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## Exploring the Adaptation of French Literature Classics Across Diverse Media and Cultural Contexts

### Abstract

This article examines the adaptation processes of French literary classics in different environmental conditions and in various cultural formats with an intersemiotic translation framework, intercultural adaptation and their implications in educational practice. We describe which theoretical position constitutes the backbone of these editions, highlighting the theory of intermediality and the theory of cultural transfer. The present research is based on the synthesis of the previous literature. This therefore requires carrying out a systematic review of the existing literature including an empirical analysis of the content of scientific articles or case studies that will ensure a full understanding of the theoretical and practical problems related to literary adaptation.

The main objectives of the article are to retrace the ways in which adaptations rework the canon of literature and, in turn, make sense of cultural awareness and improved pedagogical practice. In this regard, this study will contribute to adaptation studies, French literary studies and cultural theory in general by synthesizing previous literature and empirical results. It highlights the importance of interdisciplinary methodologies and dynamically transformed narratives in contemporary global constellations. These results also indicate, in turn, an understanding of how literature and culture work in a rapidly changing world. The pedagogical benefits achieved by students through literary adaptation serve to enhance empathy and intercultural competence.

**Keywords:** *adaptation studies, French literature, cultural adaptation, intercultural education, media studies*

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## Fransız ədəbiyyatının klassik əsərlərinin müxtəlif media və mədəni kontekstlərdə adaptasiyasını araşdırmaq

### Xülasə

Bu məqalə Fransız ədəbiyyat klassiklərinin fərqli mühit şəraitlərində və müxtəlif mədəni formatlarda uyğunlaşdırılması proseslərini intersemiotik tərcümə çərçivəsi, mədəniyyətlərarası adaptasiya və onların təhsil təcrübəsinə təsirləri ilə araşdırır. Bu nəşrlərin əsasını təşkil edən nəzəri mövqeləri təsvir edərək, aralarından intermediallıq nəzəriyyəsi və mədəniyyət transferi nəzəriyyəsini vurğulayırıq. Hazırkı tədqiqat əvvəlki ədəbiyyatın sintezinə əsaslanır.

Buna görə də mövcud ədəbiyyatın sistematik icmalını aparmaq, həmçinin elmi məqalələrin və ya konkret nümunələrin empirik analizini həyata keçirmək tələb olunur ki, bu da ədəbi uyğunlaşma ilə bağlı nəzəri və praktiki problemləri tam başa düşməyə imkan verəcəkdir.

Məqalənin əsas məqsədləri uyğunlaşmaların ədəbiyyat kanonunu necə yenidən işlədiyini izləmək və bunun mədəni şüurun formalaşmasına və təkmilləşdirilmiş pedaqoji təcrübəyə necə töhfə verdiyini başa düşməkdir. Bu baxımdan, bu tədqiqat uyğunlaşma tədqiqatlarına, Fransız ədəbiyyat tədqiqatlarına və ümumilikdə mədəniyyət nəzəriyyəsinə, həm əvvəlki ədəbiyyatın, həm də empirik nəticələrin sintezi ilə töhfə verəcəkdir. Məqalə müasir global kontekstlərdə interdisiplinar metodologiyaların və dinamik şəkildə dəyişdirilmiş narrativlərin əhəmiyyətini vurğulayır. Bu nəticələr, həmçinin, sürətlə dəyişən dünyada ədəbiyyatın və mədəniyyətin necə fəaliyyət göstərdiyini anlamağa işıq tutur. Tələbələrin ədəbi uyğunlaşma vasitəsilə əldə etdikləri pedaqoji faydalar empatiyanın və mədəniyyətlərarası kompetensiyanın artırılmasına xidmət edir.

**Açar sözlər:** *uyğunlaşma tədqiqatları, Fransız ədəbiyyatı, mədəni uyğunlaşma, mədəniyyətlərarası təhsil, media tədqiqatları*

## Introduction

The French literary canon has become, in recent years, both a popular object of adaptation in film and television media and a subject of growing interest for academic research. These re-read canonical works not only enrich perspectives on the cultural, historical and political dimensions of the works being adapted, but also relate to the contemporary era. This research will undertake an analysis of this junction between literature and adaptation with the aim of discovering how narratives are transformed from one medium to another and how these transformations influence public reception and cultural discourse.

This research explores how these adaptations actively participate in the remodeling of the French literary canon, while highlighting contemporary educational and cultural dynamics. The main focus is on analysing the transformations of classical narratives across different media and cultural contexts, with the assumption that these will have predictive value in assessing their impact on audience reception and educational practices. These complex dialogues between tradition and innovation find a very solid basis of description in the theories of intermediality and cultural transfer, on which the theoretical framework of this article is based.

