

The fatality of tragic literature characters through cinematic adaptation

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P149337

Film & Television

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation will look at the notion of adaptation through tragic literature characters within film. The concept of adaptation within film from literature appeared almost immediately once the medium was developed (for example, Georges Méliès film called *A Trip to the Moon*). Solely focusing on these categories allows a hopefully more precise analysis. Many thinkers have studied this notion, indeed it is commonly looked at, mostly because one feels the need to critique and compare pieces with one and another. One can never be truly satisfied when one is faced with an original and a copy, especially if this copy is an adaptation.

The following will be questioned: To what extent is it an adaptation? Should one focus on the idea of honoring? Is there even an original source? Through the years can one still qualify as an adaptation?

First of all, the idea of adaptation will be explored as well as certain point of views on the act. Then, placing these notions within tragic literature through their cinematic adaptations, showing certain ways around the critique of subjective viewers. Thirdly it will be illustrated with a personal practice. At last, it will denounce the fatality of these characters and the loss of the original splendor, as well as the fatality of the creators.

THEORIES ON ADAPTATION

“Novel is a norm and the film deviates as it’s peril” (Bluestone, 2003) Bluestone, as well as majority of thinkers throughout time, have studied the notion of adaptation especially when it has a relation with art. Because art is often judged subjectively many different views appear whilst relating it to the subject of adaptation. “Adaptation can at best only aspire to copy,” (Aragay, 2005) Here, without précising the source of art, the idea shows the favoritism of the original. No matter what, the original conquers its adaptation. Indeed an adaptation is not defined as a copy, the *spatiotemporal* is not the same and neither are the people - it is more an aspired imitation. People expect a lot from adaptations, for it to “honor” the essence of the original. The original is always lurking about the other. Many films have been criticized for their lack of “honor.” However, to what extent does one piece have to honor? Robert Stam, an American film theorist, wrote that;

“The language of criticism dealing with the film adaptation of novels has often been profoundly moralistic, awash in terms such as infidelity, betrayal, deformation, violation, vulgarization, and desecration, each accusation carrying its specific charge of outraged negativity“
(Stam, 2000)

Whilst dealing with adaptations the audiences subjectivity gets in the way of criticizing the medium that is film. Stam justifies and brings a different point of view to adaptation by highlighting that both pieces are from different mediums when it comes to cinematic and

literature adaptations. Therefore, one can not penalize the other because of this difference. Whether it is a good or bad adaptation still remains subjective. If only there would be a fixed criteria which justifies or condones the piece in question.

Certain questions would then have to be asked once it comes to adapting, if one is preparing to adapt whilst knowing the text of by heart; How can one adapt without betraying the original? Is it even possible to betray a piece? Is there a personalized vision one wants to bring forward? Is the original even relevant to the new piece? Many could take a small crumb of the original and transform it completely. Then, is it still categorized as an adaptation? Should one keep this idea of conserving the narrative weft. The similarity of the narration should then be put forwards. It's essence must be present to qualify it as an adaptation. This leads us to Geoffrey Wagner, who had tried to categorize adaptation, yet again to justify works for its lack of ability to honor the original.

First category is that of "Transposition", which means that there is no change whatsoever, the novel is directly on screen without any big difference (Satantango, Bela Tarr). "Commentary" is the filmmaker taking a text and altering it with a different intention, he puts his own personal input in the story, (Oedipe Rex, Pier Paolo Pasolini). "Analogy" is the third category where the text is simply a point of departure, everything else is different, therefore, the author isn't copying. An example could be Bela Tarr's Horse of Turin with Nietzsche's dialogue in the beginning. Hinting that the director will build a story over what Nietzsche wrote, however, the film takes a different turn.

This is a way to project a positive outlook on adaptation. The most renowned adaptations are the ones of Shakespeare and of Ancient Greek pieces. They have been worked on over and over again. Changing from the black and white adaptations to colored, to different ethnicities and posing different social matters or “correctness” depending on the era. However this also causes an outrage. The question of whilst changing the ethnicities of a character, one changes the character completely. If the writer wanted the character to be Asian then he would have written him Asian. Instead, changing the sexes or ethnicity of characters in order to create an “open-minded” film could then be considered to dishonor the author’s piece completely as well as showing an idea of percent-aging different races which, in a reasonable point of view, illuminates more of a racial scandal than having a full white cast.

