorithm of interaction between these types of arts is "literary work-scenario-screen version", when the book first appears. On the basis of it the scenario is written and after that film is being shot. However, there is a strong tendency towards the impact of cinema on setting new trends in literature.

In particular, one of the most qualitative and popular screen versions in history, the film trilogy *Lord of the Rings* by Peter Jackson, led to the sharp growth in the popularity of fantasy genre in literature, which also gave rise to a huge number of authors writing in this genre. The fact that a successful screen version can revive interest in writers who might not have been really popular at that time can be illustrated by the example of *Great Gatsby* (2013). Directed by Baz Luhrmann, the screen version made the literary works of Francis Scott Fitzgerald a commercial success again. Today there is also a strong tendency to use film posters of popular adaptations on books' covers. It leads to the increasing awareness of the book, as the result the demand for it grows too (Mahlknecht, 2012). Thus, today the relations between literature and cinema become more and more various.

Therefore, it is incorrect to consider that one art form prevails over another (Portnova, 2019). Along with the traditional “literary work – scenario – screen version” algorithm we also consider “literary work – scenario – screen version – literary work” (when details which appeared in the screen version influence the following parts of a literary work) or “scenario – movie – literary work” (when a literary work is created on the basis of the original scenario or the movie).

Evidence and Discussion

Film Interpretation as the Most Popular Form of Interaction

If we talk about the first algorithm, the birth of the first type of interpretation of literary works — film adaptations — it falls on 1902. That year the French director Georges Melies produced the screen version based on the novel *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe. It was a 20th minutes short film about the sailor's life in the uninhabited island, his meeting to cannibals, saving Friday and homecoming to Southampton. Since the moment the epoch of using literature by cinema start: “Since the beginning of cinema, adaptations have been a staple of the business of film. Among the earliest films were adaptations of literary works.” (Cartmell, 2012). Today's film adaptations are created on the basis of prose, dramatic art, poetry, songs and the opera. Their main goal is to transfer the sense of the primary source using “film language” which significantly differs from literary. And each literary work can be interpreted in movies in different ways. For example, the stories about Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle hit the Guinness Book of Records. Today there are about 210 adaptations with Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson

as the main characters. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson* (1979 - 1986) is a canonic Soviet TV series directed by Igor Maslennikov. Vasily Livanov, who played Sherlock Holmes' role is an Honorary MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire). Besides we should mention British TV series *Sherlock* (2010 - present) created by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss. The events in this film are carried from the end of 19th century to contemporary London. The most original version is Japanese adaptation of *Miss Sherlock* (2018) where the main characters are women. Therefore, it is natural that the viewer will estimate any screen version from the perspective of how well it corresponds to the level of the primary source or even surpasses it (it happens too). A good screen version gives viewers a chance to experience what they admired and what touched them in the book once again. It "visualizes" what they could just imagine earlier and gives the opportunity to fix the unified image: "Adaptations nowadays contribute to "convergence culture", which involves a circulation and remediation of texts, images, media and the concomitant communicated messages." (Perdikaki, 2017). Apart from film adaptation there is a screen version based on the work. Most often it is used when the book cannot be transferred to a screen literally. The screen version of this type does not strictly correspond to the primary source, but transfers the main idea and adds something new. For instance, we can consider British TV series *Lost in Austen* based on the Jane Austen's novels.

If we look at the list of 2019 Oscar Winners, we can see that 5 (*If Beale Street Could Talk*, *BlacKkKlansman*, *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, *Black Panther*, *First Man*) of the 22 winning films are based on the books (including comics and graphic novels). This proves that film adaptation genre is demanded today. At the same time the debate continues whether the film interpretation is a particular art form or it is "a way for translating from the language of literature into the language of cinema" (Vinterle, 2010, Perdikaki, 2017). We regard film adaptation as a genre of cinema. The creator of film adaptation is a director. He is guided by his own ideas, perception of the work, era and consumer tastes.

Another discussion on film adaptation's entity is connected with its fidelity approach. Should films approach fidelity to the literary version? David L. Kranz and Nancy C. Mellerski consider this question in their book *In/Fidelity. Essays on Film Adaptation* (Kranz & Mellerski 2008). This volume originates from the 2005 Literature/Film Association annual conference and includes twelve chapters. The work explores a timely and controversial theoretical issue in cinematic adaptation studies: the necessity and value of fidelity as a yardstick by which to measure film

adaptations of literary and dramatic works. The editors group the essays based on the level of fidelity in considering film adaptation. The first group is devoted to works “express the desire for fidelity in film adaptation and/or demonstrate the ways in which several films, despite some textual and contextual interference, manage to remain relatively faithful to sources in one way or another” (Kranz & Mellerski 2008). The second one “shows how textual and contextual influences draw film adaptations into infidelities of various kinds” (Kranz & Mellerski 2008). The next group “offers examples of cinematic adaptation, which have tenuous connection to their alleged sources or critique central elements of those sources” (Kranz & Mellerski 2008). But this classification has been criticized too, for example, in Thomas Van Parys’s review (Van Parys, 2013). Of course, there could be various reasons why the film adaptation would differ from the literary version, like limited screen time, low budget, actors’ graphics, etc. So, this remains a matter of ongoing debate.

