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You Screwed up my Classic!

Fidelity to Nostalgic Adaptations in Audiences' Perspectives

----- A Case Study on *Utvandrarna (The Emigrants)*

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Abstract

This research focuses on fidelity in adaptation studies from the audience's perspective since the audience usually has less power in contributing to the academic field. To see to what extent the transformation of fidelity in adaptation studies in terms of the scholars applies to the audiences, including amateurs and film critics. A case study on the Swedish story *Utvandrarna* (*The Emigrants*) was done to figure out the differences between audiences and scholars. The audiences' reflections on the two films *The Emigrants* (1971) and *The Emigrant* (2021) were under comparison, in order to identify the development of fidelity and adaptation in the audiences eyes from the 1970s to the 2020s. Data was collected from famous Swedish Newspapers and websites, which are mostly used to discuss films and culture in Sweden. The film with the classic and historical original story in Swedish people's eyes might shed light on other adaptations with different kinds of source texts as well.

Fidelity in audiences' perspective is no longer the standard to identify a good adaptation but a tool to reach a proper or good interpretation of the original story in the book and to put it on the screen as a new and credible story together with the creativity of the adapters. Although the audiences of *The Emigrants* cannot ignore fidelity and comparative analysis when they watch the film, their conclusions fall in the credibility of the new story on its own, instead of considering the film adaptation as a secondary accessory to the classic literature. Moreover, the proper interpretation raised by the audiences makes the difference between adaptation and other kinds of intertexts clear. A right and proper interpretation of the original story is a tool to justify an artwork's identity as an adaptation. It is clear that for the audiences, fidelity is not an enemy of liberty or creativity and it is still indispensable when engaging in adaptations.

Keywords: adaptation, fidelity, authenticity, remediation, derivative work, audience reception.

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Introduction

The story has always been one of the most significant components we get from various media. It was at first transmitted in the community from person to person by telling and retelling. Then came pens and paper by which the writer created his or her own story to be read by a broader range of readers. With the developing technology, we afterward have theaters, musicals, films, and other ways to engage in stories. The relationship between media nowadays becomes tighter. “Today...the screen is rapidly becoming the main means of accessing any kind of information, be it still images, moving images or text...it is the society of screen” (Manovich, 2002:99). Thinking of the daily routine, life is full of screens. A story originally from a novel will be put onto screens in cinemas and games on cellphones and computers. Instead of passively accepting these content and stories, audiences become roaming and take their chances actively producing their own content (Hill, 2019:30). For example, some fans will develop fan fiction for their beloved story series to upload on the Internet. This is the situation in the 21st century. Back in the 20th century, it was more normal for people to hold books or newspapers for stories they looked for. The trend in the new society is that people are eager for stories transmitted through “time-based audio-visual moving images” (Manovich, 2002:87). In other words, stories on screens outstrip those on paper in contemporary society.

It is common to see stories transform from other media to films in the digital era, where the audience relies on movies and TV series for stories. Surprisingly, until 1992, film adaptations took 85 percent of the Oscar Best Picture Awards (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013:4). With the development of film as a medium and the improvement of film’s status as an art form, the number of film adaptations that won Best Picture awards after 2000 slightly decreased. More original stories appeared to be put onto screens. However, film adaptations still occupied more than 55 percent of all the winners after 2000 (12 out of 22). With many film adaptations, adaptation studies focusing on literature to film

transformation in the academic field have been developed. The definition of fidelity, an inevitable concept in adaptation studies, alters with scholars' ideas by analyzing film adaptations of literature. By opposing fidelity, scholars underline intertextuality and the creativity of adaptation. The stress on creativity makes the definition of adaptation closer to another type of art form: derivative work, and meanwhile sheds light on the balance between fidelity and liberty. Those adaptations of highbrow and well-known stories compared to those of not that famous stories might end up with separate standards of faithfulness asked by the audiences. Moreover, the efficient delivery of stories among various media made it sometimes hard for the audiences to confirm the real origin of some adaptations. Not to mention new stories are all consciously or subconsciously inspired by pre-existing stories (Stam, 2000), which "no longer has an author but becomes the discourse or the indefinite citation of the other" (Certeau, 1988:28).

Searching for adaptation studies, the appearance of fidelity and the rejection of fidelity are all decided by scholars. In contrast, the fact that audiences ask for fidelity when engaging in adaptations never ceases. Fewer researchers give the opportunity to the audience to express their thoughts and perspectives on the importance of this concept regarding film adaptations. The audience research usually looks for ways of engagement and whether the audience like the adaptation or not to apply existing theories. The conclusions from the audience do not generate direct impacts on the academic field. In addition, the development of fidelity in audiences' eyes is not distinct. The lack of audience perspectives applying to adaptation studies motivates me to conduct audience reception research. To see to what extent the definition from scholars applies to the audiences, including amateurs and film critics. Furthermore, as fidelity links to liberty, the aspects concerning nostalgia and authenticity will also matter in shaping the definition.