These adaptation processes will be discussed in light of the educational implications of such changes. In fact, they not only increase access to literature, but also create opportunities to particularly stimulate the development of empathy and intercultural competence in learners. This research combines a systematic review of the literature with empirical case studies with the aim of offering an in-depth understanding of adaptation practices while simultaneously indicating avenues towards a better pedagogical integration of these works.

This is reflected in the composition of the article: after the presentation of the theoretical and methodological framework, we analyze the intermediate adaptation strategies given by the impact on the cultural canon; finally, we analyze the pedagogical and socio-cultural perspectives related to the use of the issue of adaptation in education. The article succeeded in highlights the integral dynamics between literature, media and education and has thus been able to offer a critical reflection on the role of adaptation in the transmission and evolution of literary culture in today's globalized and diverse world.

## Research

### 1. The Evolution of the Classics of French Literature through the Media: Intersemiotic and Intercultural Adaptations

The adaptation of French literary classics to various media forms has undergone important theoretical and practical transformations, shaping cultural representations and intercultural dynamics. This section explores key theoretical frameworks and historical developments that underpin adaptation processes, highlighting their impact on media and cultural narratives.

### **1.1. Theoretical foundations of intersemiotic translation**

Amorim (2013) provided a critical perspective on translation theory and inter-semiotic adaptation. He describes how literature goes beyond its limits in television and film. This approach necessarily attempts to balance fidelity to the source text with the relevant changes that such an approach requires in many other cultural contexts with regard to our understanding of adaptation as a creative and intercultural process that will benefit from it. Amorim's analysis not only considers the paradigms present today in adaptation studies, but also highlights some later lines of research, showing how vast and evolving the concept of inter-semiotic translation is, with its influence on media studies (Amorim, 2013).

In addition, Dusi 2015 discusses adaptive practices focusing on Don Quixote's case study, using this concept of “intermediate isotopies” to define repetitive semantic elements between different media. Following Yuri Lotman's translation theory, this approach emphasizes adaptation as a creative interpretation weighted between cultural specificity and universal appeal. This subsection will address the theoretical underpinnings of the complexity of adaptation as a transformative process enriching our understanding of source texts as well as their mediated forms (Dusi, 2015).

Dusi (2015) also explores adaptation practices through a case study on Don Quixote, using the notion of “intermediate isotopies”, which he defines as semantic iterations creating meaningful relationships between different works or media. These isotopies act as patterns or themes that circulate in different contexts and therefore allow for easier storytelling and interpretation. Inspired by Lotman's theory of translation, this approach emphasizes the creativity of adaptation as it dances between cultural specificity and universal appeal. Its theoretical foundations are described in this section as complex, multi-layered, thus redefining adaptation as a process of dynamic transformation, serving to improve our understanding of source texts and their myriad mediated forms. This perspective underscores the view that adaptations should not be viewed as mere replicas, but rather as reinterpretations within an intertextual cultural space where each adaptation interacts with its predecessors while shaping itself to meet the expectations of a contemporary audience.

### **1.2. Historical development: the classics of French literature in cinema**

To deepen our exploration, Griffiths and Watts (2020) give a rich historical overview of the adaptation of French literary classics to cinema from the late nineteenth century to the present day. This section presents the development of film adaptations, from early genre films and key directors to thematic phase movements that shaped the adaptation framework. Their focus reveals how such adaptations reflect iconic cultural and sociological traits of society as a whole, while reaffirming both media - literal and cinematic - as transitional media (Griffiths, Watts, 2020).

By contextualizing historical developments, Griffiths and Watts provide insight into how adaptations have evolved to resonate with changing audience expectations and technological advances.

### **1.3. Notable contributions of researchers/Contemporary Trends: Transmedia and Adaptation**

Current trends in media production are distinguished by a complex relationship between transmediality and adaptation, particularly within large media conglomerates and user-generated digital content. Eder (2015) examines these phenomena by focusing on the political and economic contexts of transmedial “supersystems” or “multitexts,” a concept that refers to integrated media systems where various formats, genres, and platforms interact synergistically. These supersystems allow stories to flow and reinvent themselves across multiple mediums, creating an enriched narrative experience for the audience. Eder's study highlights the prevalence of adaptation and remediation practices in contemporary media landscapes, facilitating the distribution of content across multiple platforms. His analysis also highlights the strategic importance of transmedia in the formation of these modern media ecosystems, as well as its significant implications for the adaptation of literary works, which must now be part of an expanded and interconnected narrative framework (Eder, 2015).