Influence of cinema on the book

The second algorithm “literary work – scenario – screen version – literary work” occurs in multiprivate, cyclic works. Some elements of the movie can be reflected in the literary work when the screen version of one part of the book is being produced simultaneously with the process of writing another part. For example, such situation happened to a series of books about Harry Potter. The moment of a release of the first movie – *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001) – coincided with the time of writing of the fifth book – *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. In this book two minor heroes – Lee Jordan (an actor - Michael Bakari Jordan) and Angelina Johnson (an actress – Danielle Tabor) – acquire new details in the description. Lee Jordan is described as a tall boy with dreadlocks on the head, and Angelina Johnson was given the following characteristics: a tall black girl with long braids (Rowling, 2003). It is obvious that such details were published in books thanks to the actors who played in the movie, – until the fifth book the author did not comment on appearance of these characters in any way. Thus, the reader understands that for the author the screen version is not just transfer of the book on the screen. The visual embodiment became in many respects inseparable from the literary source. In particular, Harry Potter’s world exists not only consistently – at first in the book, and after – in cinema, but also in parallel – in literature and in cinema.

Today iconic writer George Martin, unlike Joanne Rowling, denies the influence of the series to his books (Hibberd, 2019). Although there are some researches about the differences of the series

from the book (for example, an interesting scene comparison produced by A. K. Mungal, J. Tan and P. Sharma), but we could not find any of them devoted to the analysis of elements of the movie which are reflected in the literary work.

Three Reasons for Novelization

For designation of another algorithm “scenario - movie - literary work” the term “novelization”, which gains popularity today and plays a large role in promotion of the movie, is most often used. There is no consensus about this genre: “But the genre is peripheral in content as well, since the novelization is a ‘hybrid’ form, often mixing film, literature, screenplay, and even film photography into one package.” (Van Parys, Leuven, 2011) Novelization is a unique genre as Jan Baetens writes: “Again, novelization is obviously a form of adaptation, but it is quite different in semiotic as well as institutional terms from the better known and well-studied case of the filmic adaptation of a literary text. Semiotically speaking, most novelizations are not intermedial: they do not transform a narrative in a certain medium into another medium (as occurs with the filmic adaptation of a literary text) since their source text is not visual (the film) but verbal (the screenplay).” (Baetens, 2010). But we suppose certain intermediality of novelization as novelizers very often use visual effects in their text. For example, color spectrum, describing appearance of characters, etc.

The reasons of emergence of novelization can be different:

1. It concerns those films which were (or planned) shot, but were not shown on screens or remained in a scenario format;
2. It is the expanded version of the movie with episodes and additional information which were not included into the movie.
3. The third reason was stipulated by Neil Gaiman in the preface to his novel *Neverwhere*. He stated that he couldn't call series unsuccessful, but during the shooting process he was not abandoned by a thought: acts absolutely not that he conceived. After that he decided to write the book himself. (Geiman, 2009)

To the first group it is possible to attribute practically the 200th page script with storyboards of the unreleased film by Francis Ford Coppola *Megalopolis*. After the success of *The Godfather Trilogy* he wanted to make something very ambiguous and great. The director developed the script for many years and it was the movie of his dream. But monumental science-fiction epic about the

architect-inventor, revolution and utopian New York after global disaster did not appear on screens. In 2001 the director presented the idea in Cannes to the potential producers, but it was unsuccessful. However the tragedy of September 11, was a catastrophe also for the movie, as the director did not find producers. After that Coppola decided no longer to make widescale auteur cinema. The script of the movie and storyboards are freely distributed on the Internet (for example, <http://epoleart.canalblog.com/archives/2015/01/13/31149379.html>). But today we possess an information that the director is going to return to his project this year [Evangelista, 2019].

One more unreleased film which formed the book belongs to a cult director Stanley Kubrick. After *Space Odyssey: 2001* in 1968 he planned the biopic about Napoleon Bonaparte covering all life of the French emperor, investigating history of his self-damage. The director wanted to answer a question about what kind of person he was and what made him the great emperor. Kubrick wrote in the diary, that he was going to make the best movie ever shot on the Earth. (Sotnikova, 2015) However, neither the conducted researches into life of the outstanding Frenchman nor the idea to invite Audrey Hepburn to Josephine's role impressed producers. According to them, the budget was inadmissible, historical movies consigned to the past, and Napoleon's figure became unattractive after a failure of *Waterloo* (1970) directed by Sergey Bondarchuk.

