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DOSSIÊ: TEXTO COMO TECIDO DA CULTURA

The Intercultural Adaptation as an Anthropological Experiment

A Adaptação Intercultural como Experimento Antropológico

La Adaptación Intercultural como un Experimento Antropológico

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Abstract: Intercultural adaptations focus on the cultural changes necessary in this process of adaptation, in which a source text is adapted into a film or any other medium, or even the same one, recreating a narrative. Researchers from Adaptation Studies have stated that they are the combination of familiarity and novelty (Hutcheon, 2006); so, in this paper, we argue that the analysis of an intercultural adaptation could benefit from the perspective of Interpretive Anthropology, of thinking the adapter as in the role of an anthropologist who needs to observe the otherness in the source text and make it familiar to the audience. In order to do so, we adopt as support to our thesis authors from Adaptation Studies, such as Hutcheon (2006), Interpretive Anthropology, as Geertz (1973), and Cultural Studies, as Eagleton (2000). To demonstrate our proposition, we provide an illustrative case study of *Julieta* (2016), a film by Almodóvar that is an adaptation of three short stories by Munro from the book *Runaway* (2005), also known as "Triptych Juliet". We use a methodology proposed by Silva (2012) but incorporating the Interpretive Anthropology perspective and adding a new element of analysis: thematic crossovers. This way, we believe that studies of adaptations could avoid value judgment and comparisons of fidelity, because culture is understood as the main motivation in the process of adaptation, maintaining a dialogue between source text and adaptation, but also with all intertextual texts within the fabrication of cultural meaning. Thus, we make sense of our lives and reality through the aesthetic symbols of art, creating individual and collective identity as humanity by observing the other and ourselves in the anthropological experiment we consider to be the intercultural adaptation.

Keywords: Intercultural Adaptation; Interpretive Anthropology; Intertextuality.

Resumo: As adaptações interculturais focam nas mudanças culturais necessárias no processo de adaptação, no qual um texto é adaptado para um filme ou para qualquer outra mídia, ou, até, para a mesma, recriando a narrativa. Pesquisadores dos Estudos de Adaptação afirmam que "adaptação" é a combinação de familiaridade e novidade (Hutcheon, 2006); assim, neste artigo, argumentamos que a análise de uma adaptação intercultural poderia se beneficiar da perspectiva da Antropologia Interpretativa, pensando no adaptador como um antropólogo que precisa observar a alteridade em um texto e torná-la familiar para o seu público. Adotamos como apoio à nossa tese autores dos Estudos de Adaptação, como Hutcheon (2006), Antropologia Interpretativa, como Geertz (1973), e Estudos Culturais, como Eagleton (2000). Para demonstrar nossa proposição, fornecemos um estudo de caso ilustrativo de *Julieta* (2016), filme de Almodóvar que é uma adaptação de três contos de Munro do livro *Runaway* (2005), também conhecidos como "Tríptico Julieta". Usamos a metodologia proposta por Silva (2012) para a análise, mas incorporamos a perspectiva da antropologia interpretativa e acrescentamos um novo elemento de análise, que chamamos de cruzamentos temáticos. Dessa forma, acreditamos que os estudos de adaptações poderiam evitar o julgamento de valor e as comparações de fidelidade, porque a cultura é entendida como a principal motivação no processo de adaptação, mantendo

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um diálogo entre o texto de origem e a adaptação, mas também com todos os textos intertextuais dentro da fabricação de significado cultural. Assim, damos sentido às nossas vidas e realidade através dos símbolos estéticos da arte, criando identidade individual e coletiva como humanidade ao observar o outro e a nós mesmos no experimento antropológico que consideramos ser a adaptação intercultural.

Palavras-chave: Adaptação Intercultural; Antropologia Interpretativa; Intertextualidade.

Resumen: Las adaptaciones interculturales se centran en los cambios culturales necesarios en este proceso de adaptación, en el cual un texto de origen es adaptado en una película u otro medio, o incluso el mismo, recreando una narrativa. Investigadores de Estudios de Adaptación han afirmado que las adaptaciones son la combinación de familiaridad y novedad (Hutcheon, 2006); así, en este artículo, argumentamos que el análisis de una adaptación intercultural podría beneficiarse desde la perspectiva de la Antropología Interpretativa, pensando en el adaptador como un antropólogo que necesita observar la otredad en el texto de origen y hacerla familiar para el público. Para hacerlo, adoptamos como apoyo a nuestra tesis autores de Estudios de Adaptación, como Hutcheon (2006), Antropología Interpretativa, como Geertz (1973), y Estudios Culturales, como Eagleton (2000). Para demostrar nuestra propuesta, proporcionamos un estudio de caso ilustrativo de *Julieta* (2016), película de Almodóvar que es una adaptación de tres cuentos de Munro del libro *Runaway* (2005), también conocido como "Tríptico Julieta". Utilizamos una metodología propuesta por Silva (2012) pero incorporando la perspectiva de la antropología interpretativa y añadiendo un nuevo elemento de análisis, los cruces temáticos. De esta manera, creemos que los estudios de adaptación podrían evitar el juicio de valor y las comparaciones de fidelidad, porque la cultura se entiende como la principal motivación en el proceso de adaptación, manteniendo un diálogo entre el texto de origen y la adaptación, pero también con todos los textos intertextuales dentro de la fabricación de significado cultural. Así, damos sentido a nuestras vidas y realidad a través de los símbolos estéticos del arte, creando identidad individual y colectiva como humanidad al observar al otro y a nosotros mismos en el experimento antropológico que consideramos que es la adaptación intercultural.