### **1.4. Ethical and Cultural Considerations: Moral Configurations in Television Adaptations**

Finally, Chalvon-Demersay (2022) conducts an empirical and ethnographic study that traces the ethical and cultural dimensions of television adaptations of French literary classics. This survey

reveals how the moral characteristics of television characters are dynamically constructed in the production process, reflecting various ethical priorities and cultural influences. By examining the hybrid nature of moral content in television adaptations, this subsection challenges simplistic interpretations and highlights the complex relationship between media production, cultural representation, and audience reception. This reflection on ethical issues allows us to establish a crucial link with the next section, where we will address creative adaptation practices (Chalvon-Demersay, 2007).

### **1.5. Media convergence and creative adaptation practices**

In this regard, Détrez (2003) focuses on the success, among adolescents, of television adaptations of the classics of French literature and indicates how these adaptations negotiate different networks of references. To this end, Détrez refers to interviews that show how adolescents engage with hybrid products combining literary, musical and television references, which demonstrate a complex interaction between written and visual media, introducing a pedagogical role, improving knowledge about literary and cultural heritage (Détrez, 2003).

Alix 2020 discusses how French rappers creatively incorporate literary references into their lyrics and thus offer particular poetic styles and artistic identities. Such creativity not only highlights the coping strategies that rappers adopt, but, from a broader perspective, highlights how literary traditions interact with the latest cultural expressions, predisposed by theatre, film and other forms of media (Alix, 2020).

Straumann and Rippl (2015) provide a comprehensive overview of adaptation, remediation, and transmediality as concepts that draw particular attention to how narratives are remade across media systems. In this regard, such analysis will be important to further develop our understanding of how elements of a text jump onto media platforms for new interpretations and recreations. This perspective further enhances the fluidity of narrative practices by showing the continuous evolution of stories moving through different media and thus gives the book a solid foundation upon which the following sections are built (Straumann, Rippl, 2015).

## **2. Intermediate Adaptations and Cultural Canon: Transformations in French Literary Classics**

The impact that French literary classics have created on contemporary cultural narratives and audience engagement through their adaptation into different forms of media - film, television, comics and music - is immense. Based on the interactive relationship between popular culture and high culture through these adaptations, this section provides insight into how successful revisions have significantly transformed both the cultural canon and artistic value.

### **2.1. Evolution of adaptation to cinema and television**

Film and television adaptations of French literary classics have long been part of cultural revision and rewriting. For Gixti, these forms of adaptation are confronted with decisions related to commercial pressures while re-articulating the old divisions between high and low culture. This section examines Gixti's discussion, pointing out that these adaptations are both a mirror of the changing tastes of the public and society as a whole, thus contributing to the shift in cultural values (Gixti, 2009).

Griffiths and Watts went further by providing an in-depth investigation into the history of the film adaptation of the French classics. They trace the growth of an adaptation that takes place from the late nineteenth century to the contemporary era, showing key films, influential directors and thematic movements. In their work, they not only studied the economic and cultural motivations of adaptation processes, but they also deepened our understanding of the longer dialogue between literature and cinema.

### **2.2. Theoretical perspectives on intertextuality and cultural production**

Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins (Albrecht-Crane, Cutchins, 2010) argue for a reassessment of adaptation practices across media platforms. Their collection of essays explores how adaptations continually reinterpret French literary classics, influenced by various historical, social, and authorial contexts. This subsection deepens theoretical knowledge, highlighting the role of intertextuality in

the formation of contemporary cultural production and the artistic productivity inherent in adaptation processes.

In addition, Cartmell and Whelehan (1999) examine the theoretical and practical challenges of translating literary works into films and vice versa. They critically examine debates surrounding fidelity to the original text, the nuances of literary representation in visual media, and the reflection of contemporary concerns through adaptations. This subsection provides a nuanced exploration of adaptation as a creative process that preserves literary integrity and facilitates new interpretations across different forms of media (Cartmell, Whelehan, 1999).

### **2.3. Ethical and narrative dynamics in television adaptations**

Chalvon-Demersay (2022) uses an empirical and ethnographic approach to explore the moral landscape of television adaptations of French literary classics. This study reveals the complexities of narrative construction and ethical considerations within television production channels. Chalvon-Demersay's findings challenge simplistic views of moral content in adaptations, highlighting the dynamic interaction between production dynamics and audience reception.