The book *Stanley Kubrick's Napoleon: The Greatest Movie Never Made*, consisting of 10 volumes, was published in 2017. The working scenario with numerous comments of Kubrick was found in archives of the director in 2005. Except the scenario the book includes Kubrick's notes with the description of all, up to the smallest, details of Napoleon's life, his correspondence concerning this project, the map catalogue of the main places visited by the French emperor, the costume sketches, the photos and other materials. One of the volumes is devoted to the history of a costume of that era which was prepared by Kubrick.

Thus, the book became a peculiar synthesis of documents, inventions and also the metatext about process of creation of one of the greatest unreleased movies.

The second group of novelization has more applied character as it is created as a part of promotion to the movie. "In the past three decades they have become a regularly used tool for the promotion of many of Hollywood's major cinematic releases — a calculated means of maximizing profits. Blockbusters like *King Kong* (2005, dir. Peter Jackson), *The Wolfman* (2010, dir. Joe Johnston), and *Cowboys and Aliens* (2011, dir. Jon Favreau) all have their novelistic alter egos." (Mahlknecht, 2012) Actually, the emergence of such novelizations in the USA is not casual, one may say, even

somewhat traditional. At the beginning of the 20th century the summaries of movies were published for involvement of the audience: “This form was further developed through fan magazines, such as *The Motion Picture Story Magazine* and *Photoplay* (both first published in 1911), that enabled audiences to either prepare themselves for film viewings, or re-experience films in story form, through the translation of movie melodramas to written form.” (Grossman, J., and R. B. Palmer, 2017).

Today it extends the whole film industry. However, many critics and readers treat a novelization genre with some hostility, perceiving it not as full-fledged literature. First, naturally, in most cases these novelizations are of poor quality. For example, there is such sentence at a novelization *Seven cabins*: “They did not reach a door literally of two steps as it swung open, and the girl of twenty-four years dressed in a tutu of a black swan entered a toilet” (Piterskiy, 2007). As Maslekova writes: “Here comes the question: how the heroes defined at once that the girl is 24 years old, not 25 or 23?” (Maslenkova, 2016) It can be often met in novelizations: detailed descriptions of appearance of heroes, an interior are given though they do not play an important role for the narration. Besides, the purpose of such novelizations is not to be read, but to inform more people about the forthcoming display of the movie: “For a novelizer like Foster it may be disheartening to think that in the eyes of his employers (at least the studio if not the publisher) he may have done a good job if a person simply walks into a bookstore and looks at the cover of the novelized book *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* (Foster 2009c) without opening it, let alone buying it. At least that person is now aware of a film with such a title, and he or she may decide to go see it.” (Mahlknecht, 2012) Those who expect full similarity to the movie from a novelization might likely be disappointed. Due to the fact that in the shooting course the scenario can change, there is no time to remake a literary version. So, it is often possible to meet divergences in novelizations.

However, it’s not that bad! Sometimes novelizations can offer explanations to some subject holes arising in movies and additional details. And not all works related to this group are of low-quality. Fans speak quite friendly of Mathew Stover’s novelization of *Episode III. Revenge of Sith* from the great saga of George Lucas *Star Wars* or *Terminator. Salvation* by Alan Dean Foster. It is very important for some fans as it allows to construct the whole Universe in their minds.

This group also could include the novelizations of comics film adaptations. *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets* by Christie Golden, *The Dark Knight Trilogy* by Dennis O’Neil, Jonathan Nolan, Christopher J. Nolan, David S. Goyer are based on popular well-known films. At the same

time, they keep some elements of comic books, for example, the describing of thoughts, emotions of characters. The Star Wars universe also should be mentioned. Star Wars Expanded Universe today includes more than 200 books.

The third group is also presented by the novel of Neil Gaiman's *Neverwhere* and some others. *Neverwhere* had been published for the first time in 2009 though it was written in 1996 in parallel with shooting of the eponymous series, about which existence even not all fans of the writer know. If to speak about the failure reasons of the movie, in our opinion, the most important is the lack of good special effects. Shooting the movie in a genre of a city fantasy demands using advanced visual effects which were not widely spread in the nineties of the 20th century. The second reason is timing. The series has a mini format and consists of six episodes. It did not allow Gaiman to reveal many features of creation of London Below, characters, etc.