Palabras-clave: Adaptación Intercultural; Antropología Interpretativa; Intertextualidad.

Introduction

Adaptation Studies is an area of research that has initially focused on the book-film relationship, with publications such as George Bluestone's *Novels into Film* (1957). Nowadays, it is considered an interdisciplinary area, with works linked to postgraduate programs in Literature, Cinema and Communication, among others. Thus, different approaches are adopted, such as historical ones, with revisionism, or those centered on a specific author, as we see in studies on adaptations of William Shakespeare and Jane Austen, for example.

Despite having so many methodological possibilities, what is inevitable is the presence of the cultural element in Adaptation Studies. Scholars such as Hutcheon (2006), Cartmell (2012) and Leitch (2012) helped establish the field as we know it today, including the principle of adaptations as cultural phenomena. In fact, we have come to understand them as reflections and products of a certain time and place, surrounded by interests, for instance artistic, marketing, etc. There are many different definitions of "adaptation"; we understand it as the materialization of an everlasting dialogue between society, fabricating intertextuality and considering culture's significance in elucidating how stories resonate across different forms of expression. We propose a reflection not only on adaptation, but on intercultural adaptation, one that brings the exchange between cultures to the main discussion in the process of adaptation. Hence, we suggest thinking the intercultural adaptation from the perspective of Anthropology, the field that seeks to interpret the symbolic meaning of culture, specifically of the other culture, or, at least, from a distant positioning, also known as cultural relativity, which, according to Kilman e Wellstrom (2021, s.p.), is "the attempt of the anthropologist to step back from their own cultural biases and ideas for a moment to try and understand what's happening. This allows you to see more clearly and to try for scientific clarity".

Hutcheon (2006, p. 114) has characterized adaptation as "mixture of repetition and difference, of familiarity and novelty"; while Miner (1956, s.p.) has stated that Anthropology is "making the strange familiar and the familiar strange". Therefore, not only do both fields have the cultural element at the core of their studies but also the dynamics of familiar and unfamiliar symbols. In this paper, we seek to merge the two in order to enrich the discussion about the role of culture in (re)creating stories through adaptation. Our decision towards the term "intercultural" instead of the "transcultural", much trendier in the academy now,

is based on the understanding that there is not only transference and transformation, but, most importantly, there is dialogue, such as Bakhtin (2011) proposes, and which would later become the concept of intertextuality on the hands of Kristeva (1969), proposing that texts reference, influence, and build upon each other, creating a network of meaning through these connections. Our comprehension of intercultural adaptation, thus, implies a two-way movement, where the source text inspires the adaptation, but is also changed by it. As we will discuss further along, it puts the two works in a more balanced equation, avoiding the value judgement of fidelity. To illustrate such a proposition, we will use a case study of the adaptation by Spanish filmmaker Almodóvar, *Julieta* (2016), based on three short stories by Canadian writer Alice Munro, from the book *Runaway* (2005). To do so, we will use a methodology proposed by Silva (2012) for stylistic analysis as a starting point to discuss possible main elements for reflection, but we will add the perspective of Anthropology and Adaptation Studies, so we can show how making, watching, and studying intercultural adaptations is an anthropological experiment.

An Anthropological Take on Intercultural Adaptations

Culture is one of the hardest words to define, and many scholars have dedicated their entire careers to theorizing about it. For this work, we adopt the definition given by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973, p. 5), based on semiotics:

> The concept of culture I espouse [...] is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.

Such a definition corroborates our understanding of adaptation, in which, more than characters and plot, what is adapted is their significance, fabricating a web of infinite intertextuality that is both the process and the product in the search for meaning. Geertz (1973, p. 14) proposes an interpretive anthropology, one that focuses on thick descriptions, the observation of the difference in meaning, for instance, of a twitch from that of a wink:

> As interworked systems of construable signs (what, ignoring provincial usages, I would call symbols), culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly—that is, thickly—described.

It is, therefore, the context that attributes meaning to a certain symbol; when a symbol is taken from one context and inserted into another, its meaning could and most likely will change, unless some adaptation occurs. Such an observation of the otherness of societies is Anthropology's discipline, which seeks to make an ethnography, a description, of another people's culture, to be able to interpret their symbols. Interpretive Anthropology does so without value judgment, since it is not trying to find definite causes and explanations for specific behaviors but tries to interpret their meaning *in* society. For interpretive anthropology, context is an important part of the observation because a code can only be interpreted in a specific place and time and within a specific framing.