Through this thesis, I would like to answer the three following research questions: 1) How does fidelity transform with the changing context in amateurs' and film critics'

eyes? 2) What role does realism, including authenticity to history and contemporary society, play in dramatic stories in amateurs' and film critics' eyes? 3) As an adaptation, how much liberty can an adapter take to satisfy the audience? To deal with these questions, a case study is conducted: Audience research on the double-versioned Swedish film, *Utvandrarna (The Emigrants)*, which is adapted from a classical highbrow novel series under the same name. The films' fidelity to the novels and authenticity to the reality will be studied from the eye of audiences trying to find out the audience's standard of good adaptations.

The Emigrants was first written as a novel by Vilhelm Moberg, a famous Swedish author. The first book was published in 1949 and followed by three other novels to create an emigrant series. It delivered a story of the actual migration issue in the 1840s when Swedish people from Småland figured out their way to America. Shortly after 20 years, the books were adapted into films by Jan Troell. The film was co-produced by Sweden and the US. And both hit a good box office. The first film was released in 1971, and the second, called *the New Land*, in 1972 when films in Sweden struggled to lift their status to be listed as art instead of merely entertainment. The film is considered a perfect adaptation that shows the reality of the 1840s and educates people about a part of both Swedish and American history. Last year, a new adaptation directed by a Norwegian director Erik Poppe was released as a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the original film. Surprisingly, the new movie obtains more negative feedback than the 90% positive comments on the 1971 version. The two films, based on the same story but produced in different eras, are able to provide evidence of transforming fidelity, authenticity, and adaptation from the 1970s to the 2020s.

Transforming Adaptation Studies: Fidelity, Remediation, and

Technology

In the 1930s, Hollywood started producing a large number of film adaptations, which in the beginning were not considered adaptations since they did not clarify the origin of the stories (Bolter & Grusin, 2000). Adaptation has long been a part of literary studies and has taken up a vast amount of art and entertainment traced back to the period of Shakespeare. With more stories going onto the screen from novels, adaptation studies concerning the literature to film boom in the media field. Adaptation studies witnesses three major phases according to Leitch: Adaptation studies 1.0 when the field and methodology are built and fidelity born as the essential term; Adaptation studies 2.0 when other than fidelity, intertextuality is stressed; Adaptation studies 3.0 when intertextuality is under query, and digital technologies are emphasized (2017: 15-17).

Fidelity, born with adaptation, runs through all three courses. It emphasizes the faithfulness of the original text. It has long been used as the essential standard since films were identified as low commercial art. They can never deliver the real story and the deep thoughts in literature, especially from the seventies to the nineties (Griggs, 2016). However, fidelity in the context of 2022 seems obsolete because the hierarchy that the two media experienced is no longer a big deal. “Since the year 2000, adaptation scholars have shifted away from the idea that film adaptations should faithfully imitate an original novel or stage play” (Sandra, 2014:170). The qualities of adaptations are instead defined by how creative it is, not how faithful it is (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013:15). Some even argue that fidelity is impossible since we create new art in new media forms (Sidiropoulou, 2014).

Nevertheless, not everyone follows the same perspective. Thus, it would be “futile to find a methodological approach that entirely rejects fidelity issues,” especially for audience research (Constandinides, 2013:5). There is a conflict on how we should deal

with fidelity in modern society. Looking at the many discussions on fidelity, the term still looks essential. Insofar as most of the development of the knowledge around adaptation studies is based on the scholars' and researchers' perspectives. We are short of audiences' opinions which is the aim of the following case study. What is essential for audiences when exposed to adaptations? Is there a change of power likewise among the audience as well?

Decreasing Power of Fidelity

Fidelity was the most crucial criterion in adaptation studies, enabling film adaptations to come closer to the privileged literature. As early as 1957, the book *Novels into Film* by George Bluestone discussed the adaptations from books to screens. Bluestone already addressed that changes in adaptation are inevitable. Then came the 1970s, when types of adaptation were given based on the level of faithfulness to the original texts (Griggs, 2016:2). It later became distinct that fidelity was the most debated and discussed term in adaptation studies. Comparative analysis of film adaptations and their source texts occupy the academic research field. Nowadays, single-source texts become hard to recognize since, according to Stam (2000), every artwork has more than one origin. Stam then develops the methodology of intertextuality dialogism, putting old and new media in an interdependent relationship. The focus needs to be on intertextuality and the conversation between different media. Hutcheon (2013) also emphasizes separating film adaptations from their origin. Instead of doing comparative analysis, film adaptations need to be reviewed independently. Since then, fidelity has been considered a problem that blocks the way of creative adaptations. Scholars started to work on opposing and avoiding fidelity in adaptation studies.