In addition, Stephens (2019) examines the evolution of the representation of characters like Cosette in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* through various media adaptations. Applying Hugo's poetics and intermediate analysis, Stephens discovers nuanced interpretations of femininity and literary representation. This subsection explains how adaptations contribute to ongoing cultural dialogues, reshaping perceptions of canonical texts and their thematic relevance (Stephens, 2019).

### **2.4. Innovative approaches to adaptation in French literary studies**

Comic book adaptations of French literary classics offer unique ways to present canonical works to a young adult audience. Fedo 2012 argues that such adaptations, such as the manga version by Stanislas Gros of the last day of a condemned man by Victor Hugo, are part of the pedagogies of education - complex and convoluted things - literary texts become more digestible in aesthetic formats. Such adaptations, through the use of visualization in comics, not only represent the spirit of the original texts, but also allow young readers to engage more fully and deeply (Fedo 2012).

Similarly, collective musical reappropriations challenge notions of author privilege and still manage to perpetuate the legacies of poets like Baudelaire. For example, Abbott (Abbott, 2019) discusses how initiatives such as Baudelaire in a Box present the collaborative creativity of several artists who reinvent Baudelaire's poetry in various musical genres and many forms of performance. This collaborative process not only democratizes artistic production, but also enriches the cultural environment through new interpretations and new relationships with contemporary values and practices.

These coping strategies thus emphasize the dynamic relationship of the literature with other medial forms. They show how, in this process, literature itself can be revitalized and the public can be captivated by literary heritage again. These will bring French literary classics further into a wider arena of exhibition and relevance, ensuring their continued access and study in educational and cultural contexts by linking visual comic book storytelling and musical reinterpretation.

Therefore, the intermediate adaptation makes French literary classics central to the rewriting of cultural narratives in order to attract diverse audiences in different media venues - from film and television to comics and musicals. This section indicates how theoretical knowledge combined with empirical studies identifies adaptation as a kind of transformation that may be able to negotiate highly complex intertextual relationships in the construction of contemporary cultural landscapes.

## **3. Pedagogical Strategies and Intercultural Competence through Literary Adaptations**

Literary adaptations serve as powerful tools in educational contexts, facilitating discussions on cultural, historical and social themes in a variety of contexts. This section explores how adaptations of French literary classics contribute to pedagogical strategies aimed at improving intercultural skills and fostering critical thinking in learners.

### **3.1. Improve literacy and cultural awareness through adaptation studies**

Cutchins, Raw, and Welsh (2010) advocate the use of adaptive studies to deepen student engagement with cultural differences and historical contexts. They argue that adaptations are not mere reproductions, but creative processes that incite reflection and critical analysis. This subsection

examines their perspective, highlighting how adaptations can enrich educational experiences by bridging cultural gaps and cultivating empathy and analytical skills among learners (Cutchins, Raw, Welsh, 2010).

Jeannin (2020) highlights the role of French literary works in the teaching of French as a foreign language (FLE). By using these works, educators can create plurilingual and pluricultural environments that encourage learners to explore linguistic diversity and intercultural understanding. This approach transforms language classrooms into inclusive communities that foster empathy and appreciation of diverse perspectives, enhancing both language skills and cultural literacy (Jeannin, 2020).

### **3.2. Sociological Perspectives and Intercultural Skills through Francophone Literature**

Galan and Malela (2022) explore contemporary French literary texts as tools for developing intercultural competence. They argue that these texts function as sociological documents that offer insight into the values, norms, and behaviors of diverse cultures. This subsection examines how literary reading fosters empathy and understanding of cultural diversity, enriching the educational experience by deepening learners' connections to the target culture (Galan, Malela, 2022).

Licops (2021) discusses strategies for teaching diversity and inclusion through the adaptation of literary classics. By selecting a diverse corpus of texts and contextualizing them with additional material, educators can create inclusive learning environments that encourage critical engagement with historical, cultural, and identity themes. This pedagogical approach not only broadens students' literary horizons, but also promotes sensitivity and inclusion in literary interpretation (Licops, 2021).

### **3.3. Innovative approaches to Francophone studies and pedagogy**

Disbro (2022) introduces the concept of "transpedagogies" to analyze and uncover trans-related themes and elements in French literature. Such an approach can engage students in some of the key issues of trans studies, sparking their thoughts on gender, identities, and colonial histories in the global Francophone space. Including current societal issues would encourage educators to make the study of literature more preoccupied and vivid, as students would show deeper interest and understanding (Disbro, 2022).