“What relationship should a film have to the original source? Should it be faithful? Can it be?
To what?” (Giddings, 2002)

Fidelity of the original source, is it even possible? If there is not the slightest source of fidelity then is it still an adaptation? Throughout time most of the novels, films, poems, and music will roundup dealing with the same subjects. The number of pieces dealing with teenagers and their uncomfot and depression nowadays is outstanding, however they are not categorized as adaptations. Indeed through time numerous adaptations have been made and remade, stories written and rewritten to the extent where one piece would be accused of plagiarizing the other. For example, *Shape of Water* by Guillermo Del Toro had been accused of plagiarizing a play from Paul Zindel, *Let Me Hear You Whisper*. The similarities are uncanny, yet it has been

claimed that Del Toro had never seen nor read the text. (Gilbey, 2018) If this is taken into the perspective of a coincidence then this is an example which illustrates storylines that intertwine.

There is an “intense disappointment (...) when a film adaptation fails to capture what we see as the fundamental narrative, thematic and aesthetic features.” (Mitaine, Roche and Schmitt-Pitiot, 2015) Fidelity becomes over-looked and over questioned. Instead, it is the critiques and personal opinions which should be questioned. How the piece makes you feel on its own without taking in account of the original. This separation is needed to judge the piece as its own.

Saying that it is an adaptation, a natural instinct arises that makes one compare. Could the notion of “adaptation” be too vague to analyze? Why define adaptation as keeping it’s narrative but why not it’s character? The character is always an essential part of the universe and part of the essence of the so called “original” medium.

The difference between adaptation and the verb to adapt, the alter, one can take a different perspective. Adaptation forces one to create a certain criteria or structure one needs for their piece to be qualified as an adaptation, evaluating what is the “core” of the “original.” However if something is adapted from something else, there is nothing which forces the author to keep any similarities. Giving them the freedom to create a separate universe. The director is then adapting a piece to another medium as well as another “society,” another period of time. There is then no feel of a forced percentage one needs to qualify itself as an adaptation. Instead, it is a piece that is adapted from another. Here comes the question of the original as well.

Whether a piece is ever qualifiable to be an “original,” knowing that everything is adapting from something else depending on the era one is in and the medium.

ADAPTATING INTO ANOTHER TRAGIC UNIVERSE

“Bring something truly personal and original to it, thus turning their films into the expression of a personal vision.”

(Aragay, 2005)

Taking in account the notion of adapting, the following will focus essentially on the universe and the characters that a director can create whilst adapting from a text and adapting it to their context - their own universe. A way of not disappointing the audience, a way to illustrate these known texts on a personal level - this personal level where it cannot be touched.



(Fig 1)

Pier Paolo Pasolini does this perfectly, receiving mainly positive reviews. He sticks to Sophocles's play and adapts within his universe. He starts the film in Lombardy, Italy where establishing shots are shown of industrial Italy taken over by Mussolini's Fascist party during the 20s. Once the baby is sent away by his father the audience is projected into another universe, where the date and whereabouts is unknown. Filmed in Morocco, Pasolini creates this other universe in where his main character grows up - this is when he brings in a linear manner of Sophocles's narrative. Nevertheless throughout the piece Pasolini embodies Oedipus's character, he illustrates his confusion, frustration and sexuality through Oedipus's journey. One example would be the Sphinx where interpreted sexual connotations can be found (seen in the image Fig 1), where the Sphinx wears the same shells as Oedipus's friend (and Pasolini's love interest at the time, Ninetto Davoli) as well as the mask portraying a certain phallic symbol. Another example would be the labyrinth where the character follows numerous young boys through a labyrinth and ends up face to face with a naked woman. He turns his head back and bites his hand. Showing his possible disgust and certain devoted attention to the younger boys.

These elements indicate Pasolini's personal input within the piece, all carefully put in with thought. Somehow Pasolini adapts this classic whilst satisfying the audience for this film highlights his own life, it becomes personal. Whilst analyzing it, many focus mainly on the author's own life than the accuracy to Sophocles text. The linearity of the piece does not even match Sophocles play, starting from the beginning of the storyline rather than the trial itself. But since Pasolini uses this play in personal use and creates this complete different universe his adaptation works. From the beginning, set in 1920s Italy, the audience are not expecting a complete cinematic adaptation of Sophocles's piece, this distortion leads to erase certain

expectations.

