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BA English Honours | Semester VI | ENG6EJ303

Adaptations in Literature

Module 1: Adaptation: An Overview of Ideas, Concepts, and Theoretical Frameworks • Comprehensive Notes

Chapter 1: The Theoretical Landscapes of Adaptation Studies

Adaptation Studies has evolved from narrow evaluative judgments of literary fidelity into a sophisticated theoretical field examining intertextuality, transmedia convergence, and cultural remediation. Rather than treating cinematic or theatrical adaptations as secondary copies of "original" literary masterpieces, contemporary theory recognizes adaptation as an autonomous, creative dialogue across media ecosystems.

1.1 Timothy Corrigan: "Defining Adaptation"

In his landmark contribution to *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*, Timothy Corrigan demonstrates that adaptation is fundamental to human storytelling. From classical mythology (Ovid, Homer) to modern transmedia mash-ups, narratives have perpetually migrated across genres and technologies. Corrigan classifies adaptations into historical trajectories: from fidelity-obsessed post-Renaissance reproductions to modernist transformations and postmodern pastiches.

1.2 Intertextuality and Hypertextuality: Genette and Hutcheon

Drawing on Gérard Genette's taxonomy of transtextuality and Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006), adaptation is understood as a **hypertext** that explicitly derives from a pre-existing **hypotext**. Adaptation involves three overlapping processes: an acknowledged transposition of a recognized work, a creative act of interpretive remediation, and an extended intertextual engagement for audiences who experience the adaptation with memory of the source text.

Advanced Critical Theory, Hermeneutics & Literary Praxis

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1. Hermeneutic Paradigms and Textual Mechanics

Critical inquiry into Module 1: Adaptation: An Overview of Ideas, Concepts, and Theoretical Frameworks reveals how textual forms construct meaning through complex aesthetic strategies and structural choices:

- **Structuralism and Semiotic Deconstruction:** The organization of signs, tropes, and syntactical structures establishes narrative authority while simultaneously revealing internal fissures. Binary oppositions embedded within the discourse—such as center versus margin, tradition versus modernity, and subjective interiority versus objective reality—are systematically problematized through textual slippages and ambiguous signifiers.
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- **Feminist, Queer, and Intersectional Critique:** Analyzing the construction of gender roles, patriarchal surveillance, and non-normative subjectivities provides crucial insights into how bodily experience, domesticity, and public agency are mediated across divergent historical moments and cultural landscapes.
- **Ecocritical and Spatial Dynamics:** Physical topographies, built environments, and non-human ecologies function as active participants in the narrative economy. Space is never neutral; rather, it reflects socio-economic stratification, environmental exploitation, and geopolitical borders that delineate belonging and exile.

2. Historiographical Context and Reception Theory

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3. Comparative Aesthetic and Thematic Matrix

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