Conner (2021) reflects on various educational reforms that have taken place with the aim of making French literature more inclusive and transformative in secondary education. This section discusses reform priorities that address systemic and societal concerns by situating the purpose of education within a broader aspiration for social change. Inclusive teaching methods will offer the teacher a path through which literary education can be both current and effective, enabling the student to critically explore cultural narratives and foster equity (Conner, 2021).

French literary classics in film versions can ensure that teaching FFL improves the language of learners and acquires cultural knowledge. Using cinema either as a living contextual accessory, or as a preparation for reading, the liberation of the cinematic text from the purely literary chaperoning of Zine et al. 2024 can be even more advanced. It will also strengthen learners' intrinsic motivation and further encourage self-directed learning. For example, by shifting attention from written texts to sets and characters, cinematic analysis gives a different perspective that enriches traditional textual analysis. This methodical use of film in the classroom highlights the pedagogical potential of multimedia adaptation for the advancement of language teaching (Zine El Abidine, Nejjari, Khaldi, 2024).

Film adaptations in language teaching allow a tutor to use visual storytelling to involve students even more in French classics. While visuals provide contextual understanding, they also evoke emotional responses that help with understanding and retention. It is through such analyses in written and visual narratives that students come to develop a holistic understanding of cultural nuances embedded in texts. Such an interdisciplinary approach not only improves language skills, but also fosters an appreciation of the rich cultural heritage reflected in French literature.

In short, the pedagogical strategies discussed here position the transformative potential of literary adaptation with respect to the development of intercultural competence, foster critical thinking, and foster inclusive educational environments. From language learning to social criticism, French

adaptation studies offer educators a versatile set of tools that encourage students to embrace complex themes and multiple perspectives. Indeed, by integrating adaptation studies into curricula, educators are uniquely positioned to equip learners with the ability to negotiate global interconnection and rigorously contribute to cultural dialogue and understanding.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this article critically examines the processes of adaptation of French literary classics into a number of media and cultural positions that have colossal consequences on cultural narratives as well as on educational practice. Gathered from theoretical positions, historical developments and pedagogical strategies, it describes how adaptations do more than reshape literary canons; they also communicate with diverse audiences in meaningful dialogue.

Intersemiotic translation and historical adaptation processes strikingly reveal the balance that adaptation achieves by following the source texts, thus inserting creative reinterpretations that become necessary in this or that modified cultural context. The study of current trends, such as transmediality and media convergence, confirms the above point: adaptations are indeed important to organize new types of cultural articulation and, in their own way, to meet the changing demands of the public.

Furthermore, moral issues of adaptations, especially within television, raise complicated dynamics between the representation and morality of media stories. The adaptations also connect intellectual culture and popular culture to further illustrate cultural transmission by offering new insight into canonical texts that connect to the values of contemporary society.

Integrating literary adaptations into educational environments improves students' critical thinking and cross-cultural competence overall. Students learn meaningful lessons represented by the different pedagogical approaches; these adaptations serve as useful tools in the development of empathy and cultural sensitivity. This encourages students to engage critically with cultural narratives and also reflect on the historical and social contexts of these cultural narratives. In the future, there should be more research and implementation of adaptive strategies in the field of literary studies. This will not only help address the challenges of global interconnectivity, but will also enable cultural diversity and inclusivity to ensure that literary education is relevant and meets the needs of diverse student populations.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are offered to educators and cultural practitioners:

1. Educational departments should ensure the inclusion of French literary classics in school curricula through various aspects of media: cinema, television and new media. Students would be grateful and develop a more culturally cultivated mind, while paving the way for a critical appreciation of literature through different media.

2. It is time to embrace interdisciplinarity by bringing together studies in literature, media studies and cultural theory. This could take the form of collaborative research or seminars that deepen the understanding of adaptation processes and examine their implications for knowledge and culture in a society.

3. These analytical skills can be further enhanced through critical reflection activities on adaptations, where students will be asked to compare and contrast various media adaptations of literary texts. It is recommended to use film or television analysis activities rooted in literary classics to improve media literacy.

4. Educators could also provide a friendly and inclusive learning environment by celebrating cultural diversity in accommodations. Intercultural dialogue and better understanding could be facilitated through discussions, workshops or thematic events around which these adapted works could be organized.

5. Digital media and interactive platforms stand out as a method of seeking new forms of adaptation, given that the educational process must integrate new technological developments. With digital resources, tutors will be able to carry out an entrepreneurial project that arouses the interest of students to facilitate access to literary works.

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