Creativity is replacing fidelity in adaptation studies. The main goal for adaptation nowadays is to create a coherent universe with the world in the original novel, which is different from the natural or contemporary world but not to visualize every element mentioned. As Hutcheon and O'Flynn argue in their theory of fidelity: "One way to

think about unsuccessful adaptations is not in terms of infidelity to a prior text, but in terms of a lack of the creativity and skill to make the text one's own and thus autonomous" (2013:21).

The director is the primary source to add creativity to film adaptations. Filmmakers need to decide "whether their aim is to merely recreate visually the story of the book or to depart from it and offer their own creative vision of that particular story" (Radu, 2019:6). Like the discussion on the adaptation of *Thirty-Nine Steps* by Hitchcock, who simplified the plot and added his understanding of gender relationships (McDougal, 1975). In addition, many books or stories have more than one adaptation, such as *Jane Eyre*, which was adapted thirty times, as well as the story of *Snow White* (Scholz, 2013; Juez, 2021). In this sense, the directors take responsibility for the result since everyone has their own thoughts to deploy and their own understanding of the original story. They need to take the subjective initiative to make different instead of repeated works. In a nutshell, the power of fidelity is reduced and to be taken over.

Collapsing Media Hierarchy

The proper reason for the decreasing power of fidelity might be the change in media hierarchy. Paper and digital media, at the very first place in adaptation studies, experienced a dichotomy between high and low art. Literature experienced development for several millennia, whereas film appeared for just a century. The hierarchy exists according to Stam due to the sense that old media is better than new ones; the thought that literature and film must be put in a rivalry; some cultures' prejudice against visual images; the unwillingness to see concrete settings from graphical images and the fanaticism of reading texts; the lower class origin of films (2019:65-66). For the same reason, film adaptations were identified as threatening the original art. Back in the day, literature was one of the most privileged media. It was then the main pathway through which people get access to stories. Whereas, as an invention, films had long been considered a technology breakthrough or pure entertainment instead of an art form.

Although there is still the debate about film as art or entertainment (Bordwell & Thompson & Smith, 2017), we cannot deny that the film has gained its power in everyday media practice starting from the twentieth century. Why did the film become the most popular and dominant art form? The power of movies, according to Carroll, includes two aspects: widespread engagement and intense engagement, which enables an “easily graspable clarity” for audiences (Carroll, 1985:82). This power of movies over literature benefits from the characteristic of images and words. People can quickly learn an object from a picture but can never pick up a language by only being exposed to several letters or words (ibid:83-84). In addition, while literature only requires our eyes as the receiver, film mobilizes more senses, including the eyes and ears (Bolter & Grusin, 2000), which enables a stronger feeling of getting involved in the narration.

However, the changes and the decreasing power of fidelity are always decided by the adaptation scholars. By reading pre-existing studies and research on fidelity, I failed to find the importance of fidelity to original novels from the audiences’ perspective. Film adaptations are made for audiences to enjoy, not only for scholars to analyze. Is fidelity in the first place essential for audiences as well? Will the audience spontaneously bear fidelity in their minds when they watch adaptations? Will the audience agree that fidelity is a threat to the creativity of adaptations? All of these questions need to be dealt with.

Articulating in Old and New Media

In the process of remediation from one medium to another, *strict* fidelity is not possible (Stam, 2000:55-56). Since each medium has its own characteristics, transformations apply to tell a story in the most suitable way through the specific media. For example, adaptations from literature to films. Novels always describe the crucial settings and elements that push the story’s development but never depict those that are not that necessary for the storytelling. But films need to fill everything out in every scene

regarding *mise en scène* to show a whole picture on the screen. Sound design and background music are also elements that need to be created by the adapter since we cannot get this information directly from the words.

Old and new media are sometimes vague and hard to divide. It seems like, in adaptation, literature is an old medium while the film is new. However, if put in a larger context, film and cinema cannot be called a new medium any longer in the 21st century, with the appearance of computers, VR, and any other media (Manovich, 2002:30-42). We need to take newer media into account when defining cinema, as computers influence the production as well as the reception of movies. Of course, there is no utterly new or old when we define media. They are just serving storytelling from different perspectives (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013).