In the article *Adaptação intercultural: em busca de um modelo analítico*, Marcel Vieira Barreto Silva (2012) proposes an analytical methodology for adaptations, one that we find to be precisely, even though unintentionally, concerned with adaptation in a complementary way to that of interpretive anthropology by establishing that context is essential to understanding the dynamics of other cultural symbols. For us, the materiality of the works (both the source text and the adaptation) is the given context, as works of art, which are aesthetical in an individual and collective construction, as we will discuss in more detail further along.

Silva's focus is on theatrical productions, based on Pavis' (2008) contributions, but, in this paper, we will check its application to literature-film adaptation, using the case of *Julieta* (2006), ad-

ding the anthropological perspective. Silva argues that texts located in different cultural matrices necessarily pass through a prism where the signs receive new meanings. The researcher proposes five categories of analysis for intercultural adaptation: spoken language, chronotope, plot, generic dominants, and staging style. Even though Silva applied culture from a semiotic approach, thinking of the signs and their significance, we take one step further by understanding the role of the adapter as that of an anthropologist, who decodes and recodes such signs so that they receive the culturally specific significance in a different social context, creating a somehow correspondent meaning, although not necessarily the same one. As a consequence of this extension of Silva's proposition, we will also add a sixth category of analysis, thematic crossovers, to be detailed further on.

First, we should look at Silva's (2012, p. 205-206, our translation) definition of adaptations, organized in four points:

> [...] first, it is a process of creation, carried out by different motivations, which imply particular aesthetic choices; second, it is the result of this creation process, in whose materiality the choices made during the process are inscribed; third, it requires a recognizable source, as it is necessary for the reader-spectator to be engaged, to a greater or lesser extent, in both works; and, finally, it necessarily implies a change of means of expression.

In this way, he resumes and summarizes Hutcheon's (2006) propositions that adaptations are both the process, the product, and the consumption. When we apply this to the intercultural aspect, that is, the exchange between cultures, we think about the process of transferring a text from one culture to another, making the necessary changes so that the signs are adapted to their significance in said new culture; in the product that materializes and reflects the culture of which it is part; and in consumption, when the viewer is aware of the adaptation condition, an intercultural interpretive layer can be added, both to the source text and the adaption, in addition to ruling out fidelity judgments. In the intercultural adaptation, certain meanings encoded in the source culture need to be decoded to be selected (or not) and then recoded according to the target culture. In this process, it becomes clearer what each code means, both in the source text and in the adaptation. Therefore, we find in culture the motivation for choices in adaptation and, at the same time, when we come back to the source text, we can see more clearly that its author also followed cultural motivations, intentionally or not. Once again, we reaffirm the perspective of Anthropology in this observation that, through this dialogue between source text and adaptation, a dynamic is created that makes the strange familiar and the familiar strange.

Silva suggests that the five aspects to be analyzed we already mentioned (spoken language; chronotope; plot; generic dominants; and staging style) can highlight "cultural transformations that are not limited to the text, but are circumscribed within it" (Silva, 2012, p. 221, our translation). We search, through such elements, for material evidence in the film, which explains and can be explained by extratextual factors, understood here as national and regional cultures. Silva (2012, p. 206, our translation) states that, in this way, we use comparative study only to create the necessary contrast to see cultural transformations:

> We believe, therefore, that there is not only a stylistic specificity in this type of adaptation, but, above all, a need for epistemological reassessment, since we cannot analyze the relationship between film and adapted book simply through comparative textual categories [...]. On the contrary, we must use cultural shock as a prism that directs textual tools towards deliberate transformations. With this, we also take a step beyond the classic reading of adaptation, whether from the perspective of fidelity – now duly relativized – or through phenomenological criticism that works with the idea of the work's spirit, a category that slips in the face of its more comprehensive hermeneutical ambition.

Therefore, if a narrative encoded in one culture is transposed into another, it needs, consequently, some sort of re-encoding, so it holds an equivalent meaning – or, in some cases, a new one if this new context requests it –, in this process, adaptations are necessary to make even the smallest detail, such as Geertz's unpretentious

wink, credible in this new frame. Adapters, at that point, take on a posture similar to that of an anthropologist: they need to observe the meaning of the *other* in the source-text and how it is encoded. After that, they need to investigate their own culture, however no longer as an anthropologist, since an ethnographic perspective is only possible when analyzing another culture, because "One's own way of life is simply human; it is other people who are ethnic, idiosyncratic, culturally peculiar. In a similar way, one's own views are reasonable, while other people's are extremist" (Eagleton, 200, p. 29). Adapters, then, re-encode it in a way that it gives the same or similar meaning in their cultural context. If meaning is the goal, how we encode it should not be so impactful on how we read a text. Therefore, the adaptation decisions are justified by the interpretive reading of a source-text and how the adapter will adapt it to get the closest to that meaning. Interpretive anthropology, then, can provide a new view to intercultural adaptations as readings of meaning by different cultures. Applying Miner's (1956) quote "making the strange familiar and the familiar strange" from our introduction, adapters take what is strange in the source text and make it familiar in their own context and, parallel to that, this process stresses what could pass as familiar to be, actually, strange, when compared to another culture.