Indeed “adapting” a piece into a film whilst changing elements completely gives the audience a sense of separation. It will illustrate a different aspect of the tale. Lowering the expectations of the audience for a copy. Numerous plays or novels have been altered into another universe. Examples would go from Oedipus Rex to Ran, from director Akira Kurosawa, one of the best rated and known films which is said to “derive” from Shakespeare’s King Lear, yet they still find a way to honor the piece. Despite its prodigious cinematography and plenty of other elements which makes this film what it is, one possibility of its success could be because it is yet again projected into another universe, another country. An incredibly intellectual way of adapting elements from Shakespeare, creating this new facade of the known characters and storyline. However it is to truly understand the piece to be able to still adapt the piece into the Subject’s personal universe.

This part will focus on a more modern way of adapting tragic novels into a film. Bela Tarr’s adaptation of Laszlo Krasznahorkai’s *Satantango* and it’s “tragic” characters. Having already worked together in the past, Tarr truly understands the universe and message portrayed throughout the novel. His seven and a half hour long piece follows the steps and the structure introduced in the novel - as well as the steps of a tango. Both of them illustrate the tragic characters in a very poetic manner. The reason for Bela Tarr’s honor to Krasznahorkai lies in his approach to characters and visual aesthetics, turning the piece into another poetic œuvre.

Their characters are a more “modern” depiction of a Tragic ‘hero’. Unlike the Shakespearean heroes who all have something to aspire to, most of their characters have nothing - they are still letting the outside world take over them. As Irímias (a character in *Satantango*) describes; “They’ll be sitting in exactly the same place, on the same filthy stools (...) They are waiting belly to the ground, like cats at pig-killing time, hoping for scraps. They are like servants that work in a castle where the master has shot himself: They hang around at an utter loss as to what to do.” (Krasznahorkai, 2012)

This illustrates most of Bela Tarr’s characters, notably in the *Turin Horse*, where both his characters spend a large amount of time on stools, staring at the outside world. These tragic characters are projected perfectly into Bela Tarr’s universe. Faces that are blank - real. They are just waiting in silence, hence all of Bela Tarr’s films where his characters are sat in front of a window, such as in *Damnation’s* opening, *The Turin Horse*, a *Man from London* and the list goes on - they are perceived as ‘voyeurs’ in a Deleuzian way. These characters are all passive. “Any capacity he might have had in the realms of touch, or taste, or smell had also deserted him, leaving nothing but the throbbing of blood and the calm workings of his organs to disturb his utter lack of consciousness” (Krasznahorkai, 2012) placing this with the visuals of the doctor from *Satantango*, one can see this portrait as being “honorable.” (Fig 2)



(Fig 2)

Within here there is the creation of Krasznahorkai's universe. Bela Tarr creates an extremely lengthy piece, an approach which illustrates Krasznahorkai's text perfectly. Indeed one can remark the extremely long sentences as well as blocks of text within his novel. The dialogue does not appear like other novels, distinctly separated from change of character, description or action within the text, instead it is all jammed together within the same block. This use of long, lengthy text could have partially influenced this idea of creating a seven and a half hour film. It's duration is commented as "forcing the viewer to experience the equivalent of the inertia in which the characters live: the dullness from lowland horizons and the endless rain have

to be almost physically felt by the viewer,” (Ranciere, 2013) becoming true to the film and Laszlo Krasznahorkai’s novel.

Every time the omnipresent narrator describes the thoughts of the characters, it is portrayed perfectly with Bela Tarr’s universe, where “the events that comprise a film are sensible moments, slices of duration: moments of solitude in which the fog of the exterior slowly penetrates bodies from the other side of the window.” (Ranciere, 2013) His scenes say nearly as much as Laszlo's words, the perfect combination to portray these tragic characters with few dialogue, few action. Placing the text next to the imagery of Bela Tarr, one can imagine already, even though a large amount of time the characters are silent - they do not speak a word until half the film has passed. These thoughts are exactly what the characters in his film are thinking. Bela Tarr does say in an interview that he wants to show “some poor, ugly, sad people.” (Garyrthk, 2011) He would show the realism, a factor explored within Krazsnaorkai’s work.

Within Laszlo’s *Satantango* many elements can be found and compared to many other Bela Tarr’s films, not only does Tarr give the perfect portrayal of Laszlo’s characters but Laszlo's words are continuously found in Bela Tarr's work. For example, Irimias describes the villages in *Satantango* being, “when they are left alone they go mad: like mad dogs they fall on whatever remains and tear it to bits,” (Krasznahorkai, 2012) whilst in *Damnation*, at the end the main character is left alone, the woman he desires is gone, he joins the hungry dogs, crotched on the floor, becoming mad as since in the following (Fig 3).