Gaiman reprocessed the cinema version quite a lot though the main plot and the main characters remained. In the book the author pays more attention to forming of the world of London Below which is guided by the subway map that is not present in series: "Another important detail of this prologue is an umbrella with the map of the London Underground. It prepares the reader for the subsequent play with the toponyms connected with this type of transport. Nearly the whole novel is based on a kind of game associated with the names of streets, districts and other toponyms in London. For example, Old Bailey of Gaiman is an old man who breeds birds, and Hammersmith is not the name of a subway station, but a blacksmith. The whole London Below is structured on the basis of the metro scheme, where most of the action of the novel takes place." (Zinnatullina, Zueva, Popp, 2018) Director focuses more attention on events, without giving the viewer the reason for reflection over toponymy of London. At the same time Gaiman remains faithful to some cinema receptions, such as, parallel installation, a soundtrack, the movement from the general to a close up, using them in the book. (Zinnatullina, Zueva, Popp, 2018) This group may also include novels by Anthony Burgess *Man of Nazareth* and Johnathan Lynn and Antony Jay's books *Yes Minister* and *Yes Prime Minister*, all from which appeared on the basis of movies. In the 1970s English scriptwriters Jonathan Lynn and Anthony Jay had offered to the BBC2 Channel to make a series about a fictional British politician Jim Hacker. The first season of the series (which called *Yes Minister*) was transmitted on TV in 1980 and became very popular, so soon the second part (*Yes Prime Minister*) appeared on the screens. Eventually *Yes Minister* and *Yes Prime Minister* received three BAFTA (British Academy Television Awards) was adapted for the radio and also

spawned a stage play. As a result, already in 1989, Jonathan Lynn and Anthony Jay published books based on their own script. The main character, a former oppositionist Jim Hacker is the Minister for Administrative Affairs (a fictitious ministry of the British government) and in *Yes, Prime Minister* he becomes the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. He is confronted by his own permanent secretary Sir Humphrey Appleby. As a result, we have a conflict between politicians and officials, which becomes the main problem of the country. Although the screen version keeps “theatrical specificity of spectator perception” (Solomkina, 2016), the literary version’s genre can be defined as a mockumentary, as these works are a mere imitation of the documentary. In *Yes Minister* and *Yes Prime Minister* authors chose a form of the diary of the main character for realization of literary option. Except the diary the literary work includes also the imitations of the subordinates’ memoirs, various documents (for example, memos), shorthand reports and fragments from media materials. As the result, Johnathan Lynn and Antony Jay could keep satire of the television series, and at the same time, they could get away from the usual third-person narrative and a mere plot’s retelling.

Man of Nazareth by Anthony Burgess narrates his own vision of Christ’s live and is based on his own scenario to the television mini-series of 1977. Anthony Burgess novelized it because the series had not taken all his ideas on screen. The director structured the movie around biblical themes and canonic Jesus image. Burgess’s Jesus has dual nature: divine and human, but his humanity prevails. The writer tried to describe him as a real man.

Conclusion

Thus, in a contemporary cultural situation connection between art forms amplifies and borders are washed away. It seems to us that it is one of the main features of modern culture and most brightly characterizes today’s situation in society. In particular, it leads to formation of a difficult complex of relationship between corporation and authors, literature and cinema, the director and writer that directly reflected in the created texts and influence the addressee (reader/viewer). We tried to classify the current types of relationship between cinema and literature. In this paper we highlighted three of them. Our classification is based on the consideration of working processes’ algorithms. The first one is when literature plays a role of the primary source. It is the oldest type of interaction of the literature and the cinema. As we can see there is no consensus about the status of this genre: “the adaptation – situated somewhere between the categories of novel and film,

simultaneously recognized as both and as neither – challenges the novel/film binary, thereby refuting the hierarchy that situates the novel as innately superior to the film” (Kranz & Mellerski, 2008). In our opinion, we can speak about the hybridity of the film adaptation, as its main goal is to keep the idea of the primary source (literature) creating new artwork (cinema). The algorithm “literary work – scenario – screen version – literary work” refers to a limited number of works, as two conditions must be met:

1. The literary work is cyclic.
2. The filming process coincides with the time of writing of the book.

In this situation some elements of the book can be inspired by a film.

The notion novelization is used for the third algorithm. There is an opinion about this genre as well as film adaptation. Novelization is comparatively young genre and is considered as a part of film industry than literature. Nevertheless, today the novelization estimates thousands of works which differ from each other in quality, the reasons and conditions of creation. We highlighted 3 the most popular reasons for novelization and considered some examples. Due to the development of various fields of art today writers and directors look for new ways of transferring of one art forms peculiarities into another. As a result, we can speak about the existing interdependence between them.

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