As for the audience who experience the intercultural adaptation as such[2], they can also exercise their seeing adaptation as a producer and a product of a culture that brings to the surface the possibility of thick description and possibly walking away from the judgmental idea of "fidelity". Geertz (1973) argues that value is never to be attributed in anthropology since we cannot state that one culture is superior to others. Hither, comparison is a healthy exercise, because it is through contrast that the evidence for a thick description comes forward, and we can more clearly see the cultural specificities manifesting. The audience becomes the anthropologist who can observe from the outside, in one determined context, maybe from the perspective of the one who read the book first, for example, and watches the film adaptation as the Other or vice-versa, or from a 3rd perspective of their own cultural background. Different audiences, of course, also have different readings.

It is important to take into consideration what Geertz argues when he explains that an ethnography of a small village is the ethnography of a small village and cannot be applied to other contexts and generalized to bigger scopes of society. If we interpret meaning in an intercultural adaptation, we can find explanations from the bigger picture, but we are studying the empirical evidence that can provide a reading of a specific film/book, etc., which is set in a specific context and, thus, provide the possibility of such a reading. However, when we think about art we are taken to the concept of aesthetics, which Eagleton (2000, p. 53) connects deeply to our contemporary view of culture, as both producer and product of art:

> What matters is not the works themselves but the way they are collectively construed, ways which the works themselves could hardly have anticipated. Taken together, they are offered as evidence of the timeless unity of the human spirit; of the superiority of the imaginative to the actual; of the inferiority of ideas to feelings; of the truth that the individual stands at the centre of the universe; of the relative unimportance of public as against interpersonal life, or of the practical as against the contemplative, and other such modern prejudices. But one could just as well construe them quite differently.

Adaptations fit in this concept of culture as a circular intertextual system that feeds itself since they are, at the same time, the process of adaptation and the final product of the adaptation itself. They are art products easily subject to comparison, collectively constructed as cultural artifacts. The intercultural adaptation, then, makes explicit the dual position of the individual and the collective in culture production. In the re-coding, adapters aestheticize their reading of the other society in a universalizing way that should not

[2] According to Hutcheon (2006), the audience needs to know they are watching an adaptation to watch it *as an adaptation*. For instance, a viewer who does not know that the film is based on a book will have a different experience than one that does.

even be noticeable to those who share the same culture. They make the individual decisions on the artwork which represent the universal of their culture. The concept of culture adopted by Silva (2012, p. 212, our translation) supports our affirmation by understanding it as

> [...] cultural goods (practices, habits, forms, styles, works) [which] are not only products of the social context from which they manifest themselves, but, dialectically, are also shapers of this context, in a living and organic way.

The frames of the intercultural perspective are not only and necessarily national but, more expressively "tribal". Each group of society is a tribe whose cultural specificities resonate within, being them geographic, period, genre or medium framed. The five aspects suggested by Silva corroborate this affirmation. A classic example is *Clueless* (1995), which not only transferred Jane Austen's *Emma* (1816) to the US, but also to a specific time and cultural context. For example, Emma, a self-proclaimed matchmaker, emphasizes the importance of social stratification for relationships in early-19th century England; Cher does the same, but now with the American high school's cliques. This sort of adaptation change in Austen's novel has turned *Clueless* into a symbol of pop culture on its own:

> It is at the point where the Other is dislocated in itself, not wholly bound by its context, that we can encounter it most deeply, since this self-opaqueness is also true of ourselves. I understand the Other when I become aware that what troubles me about it, its enigmatic nature, is a problem for it too. […]. The universal is that breach or fissure in my identity which opens it up from the inside to the Other, preventing me from fully identifying with any particular context. But this is our way of belonging to a context, not a way of lacking one. It belongs to the human situation to be "out of joint" with any specific situation. And the violent disruption which follows from this connecting of the universal to a particular content is what we know as the human subject. Human beings move at the conjuncture of the concrete and the universal, body and symbolic medium; but this is not a place where anyone can feel blissfully at home (Eagleton, 2000, p. 92-93).

Thus, it is by individually interpreting a source text from a cultural relative standpoint, that the adapters can find what is lacking in their own culture and, by making an adaptation, inserting those symbols, and their meaning to their own context, they, finally, reach the collective sense of the universal, of the intertextuality that creates life, meaningful life, through the infinite dialogue that is art.

Intercultural Adaptation: An Anthropological Experiment

It is important that we reflect on those points within the materiality of an illustrative case study. In this section, we analyze *Julieta* (2006), by Almodóvar, considered a contemporary representer of Spanish cinema to international audiences. The film is an adaptation of three short stories, "Chance", "Soon", and "Silence", also known as "Triptych Juliet", by Alice Munro, whose work is most famous for portraying the provincial life of countryside Canada through the short story genre and poetic language. Even though both works are framed in the Western society, they belong to very different "tribes". In this illustrative case study, it is not our objective to analyze the sociological aspects in depth, as we believe they are excerpts from the discussion regarding intercultural adaptation and anthropological interpretive reading. For example, we do not discuss the differences between the English and Spanish languages in the general sociolinguistic panorama, but rather how they are used in the source text and in the adaptation with the aim of reflecting credible social dynamics; thus, the materiality of the works is our cultural context, our frame of analysis.

