

'DISQUIET' NOVELLA AND SCREENPLAY: ADAPTATION AND
CREATIVE HYBRIDITY

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ABSTRACT

The major creative work of this thesis consists of ‘Disquiet’, the novella and the screenplay. It is a twice-told tale. In the exegesis I explore the writing practice of working between two narrative forms. To do this I begin by establishing that the traditional focus of adaptation studies has been book-to-film adaptation. Within this field the issue of ‘fidelity’ has been a dominant concern although it is hard to find any scholar who is actively arguing *for* fidelity. I look at types of adaptation and then outline some possible new directions for adaptation studies. I pay attention to two areas that adaptation studies have largely overlooked and which are pertinent to ‘Disquiet’: the screenplay and the novelisation. Having loosely situated ‘Disquiet’, the novella, within the experimental end of the novelisation continuum I then develop the concept of the creative hybrid. I revisit the assumption that where there are two creative works based on the same story then one work must have come into being before the other. I also query whether the term ‘adaptation’ is appropriate to describe the creative process for hybrids. I look at other modes of speaking about ‘adaptation’ proposed by recent scholars and venture some terms of my own. Turning to the case-studies I first make the case for why Graham Greene’s novella *The Third Man* – which was written *before* his screenplay for a film of the same name – does in fact sit on the continuum of novelisations and/or could be called a hybrid. The second case-study is Pier Paolo Pasolini’s so-called novel, *Theorem*. The third case-study is Ingmar Bergman’s hybrid text, *The Best Intentions*. I then address ‘Disquiet’ in both its forms, highlighting the writing practices I adopted. I conclude that ‘Disquiet’ does not readily fit within either book-to-film adaptation or novelisation. I suggest that acknowledgment of creative hybrids invites a deeper understanding of the practice of adaptation.

DECLARATION

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EXEGESIS – ADAPTATION AND CREATIVE HYBRIDITY:

‘DISQUIET’ AS NOVELLA AND SCREENPLAY

INTRODUCTION

'Disquiet' takes two forms: it is a novella and a screenplay. Both works involve the same characters, in the same location, over the same period of time, facing the same key events – a twice-told tale. Each work is intended to stand alone: that is, the reader of the novella may well never read the screenplay, and vice versa. The challenges of this exegesis are to position 'Disquiet' within the field of adaptation studies, a field which has traditionally focussed on book-to-film adaptations, and to provide a unique insight into the writing practice of working between two narrative forms.

The first part of this exegesis is intended as a broad overview of the chief concerns of book-to-film adaptation studies to date. One such concern is that of fidelity: how important is it that an adaptation be faithful to a source text? I pay particular attention to the screenplay and the novelisation, two areas largely neglected in the field. I then reconsider those concerns I have discussed in the context of what I call 'creative hybrids': I investigate case-studies of Graham Greene's novella *The Third Man*, Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Theorem* and Ingmar Bergman's *The Best Intentions*. Against this background I move to a detailed consideration of 'Disquiet', both the novella and screenplay.

My comments and page number references throughout the exegesis refer to those versions of the novella and screenplay submitted together as the major creative work of this thesis.