(Fig 3)

Their universes combine together which gives Bela Tarr's films such poetry. Ranciere says Bela Tarr "scrupulously" adapts *Satantango*. He is careful, he understands the characters, his understanding becomes so strong that he need not words nor action to describe to the audience what Krasznahorkai says in his novel. Bela Tarr constructs "a visual scenario which extracts the power of situations that endure from the narrative that binds them together" (Ranciere, 2013) This is an example of where an artist adapts a novel and truly understands it, creating a poetic honourable piece where both universes collide in harmony. This poetic feel, posing Flaubert's words in Ranciere's analysis of Bela Tarr, is "A style (...) is not the embellishment of a discourse, but a matter of seeing things: an "absolute" manner (...) of seeing

against the narrative tradition that rushes on to the effect that follows from a cause,” (Ranciere, 2013)

THE FATALITY OF ADAPTATION ITSELF

“Any production of *Endgame* which ignores my stage directions is completely unacceptable to me. (...) dismisses my directions is a complete parody of the play as conceived by me. Anybody who cares for the work couldn't fail to be disgusted by this”

Samuel Beckett (Badham, 2015)

Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary* illustrates this realism - this way of seeing of “inking into reality”. Words which perfectly describe Bela Tarr's and Laszlo Krasznahorkai's works. This is needed to create a perfect adaptation - this way of “absolutizing the act of seeing.” These directors made the adaptation their own yet still honoring the original text or storyline. However through time once a piece has been adapted time after time the essence of the original disappears. the loss of the text becomes apparent. The canon ruins the effort of creating a new piece.

“Rhetoric of cinema as a rapacious animal of prey or parasite devouring ‘it's unfortunate victim’, literature.”

(Aragay, 2005)

This part will explore this idea of loss of text, the loss of the narrative, the loss of the essence. Then developing into the idea that these adaptations of these tragedies become tragedies themselves, in the sense of their fatal end of adaptation itself. Wagner's categorization might be

“pigeonholing” as he himself put it nevertheless one can point out that if someone adapts a film, only based on a small part, he is making it his own. But to take a piece and transform it whilst using the term “adaptation” will automatically cause a riot.

Taking in account the thoughts of Flaubert his work has been adapted numerous times and only now does an adaptation of his work dishonor completely the novel of *Madame Bovary*. Not only does an adaptation fail if the director does not understand the piece, it is the common reuse of a piece over and over that creates this distance between it and the “original.”

Madame Bovary has been adapted numerous times throughout countries such as in France, U.S.A and India, taking on different titles. Despite several successful adaptations such as Minnelli’s 1947, the recent adaptation is left undesirable. Unlike putting a piece into Bela Tarr’s own universe, this is a “proper” adaptation. Remembering the difference between adaptation and adapting. Here it’ll show how nowadays old literature has completely lost its course, over developed and over analyzed by the present.

Kugelmass, a modern man brought into *Madame Bovary*’s life. Different realities intertwined. “A bald Jew is kissing *Madame Bovary*,” (Amann, 2006) A comic, humoristic version of *Madame Bovary* where the main character takes on the role before Rodolphe. Not an adaptation of the piece but having the tragic character adapted to a new scenario, into the modern times.

“I would like to be sure that all those who conjure up the spirit of Fabrice and Madame Bovary have read Stendhal and Flaubert, but I am not sure.”

(Kalnay, 1997)

The gaze of Madame Bovary can be picked out, the way the character gazes off, never does she show her happiness or love to Charles within the 1991 adaptation. She has a harsh, disappointed face most of the time, the realism is illustrated perfectly, such as in her gruesome death scene which illustrate certain stylistic devices within Flaubert's text. Within Minnelli's the romanticism of Emma Bovary is seen as well. The way she moves and talks. The most important scene would be the ball scene within Minnelli's works, where Emma is surrounded by men, taken away and dances all night, spinning and spinning, illustrating Flaubert's words, creating this illusion of Emma of her first taste of infidelity; “They began slowly, then went more rapidly. They turned; all around them was turning--the lamps, the furniture, the wainscoting, the floor, like a disc on a pivot. On passing near the doors the bottom of Emma's dress caught against his trousers. Their legs commingled; he looked down at her; she raised her eyes to his.” (Flaubert, 1856) These stylistic device, using punctuation and short sentences create this rapid feeling within the scene (Fig 4). Playing as well with the symbolism Flaubert uses in his text with windows, when Emma mentions who she would faint, and there they break them for her, they break away her entrapment, or instead opens reality within the scene, since the following is Charles yelling her name, inking her back to her reality. This first infidelity and ball scene is practically forgotten within the 2014 adaptation, even though this is an important scene which illustrates Emma's downfall.