The first point of analysis is spoken language, which focuses on how the language adapts and consequently influences the narrative. We could consider characteristic lexicon and syntax, but also accents, slang, intonation, etc., highlighting sociocultural aspects. In the case of *Julieta*, the source text was written originally in English by Munro, and the film is in Spanish. Almodóvar has stated his initial intention to adapt the short stories in an English-speaking context but failed to do so because of cultural difficulties. Even though it could seem easier to adapt in the same language

as the source text, he felt incapable of adapting the symbols in a language foreign to him. He only resumed working on this project when he accepted the fact that he would need to adapt it into a Spanish-speaking film. This can be another evidence of how our culture is so encoded in our language, and vice-versa, making it harder, sometimes, for an artist to create meaning in a different one. Almodóvar, as an adapter/anthropologist, failed to make the strange familiar because both culture and language were strange, too strange to create familiar meaning in a foreign language. He was only able to make the strange familiar when he used the familiar language to work on. Again, as Hutcheon (2006) explains, adaptation is the combination of familiarity and novelty, it is about repetition as much as it is about difference. This example hints that it could be a bigger challenge to make an intercultural adaptation with both works in the same language, if foreign to the adapter, because how can he/she decode it and then recode it into the same symbol? Repetition without difference is not adaptation and it does not provide an anthropologic interpretation. Of course, we are not saying that it is impossible to make an intercultural adaptation maintaining the language, but, in this specific context, language was a barrier because the artist was unable the make the unfamiliar symbols familiar to him and to the story.

Now, with Almodóvar deciding to adapt the story in Spanish, we can analyze this specific materiality of English-to-Spanish culture dynamics. More interesting than comparing character's lines in English and Spanish, we include in this category a reflection on the choice of characters' names, which, in addition to being related to the concept of identity and the construction of characters, also presents an important semantic load to the narrative. In real life, when someone chooses a child's name, they do not know what their life will be like; in fiction, characters' names can be linked to the events of the narrative, resonating strategically planned meanings. In the case of intercultural adaptation, such meanings need to be aligned with the culture: characters' names are signs, with meaning, credible within a given culture, as we find in *Julieta*: Munro's Juliet becomes Almodóvar's Julieta, preserving the closeness between the two characters and a possible reference to William Shakespeare's tragic play, *Romeo and Juliet* (1597). In the film, the name is adapted to its Latin version and gains prominence when adopted as the title. Almodóvar, despite having female protagonists as the center of his filmography, had only used a first name once before, in *Kika* (1993). In fact, Julieta is the connecting thread that unites the plots of the three short stories, resulting in a unified narrative for the feature film. Consequently, it seems appropriate to maintain the character's name, adapting it slightly, of course, to the Spanish language and culture.

Besides Julieta, Almodóvar changed the names of all the other characters, with the exception of Julieta's parents, who remain Sam and Sara. We believe that the change of two names in particular happens in a very symbolic and culturally relevant way: Eric/Xoan and Penelope/Antía. We highlight that Xoan and Antía are names of Galician origin, that is, from Galicia, where the characters reside in the film. On the other hand, they are not among the most common names in the region, which makes us wonder about Almodóvar's motivation in adopting them. Indeed, being from Galicia is an important factor in demonstrating cultural character, but the choice seems to us to have a deeper intention. The meaning of Xoan is "God is merciful". We remember that, in the film, Antía loses a son in an accident, and he is also called Xoan. At first, we focus on the tribute she pays to her father by calling her son the same name; however, this may be an indication of the character's guilt in relation to their deaths. "God is merciful" can be understood in two ways: as irony, as the two characters by that name have their lives taken in tragic ways; or as truly merciful, as it is the death of Antía's son that allows Julieta to be reunited with her daughter after many years. Although apparently opposite, these two forms build an Almodóvar's characteristic type of paradox, demonstrating that no event is simple, as it

can constitute more than one thing at the same time, resulting in the complexity of life.

Penelope becomes Antía, the Galician version of Antheia, which means "Goddess of flowers", maintaining the reference to Greek mythology proposed by both Munro and Almodóvar, which we will expose later. For Almodóvar, this character is not the one who waits, as the Penelope in the *Odyssey*, but the one who is taken away and finally is transformed through a mother's love: Antheia is a Carite of the goddess Aphrodite. There are side stories of her relationship with her supposed mother, Chlóris, goddess of Spring. In this myth, Chlóris creates a flower and gives it a lot of love, but Zephyrus, god of the wind, is jealous and blows the flower away, reaching Aphrodite. Having felt maternal love, the flower transforms into a nymph, Antheia. Thus, Almodóvar exchanges Penelope for Antía, switching the intertextual reference but maintaining the idea of bond and love, which not all viewers will identify, but, if the audience, also in the position of anthropologists who watch the adaptation as an intercultural adaptation, notices this peculiarity, the contrast evidences the cultural motivations behind the alteration of the character's names. Again, the fact that Almodóvar chose to change the name of the character puts it under the spotlight. He observed the names in the source text but their meaning, or lack of it (since people's names in Western society are becoming emptier with meaning each generation; it is now more about the symbol's form and sound, if it is beautiful, then what it means or what is its origin), did not correspond to his interpretation of those characters, so by changing their names, he, why not say it, labels them, giving them extra layers of meaning and interpretation.

