

Death of the Author and Birth of the Adapter in a Literary Work

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Abstract : Adaptation studies have been closely aligned to translation studies as both deal with the process of rendering the meaning from one culture to another. These two disciplines are related to each other, but the theories are still being developed. This research aims to fill this gap and provide a contribution to the growing discipline of adaptation studies through a theoretical perspective while investigating how different cultural interpretations of adaptation influence the final literary product. This research focuses on the theoretical concepts of Barthes's death of the author and Benjamin's afterlife of the text in translation, which is believed to lead to the birth of the adapter in a literary work. That is, in adaptation, the 'death' of the author allows for the 'birth' of the adapter, offering them all the creative possibilities of authorship. It also explores the differences between the meanings of adaptation in the West and the Arab world through the analysis of adapted texts in Arabic initially deriving from the European and American literature of the 19th and 20th centuries. The methodology of this thesis is based upon qualitative literary analysis, in which original and adapted works are compared and contrasted, with the additional insights of literary and adaptation theories and prior scholarship. The main works discussed are the Arabic adaptations of William Faulkner's novels. The analysis is guided by theories of adaptation studies to help in explaining the concepts of relocating, recreating, and rewriting in the process of adaptation. It draws on scholarship on adaptations to inquire into the status of the adapted texts in relation to the original texts. Also, these theories prove that adaptation is the process that is used to transfer text from source to adapted text, not some other analytical practice. Through the textual analysis, concepts of the death of the author and the birth of the adapter will be illustrated, as will the roles of the adapter and the task of rendering works for a different culture, and the understanding of adaptation and Arabization in Arabic literature.

Keywords : adaptation, Arabization, authorship, recreating, relocating

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