(Fig 4)

Another element of Emma's unhappiness was the birth of her daughter, one she wished would be a boy. Emma names her "Berthe," which in French sounds like "yuck." Emma's relationship with her daughter is one of constant love and hatred, love and pity. However in the 2014 adaptation Berthe is completely forgotten. Sophie Barthes justifies by mentioning how it would be a difficult task for her to introduce this complex mother and daughter relationship in a two hour film. (Au Café Des Loisirs, 2015). If one were to honor the piece completely, not thinking the time is enough, it should be longer to truly honor the piece, hence the time of Bela Tarr's *Satantango*, instead of wiping out an essential part to Emma's downfall.

Emma's death is also put aside. She dies in the forest shown in the beginning of the 2014 film. (Fig 5) Even if this could be an idea of showing how the character is apart from the rest of the village, that she shouldn't have to suffer her last breath in a claustrophobic room, with death right by her side, this is not Emma Bovary, her tragedy is pushed aside. The realism penetrating her, pushing her to the edge is forgotten. Flaubert's words whilst describing her symptoms; At once her chest began rising and falling rapidly. "Her tongue protruded at full length from her mouth; her rolling eyes grew paler, like the globes of two lamps about to go out, so that one would have thought she was already dead, except for the frightening, accelerating motion of her ribs, as if her soul were leaping up to break free," (Flaubert, 1856) in "vulgar" manner, he even stated that he himself threw up his dinner whilst writing the poison scene. Within the original text the accumulation of "f," "r" and "s" makes the scene sound harsh, the reader feels the pain of Emma. Illustrated in 1991 adaptation, where she is seen almost decaying into her bed. (Fig 6) However she becomes more of a heroine in this adaptation, possibly an attempt to illustrate a view on feminism, which puts aside the true meaning of Bovarism. She dies in a fairytale-like

way, isolated in a forest. Her story is forgotten, instead her pain only lasts a little bit, she dies alone in the forest barely in agony. Then André Bazin's definition of adaptation is overlooked, "The very principle of cinematic adaptation, whose aim is to simplify and condense a work from which it basically wishes to retain only the main characters and situations," (Bazin, Piette and Cardullo, 1997)



(Fig 5)



(Fig 6)

“Truffaut excoriated the tradition of quality which turned French literary classics into predictably well-furnished, well-spoken, and stylistically formulaic films.”(Stam, 2006) This is present nowadays, such as in the newest polished version of *Madame Bovary*. Here the director kept her in her dull realistic “banal” life and simply changed everything around Emma including the birth of her own child. Inking Emma Bovary into this polished, “perfect” lifestyle where she so happens to find boredom. There is nothing pushing her to commit her “sins.” The “pearls” as Flaubert puts it is forgotten, his string has also been cut to pieces. The whole context is forgotten. Making it simply a modern depiction of what is classified as “beauty,” “pleasing to watch.” The perfect film for entertainment in this 21st century, where everything is about mass produce, such as certain online platforms. The beauty of Flaubert’s text and narration is completely wiped out.

“It is possible to imagine that we are moving toward a reign of the adaptation in which the notion of the unity of the work, if not the very notion of the author himself, will be destroyed,” (Aragay, 2005) The director takes the narrative, leaving only bones which are the author and his words, dead. Indeed André Bazin mentions how to certain writers “their protagonists are *enfants terribles* who completely escape from their control once they have been conceived.” (Bazin, Piette and Cardullo, 1997) Here again is the death of the author but also the freedom of the characters, the freedom to interpret them anyway. Nevertheless it is this freedom that is notably the uncontrollable problem. This is what has been and is happening through interpretation and notably adaptation. As well as Barthes, “we know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the

death of the Author.” (Barthes, 1977) some could point out this idea of giving the future to cinema one must overthrow the original source, killing the writer, giving birth to the filmmaker.

PERSONAL PRACTICE

To create a proper adaptation is truly desirable. If one were to make one, the research one would have to put is undeniably important.