Lastly, we will reflect on the name of Xoan's dog. It may seem like a detail at first; however, a question, raised also by the press, reinforces the argument of how culture materializes in the work, so we consider necessary to discuss it. In *Julieta*, Xoan has a dog called Canelo and there was a question about a possible tribute to the also Spanish (naturalized in Mexico), Luis Buñuel. In the film *Viridiana* (1961), there is a dog by the same name and, as he was often compared to Buñuel, it is believed that Almodóvar was referring or making a tribute to him through Canelo. At the Cannes Film Festival Press Conference, he stated that it was not his intention, as it is just a common name for dogs in Spain. The comparison, however, is interesting, as *Viridiana* is Buñuel's first film after returning to Spain, after years of exile in Latin America. By choosing the name Canelo, Almodóvar may not have paid homage, but it proves the relevance of certain names, words and even lines in a certain language, denoting cultural identity, also being represented in the history of Spanish cinema. In this way, when adapting the "Triptych Juliet" to Spain, the filmmaker had to activate a repertoire that contemplates cultural specificities in the spoken language that are intricated in the intertextuality of culture fabrication that, for him, is just given as familiar. One cannot perform the role of an anthropologist of their own culture, but the audience and the critics can and, as we can notice, are constantly seeking for meaning in the symbols present in the intercultural adaptation.

The second aspect proposed by Silva (2012), the chronotope, contemplates the time-space transfer, when and where the narrative is located. According to Bakhtin (1981, p. 84), the chronotope is "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature". A priori, it may seem that changing space is mandatory in an intercultural adaptation; however, we remember that it is possible to have only the temporal change, preserving the geopolitical location, and still have the dialogue between cultures, after all, different periods of the same country present distinctions and cultural specificities. For instance, the film *Richard III* (1995), by Richard Loncraine, adapted Shakespeare's play by the same name, keeping England as the setting, but transferring the plot from the 15th century to the 20th century. Such a temporal change entails the demand for the cultural signs from Shakespeare's play to pass through the prism of re-significance to take on new, credible meanings in the plot established five centuries

earlier. Despite there being no spatial change per se, if we understand locations as constructions that reflect the culture of the moment, temporal change implies that the space also has changed, in greater or lesser degree, depending on the case, but inevitably so.

In the case of *Julieta*, this involves spatial transfer with national framing, Canada-Spain, which demands an understanding of the geopolitical dynamics of the respective areas that have led both authors to establish certain plot actions in certain regions. First, Canada is a vast country with most of its territory inhospitable for people because of the wildness of nature, especially during winter. In the "Triptych Juliet", each of the short stories is located in one part of the country: Whale Bay (a fishermen's village on the West Coast), Lake Huron (provincial city on the East Coast) and Vancouver (urban city on the West Coast). The location is important, and it reflects the evolution of the protagonist. In Whale Bay, Juliet finds a new life, different from the one she used to live as an academic researcher; an exciting life with a "married" man, Eric. In Lake Huron, years later, she visits her parents and is forced to face the fact that they live a small-minded lifestyle, surrounded by prejudice people; she, then, realizes she really belongs in Whale Bay, where the constant risk from the unpredictable wilderness prevents people from meddling in each other's businesses. In Vancouver, after another time lapse, Eric dies in a tragic accident, and Penelope and Juliet move to the big city, away from the dangers of wildlife. Years later, Penelope abandons Juliet, who is able to continue with her life, getting busy with work. Only by reading the stories, we can notice how those settings create meaning, but the Canadian audience can have a different identification, those symbols are even more meaningful to them. Just as a culturally constructed place can shape a person, it can shape a character and, thus, their story.

When Almodóvar adapted those arches, he could notice how meaningful those locations were to the stories; therefore, he needed to find locations that could resonate similar meaning to an audience familiar with the Spanish territory. Spain is geopolitically organized in autonomous communities, each holding characteristics that the people are very proud of. The Whale Bay arch is moved to Ferrol, in Galicia; Vancouver's to Madrid; and Lake Huron's is moved to some small city in Andalusia. The transfer from Vancouver to Madrid is significant in Almodóvar's case because it seems to have occasioned the temporal change from the mid 1960s to the 1980s, the time he first arrived in the big city and became involved with La Movida, the cultural movement that influenced the artist he is today. Once again, as an adapter/anthropologist, he could see meaning in Munro's cultural context in the 1960s, but one that is strange to him and his own culture, hence, he needed to make the symbols familiar to his audience, yet maintaining or trying to reach a similar meaning, using the 1980s Madrid.