New media never replace old media, and old media never disappear. They merge and reach convergence through collective intelligence (Jenkins, 2006: 1-24). Each invention of a new medium usually needs to discover its potential by “copying” qualities from existing old media. “Repurposing: to take a ‘property’ from one medium and reuse it in another,” as stressed by Bolter and Grusin, digital media is under continuous interaction with old media by repurposing and remediating. (2000:47-49). As new media, film adaptations are able to remind audiences of their memories of themselves reading the novels or encourage the audience to read the novels afterward, which in a sense, refashion the old media. This leads us to the concept of nostalgic remediation; instead of “killing” the old media, it “reveals the shifting frames, contexts, and transferences through which memory and media jointly function” (Sandra, 2014:172). Steven Holtzman (1997) advises that the communication between old and new media and new media’s learning from or directly using the content from old media will cease if the new media find its own characteristic and aesthetic. Whereas Bolter and Grusin (2000:49-50), however, suggest the process of mirroring the old media will never terminate.

Developing Remediation and Intertextuality

“We call the representation of one medium in another remediation, and we will argue that remediation is a defining characteristic of the new digital media” (Bolter & Grusin, 2000:45). With the switch of audience habits, especially from book to screen, more and more novels are being translated onto cinemas and TV screens (Straumann, 2015). When new media started to occupy the market, scholars started researching adaptations between different kinds of media. These studies usually started from, or paid more attention to, the original literature than films (Scholz, 2013:1-13). Previous research on remediation tends to separate old and new media to search for their various functions and characteristics when creating artifacts on different media.

Nevertheless, later at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, scholars exemplified by Robert Stam (2000) and Linda Hutcheon (2013) emphasized intertextuality and the merits of both media. In the article *Remediation and the language of new media* (2007), Bolter focused on “intermedial relationships that reject modernist aesthetics” (25). Many research pieces afterward analyze the relationship between old and new media (Manovich, 2002). And even to reach media convergence while each work in the transmedia process needs to be able to stand alone and, as a result, serve the overall storytelling of the franchise (Jenkins, 2006:95-96).

Stam (2000) suggests intertextuality beyond fidelity and analyzes adaptation in connection with all the possible origins no matter what media form they are using. Since stories are all about telling and retelling, all stories will intentionally or subconsciously learn from or adapt from pre-existing narrations (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013). The status of film adaptations is raised by taking them independent of the origin from the scholars’ perspective. However, with the increased communication and interaction among various media in intertextuality and the multi-origin adaptations, will it be hard for the audience to decide the natural origin of a film adaptation? If this is true, how can the audience know to whom the adaptation needs to be faithful?

Developing Digital Technology and Remediation

Thanks to technology development, people can easily get involved in music anywhere with any electronic device. Nevertheless, the convenience brought by the new technology slashes the participation of amateurs in playing their own music. Based on John Philip Sousa, people started to passively accept music culture from professional music makers. They might, as a result, “be less connected to, and hence practice in, creating the culture” (Lessig, 2008:25-27). Lessig calls this phenomenon raised by Sousa the “Read/Write” Culture transforming into the “Read/Only Culture. Yet, she asserts that the new technology will still lead to an RW Culture since consumers will use the same tools as the professionals to recreate the contents into the culture (ibid:28-33). In his book *Convergence Culture*, Jenkins wrote: “The story of American arts in the 19th century might be told in terms of the mixing, matching, and merging of folk traditions taken from various indigenous and immigrant populations” (2006:135). Furthermore, new technology also makes copying easier. Artwork under developing technology needs copyright protection (Lessig, 2008).

The new and old media are interdependent and keep interacting with each other in the remediation process (Bolter & Grusin, 2000, Stam, 2000). Remediation experiences two controversial but interdependent elements: immediacy and hypermediacy (Bolter & Grusin, 2000:2-51) corresponds to technological innovation. Immediacy stresses the absence of the particular media. Still, it renders the audiences focusing only on the information disseminated through the media, creating credibility. When knowledge transforms among various media, remediation becomes apparent. Immediacy here helps erase the differences between different media and let the audience enjoy the content in a new media just like how they want it with old media to minimize the discontinuity. Immediacy is on the right path of nowadays media scholars who ask for intertextuality. However, the process of creating a transparent interface, the other way around, leaves the development of technology unseen by audiences, and it is sometimes hard to achieve transparency since, after all, they are different media (Bolter & Grusin,

2000:23-24, 44-46). Then other media scholars turn to underline the differences in hypermediacy.

