

Journal of Comparative Literature

Faculty of Literature and Humanities
Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman
Year 12, No. 23, Winter 2021

**A Comparative Study of Selected Cinematic Adaptations of
Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman****

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1. Introduction

With the immergence and overwhelming outspread of the consumption of the modern video culture, directors and producers have had the opportunity to employ literary masterpieces for their subject matter and hence, reel in huge profit.

The present study aims to thoroughly analyze three filmic adaptations of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1949). In so doing, it is crucial to study the play in the first place. In the next step, the researcher aims to bring to light the dominant discourses and culture of each film's period of production. The analysis of each adaptation encompasses the ideologies and the mindset of each director and adapter. These different directors and adapters are then compared to each other so as to further bring to light their discourses,

*Date received: 05/10/2020

Date accepted: 05/12/2020

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not to mention the process of transposition each adaptation has experienced.

3. Methodology

What makes this study quite innovative is its comparative aspect. The general framework of this study is Comparative Literature as adaptation studies are considered a major branch of comparative methodology. Contextualization is another critical methodology, which brings to the fore the study of major discourses of the time and place of adaptations. The 'wh' questions asked by Linda Hutcheon for the delineation of the creative or faithful process an adaptor has gone through in making an adaptation is the first and foremost important theory applied in this study.

The next theory applied is that of George Bluestone who analyzes three areas between literature and film. These areas encompass such aspects as linguistic and image, consciousness and inner thoughts and representation of women. Kamilla Elliot, the next theorist employed, introduces six concepts for adaptation through which different types of adaptation process are delineated.

4. Conclusion

The study comes to find that Benedek and Segal's adaptations which were produced at a time when America was doing away with Communism as a whole, fail to portray the failure of the American Dream, the theme of the play. Henceforth, the Lomans' life failure is shown to be the result of the mental demise of the protagonist. German expressionist Schlöndorff's expressionist adaptation being produced at a time when the masses were coming to a consensus that the American Dream is unlikely to come true, fully and freely depicts the destructive result of the American Dream.

Keywords: Adaptation, Arthur Miller, Comparative literature, *Death of a salesman*, Film, Laszlo Benedek, Alex Segal, Volker Schlöndorff

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