This personal practice will be to adapt a story into one's own context and "universe" as well as showing the death of creation. Taking Tartini's song *The Devil's Trill* and his story on how the Devil came to him at night in a dream, the final major project will represent the story after the dream, the torture it leads the character into. The main character's piece gets played after his death and this causes everyone who listens to it to die, hence the death within his creation for himself and mankind, developing on the idea, such portrayed by Guan Xiao's *David* from 2013 where art becomes repeated, reused, recreated, sold, expanded, compressed, and destroyed.

Then the elements of Tartini's dream are projected into a new character, an old man. Like countless Shakespearean plays, only taking certain aspects which are known, the audience are aware of them. Nevertheless the characters, as well as the storyline is different. This is a separate project, revolving around the same myth. These two projects are both adapted from Tartini, personally it does not seem that taking these elements would ruin the tale of Tartini, for it does not mention the musician once and the story of Tartini around the world is fairly less known than that of *Madame Bovary* or Shakespeare.

Adapting historical events, situations to new characters. Such as the relevance between Virgin

Suicides and the Romanov Sisters, taking their tragic story and inspiring myself to develop this short piece about four sisters, all trapped in a room yet one by one they disappear. This is inspired by the time the Romanov family were held captive before their execution, and the idea of one sister escaping taking historical events can also be challenging especially for adaptation. The film needs to be historically accurate if it would be defined as an adaptation, or “inspired by.”

In order to create a proper adaptation, one which pleases the whole, one needs to remove oneself from all expectations of the 21st century; remove oneself from the commercial aspects, from the audience and focus merely on the text and the author. One must devote itself to the context of the story and the author, become completely enwrapped by the context and the storyline. However this is difficult nowadays. It becomes more and more complicated to adapt well-known novels and plays into film. One finds it hard to create an honorable piece whilst taking in account, the expectations of the audiences, an audience nowadays whom solely desire mass production, to consume as much as they can. Hence why for my final major projects, none of them are proper adaptations but merely a tentative of adapting certain events into a different context. As soon as one person puts a text next to film the judgment flies. People will always compare. It becomes easy for people to adapt instead of creating adaptations. This is merely to adapt storylines which interests, however it is agreed that the essence of original storytelling is dead, the idea of film as an art form is dead. Literature has been used over and over again, it is then comparable to Guan Xiao's idea of *David*. Reused and resold over and over again, literature merely becomes a merchandise, more and more after every single adaptation.

CONCLUSION

“Film technology, obliterates the ‘aura,’ the authenticity, authority, originality, uniqueness—of the work of art, thus bringing about a ‘liquidation of the traditional value of the cultural heritage” (Aragay, 2005)

Especially in this era of 2010s there is only so much one can do whilst adapting classics especially if there are thousands of adaptations or even theatre adaptations. There are of course a few exceptions however taking online platforms which create their own films as well as adaptations (such as a Series of Unfortunate Events) the essence and style of the piece is completely forgotten in order to maintain a certain constraint. Bela Tarr’s work illustrates Laszlo's perfectly because of the lack of constraint given to him, and his closeness to the writer himself, giving him permission to adapt it. The image nowadays platforms give out is this slick “perfect” way of filming. It is indeed visually polished nevertheless the depth and many literary stylistic elements and devices are put aside. More than ever, the idea of film is becoming more and more of a product. A way to the author is forgotten instead the piece is left though visually pleasing, empty. It is on the course of extinction, everything is an adaptation of everything nowadays. In the world we live in this is simply a way for producing more and more, hence the live action movies of all classic tales. Scene by scene, song by song everything is the same except the “live action” side of things. The whole original concept of adaptation is dead. Humans simply continue in order to give themselves a reason for fantasy, a reason to live the way they imagine that they do. As Jacques Ranciere puts it whilst comparing Flaubert's thoughts to Bela Tarr, “there are no stories, say the novelist. There are no subjects, says the filmmaker.

They were all told in the Old Testament.” The death of text, the death of creation itself is within this phrase. If one lives without the presence of adaptation, no matter how good or bad the context, they will live their lives the way most of Bela Tarr’s characters do. Completely passive, letting the rain “penetrate” them, they will give into the idea of the death of creation. One then becomes their own tragic hero. It simply feels as if the original fades due to being like a stamp being continuously stamped over and over again, losing its original ink. It has already lost it.

Boris Vian, writer and musician wrote the book, “I will spit on your grave” in 1946, an adaptation was released in 1958. Boris Vian disowned the book then forced them to remove his name from the adaptation. At the premiere he stood up, yelled:

"These guys are supposed to be American? My ass!"

(Neill, 2007)

Then collapsed, dying from a heart attack.

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