The third aspect, plot, is a category that we commonly analyze in Adaptation Studies. In the adaptation process, deletions and additions occur, whether of characters, events or even lines, inevitably reworking the narrative. In the case of intercultural adaptation, we bring to the foreground choices that can be explained by cultural motivations. A character needs to be transformed, otherwise they do not fit into what would be expected of them within a certain culture, or they could even be suppressed completely. We can observe, in our illustrative case study, that an apparently subtle difference, such as the position of the maternal figure within society, means that the plot needs to go through a surgical process of adaptation in *Julieta*. According to Almodóvar, the ending, an addition to the source text, gives Julieta a conclusion more consistent with the figure of the Spanish mother, who would never give up on finding their kid, different to what happens in the "Triptych", as we see in these two excerpts:

> Penelope was not a phantom, she was safe, as far as anybody is safe, and she was probably as happy as anybody is happy. She had detached herself from Juliet and very likely from the memory of Juliet, and Juliet could not do better than to detach herself in turn. [...].
>
> She keeps on hoping for a word from Penelope, but not in any strenuous way. She hopes as

> people who know better hope for undeserved blessings, spontaneous remissions, things of that sort (Munro, 2004, s.p.).

We believe this is the moment in which culture has the greatest influence on Almodóvar's intercultural adaptation process. The filmmaker declares at the Cannes Festival Press Conference:

> [...] a Spanish family is very different from a Canadian or American one. Our culture in Spain, our family, is very different. In the United States, the mother knows, at some point, that her child is going to university, which means becoming independent and leaving home. She will see little of her child from then on. In Spain, we never break ties with family members, even when they leave home. So, I tried to see if there was a way to adapt the script for Spain and that's when I wrote the final scrip (Julieta [...], 2016, s.p., our translation).

Thus, Almodóvar, as an adapter/anthropologist, observed how motherhood is different in Canada from his own culture through Munro's work. Juliet as a symbol of motherhood makes sense in the specific context of Canada, but not in Almodóvar's Spain. Hence, for Julieta to create meaning in the Spanish framing, Almodóvar needed to provide an episode in which his Julieta becomes a Spanish mother, making her act like "a drug addict who spent years in abstinence and has a fatal relapse", in the character's own words in the film. No matter how hard Julieta tries, she cannot completely cut ties, and so she hopes of reuniting with Antía. This is Almodóvar's symbolic interpretation of the Spanish mother. Munro's Juliet accepts her daughter's individual choice and tries to understand her motivations because, in the Canadian culture, a mother raises her children for the world, not for themselves, a fact that could be strange to the Spanish audience or alike, making the end of the story seem phony or not relatable.

The fourth aspect, generic dominants, encompasses the different genres found within a single work. In this way, we think about dominant genres, instead of just one genre, aware that they are not fixed or static. In intercultural adaptation, we understand that a specific genre may be more easily accepted in one culture than another. For example, the Brazilian soap operas, a genre established in the country, and which has already been used for intercultural adaptations, such as *O Cravo e a Rosa* (2000) and *Orgulho e Paixão* (2018), from Rede Globo. The generic dominants, therefore, are directly related to the plot, as the genre imposes certain conditions on the adaptation process. Munro is most celebrated for being a master of the contemporary short story; she was able to transform the genre into a prestigious one, surpassing the idea that the short story was practice for the novel, and that only novelists were real writers. Her writing is considered realist and often compared to Chekhov's. On the other hand, Almodóvar's works with melodrama, sometimes called "Almodrama" by critics, constitute a genre that he has helped coin as typically Spanish. The plot twists added to the adaptation are characteristic of an Almodóvar film. In the "Triptych", it is Juliet who tells Penelope the real circumstances of Eric's death, including the fight they had had that day. On the other hand, in the adaptation, Antía discovers it from Marian, who tells the truth with the intention of taking revenge on Julieta, turning daughter against mother. This event is only revealed at the end of the film, and it explains part of the mystery of Antía's disappearance. The twist tests Julieta's beliefs, rethinking her trajectory and dramatically reflecting on the weight of secrets from the past. When the protagonist discovers that her daughter knew the truth all along, she is frightened by Antía's coldness on the subject, having spent years without ever questioning her mother and, in the future, as if she had waited for the best moment to make Julieta suffer the most, punishing her by disappearing. Therefore, Antía, as a character, is adapted to support the attitudes in the plot, resulting in an important addition made by Almodóvar. The climax happens when, at the end of the film, with all the secrets of the past revealed to Julieta and, consequently, to the audience, both can better understand Antía's motivations when she contacts her mother through a letter. She confesses that she had intended to punish Julieta, but that now, as a mother herself and having recently lost a son, she can understand the pain she must have caused by leaving

without notice. Julieta then leaves to meet Antía, and the film ends with this expectation, without certainty of what the reunion will be like. Beyond this difference of plot we explained, the events of Munro's "Triptych" and *Julieta* are very similar; however, they receive a new clothing derived by the genre transfer, transforming the strange into familiar to an Almodóvar audience. At the same time, this intercultural adaptation protrudes what is strange to them in Munro's story, consequently, *Julieta* can become a new creation, even being a recreation.

Taking advantage of the "new clothing" expressions we just used, a lot of this "Almodrama" lies in the visual construction of his cinematography, leading us to the fifth aspect of analysis, staging style, which refers to cinematographic language, involving the mise-en-scène, with all the elements present within the frame (the frame itself being also an element of mise-en-scène), such as scenery, staging, soundtrack, lighting, costumes and makeup, etc. We can say that this category embraces the most aesthetic and visual dimension of adaptation. In intercultural adaptation, again, we can find culture in the mise-en-scène choices, such as, for instance, local architecture and design, fashion, and artistic movements in general. As works of literature, the "Triptych Juliet" does not have a mise-en-scène per se, although we can rely on the descriptions and the poetic language to create our own visual imagination of the stories. Therefore, in this case, Almodóvar, in the role of an anthropologist, reflects on the medium of printed words as strange to his own, of cinema, and materializes such imagined world, changing the symbols from letters to images composed by all the mise-en-scène elements, including sounds. In the cinema medium, Almodóvar already has stablished his own symbols that resonate meaning to his audience: the usual actresses; the use of saturated colors, especially the color red; soundtrack by Alberto Iglesias; etc. *Julieta* follows the same staging style consistent with his filmography, visually materializing the story into the Spanish context.

With these five categories of analysis, we demonstrated how an adapter needs to have a position similar to that of an anthropologist, observing what is strange to him/her and his/her cultural context, aiming to discover and interpret the meaning each symbol carries. However, we believe that this experiment is not made only by differences, but also by common points, convergencies. Greek tragedy, for example, is not a cultural trait of Canada or Spain, but is a cultural production that dialogues intertextually with the artistic works of Munro and Almodóvar, influencing them to the same extent, but in different ways, due to the specifical cultures in which they are inserted. According to anthropologists Kilman and Wellstrom (2021, s.p.):

> Culture is holistic, which means that all the pieces of it are interconnected. It functions like a vast and intricate clock; some pieces large, some small, but all working together to make a functioning whole. The way its members think, the values they hold, their hopes and fears, even their physical bodies all fit within the greater machine of culture.

Therefore, the adapter/anthropologist needs to understand that somethings from the source text will be familiar to him/her, even though coming from a different culture, because intertextuality knows no geographic/temporal limitations, as an everlasting fabrication of meaning and life, uniting the "tribes" into bigger or larger contexts and frames of humanity. Munro and Almodóvar, besides Canadian and Spanish, are Western culture artists, being influenced by the Greek culture, directly or indirectly, but surely intertextually. Realizing the convergencies in the familiar part of the dynamic of adaptation seems to us to be as important as the strange, since, in the end, the goal is to create or recreate familiar meaning. The novelty in adaptation should not be for the sake of novelty only and, in the intercultural adaptation, finding the familiar in a different culture can free us from ethnocentrism, becoming more human and empathetic, by seeing how we are not that different after all. As a result, we move away from a place of duality that, in a way, encourages judgments of fidelity in adaptations. Therefore, we suggest a sixth category, thematic intersections,

to provide an epistemological place to think about thematic aspects of the intercultural perspective that perhaps would not fit into the previous categories, but are relevant when we think culture as holistic. We will not present a long illustration of the Greek mythology now, for the sake of this work's length, since we already mentioned it before when analyzing the name of the characters, clearly in dialogue with the ancient myths. Even though the characters' names were changed in the adaptation, the influence of the Greek mythology is present in both works, showing how the film *Julieta* is not only dialoguing with the "Triptych Juliet", but also with all other cultural production of humanity, constructing our collective experience, through this composed fabric of meaning that is art.

Conclusion

With this illustrative case study, even though it is a brief and consequently superficial one, we hope to have demonstrated our proposition of analyzing an intercultural adaptation from the perspective of interpretive anthropology. We argue that it can be a relevant research framing for understanding better how culture can be a deciding aspect or a motivation in specific changes in the process of adaptation, in selecting, decoding, re-coding. What and how readings of other texts are kept into the adaption helps fabricating the web of intertextuality that creates meaning, as Eagleton (2000, p. 284) has pointed: "Rendering experience in terms of narrative is seen as a meaning-making activity which dominates much of human practice, and (as Barthes and Hardy have noted) as taking many forms". We believe that intercultural adaptation is, actually, rendering the "same" experience in different forms and, in a way, all adaptations are intercultural adaptations and could benefit from a more culture centered perspective provided by thinking them as anthropological experiments performed by adapter, audience, and critics and academic researchers.

Most importantly, in interpretive anthropology, value judgment is avoided because meanings of a behavior are to be understood as within a framing. In the case of intercultural adaptation, two or more framings are present (source-text, adaptation, context of the audience etc.) but the contrast is precisely to bring to the surface what makes each culture unique in their aesthetic encoding of the same meaning, making sense of our lives and reality:

> If we ask what kind of 'work' adaptations do as they circulate stories among media and around the world, indigenizing them anew each time, we may find ourselves agreeing that narrative is indeed some kind of human universal: 'Building shape and meaning is what we do in our stories and songs' (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 175-176).

In conclusion, although Adaptation Studies has been focusing on culture, we believe the dynamics of strange and familiar observed by Interpretive Anthropology can provide new readings of the intercultural adaptation, which encourages the idea of dialogue between cultures, reinforcing our choice of the "inter" prefix. As Hutcheon says on the quote above, every time someone adapts a text, they indigenize it culturally, but, at the same time, they use all their cultural repertoire, their idea of what is familiar and of what makes sense to them, so that we can continue creating meaning of the human experience, and, therefore, life.

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