Hypermediacy emphasizes the use of multimedia. It matters when the creators want to show the improvements of the new version over the old (Bolter & Grusin, 2000:31). For example, the ability of computers to carry audio and videos makes them more vivid than mere texts and pictures on paper books. Hypermediacy made the digital technology visible and controllable by the audiences. However, some scholars assert that not every adaptation needs to experience the process of remediation (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013:170). Adaptation can happen within one medium and sometimes with the help of the development of technology (Leitch, 2012:92). For example, the ability of films to carry color and audio which is easier to be understood compared to the black and white silent films. The film itself can be an old and new media at the same time.

The Audiences' Practices Taking Part in Film Adaptations

With the change in the hierarchy and the development of film technology, the habit of the audience changed. The film became the most suitable and accessible medium for all kinds of audiences regardless of their social classes or educational levels (Bordwell & Thompson & Smith, 2017:1-4). The main source of stories comes from screens, not books, which set the tone for booming film adaptations. Since not every person is keen on books, audiences started their life of watching film adaptations in cinemas, intentionally or unintentionally. "Adaptation is a form of intertextuality: we experience adaptations as palimpsests through our memory of other works that resonate through repetition with variation" (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013:8). However, adaptation is a flexible concept concerning if we know the origin or not. This means different audiences may have different experiences when they watch an adaptation. For example, audiences who have read the book and would like to watch it on screens, audiences who do not enjoy reading but enjoy watching films, audiences who watch the movie and decide to read the book afterward, or audiences who watch the film and refuse to read

the book and so on. Will the identity of a movie as an adaptation remain for all types of audiences? Audience reception of film adaptation also affects the reception of literature. Digital media “can try to refashion the older medium or media entirely, while still marking the presence of the older media and therefore maintaining a sense of multiplicity or hypermediacy” (Bolter & Grusin, 2000:46).

Nevertheless, fewer scholars allow the audience to actively participate in defining the quality of adaptations for academic development (Scholz, 2013:7) as adaptation studies suggest more on the reflection of film and media scholars instead of the laypeople. Referring to Candice Breitz, a South African artist, who works on the relationship between artistic works and the audience, more work needs to be done based on the audience:

The idea is to shift the focus away from those people who are usually perceived as creators so as to give some space, some room, to those people who absorb cultural products – whether it’s music or movies or whatever the case may be. And to think a little bit about what happens once music or a movie has been distributed: how it may get absorbed into the lives into the very being of the people who listen to it or watch it. (Lessig, 2008:6)

The impacts coming from the audience on film adaptations and their original texts aside, questioning the objects of fidelity is also connected to the audience reception studies, which will carry a straightforward influence on audiences’ experiences engaging in various adaptations. For instance, how will the audience’s standards of faithfulness be different facing film adaptations of highbrow artistic literature and those of popular novels or unknown novels? And how will the criteria change facing film adaptations of historical-based literature compared to pure fictional stories?

Adaptation of Classical Stories and Nostalgia

Adaptation studies used to be a field dominated by film adaptations of classic literature. The cases mentioned above, including *Mulan*, *Snow White*, and *Jane Eyre*, are all

adapted from classical and very well-known literature, at least in a part of the world. Cartmell asserts that literature should include any kind of written work (2012:4). Cardwell as well takes adaptations of classic novels as a distinct genre (2002:1). The purpose of making adaptations of classic highbrow literature has changed throughout history. In the 1970s, film adaptations of classic literature worked to lift the status of films as an art form (Larsson & Marklund, 2010). Whereas nowadays, the classic adaptations guarantee success in the market thanks to the nostalgic memory. Their adaptations can be easy but difficult because audiences who have experienced the original work may be seeking the same experience to bring back their nostalgia for the literature.

The once prevailing debate on the type of adaptation sources suggested that good books would lead to bad adaptations, whereas bad books would lead to good adaptations (Cartmell, 2012:10). Good books are not restricted to classic highbrow literature but also include cult movies with their fans:

One of the central beliefs of film adaptation theory is that audiences are more demanding of fidelity when dealing with classics, such as the work of Dickens or Austen. But a whole new set of cult popular classics, especially the work of J.R.R. Tolkien, Philip Pullman, and J.K. Rowling, are now being made visible and audible on stage, in the movie theater, on the video and computer screens, and in multiple gaming formats, and their readers are proving to be just as demanding. (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013:29)

In this respect, not every good book ends up with a bad film adaptation in today's film industry, for example, the movie series of Harry Potter obtains a good reputation among audiences. But the presence of the debate implies the level of fidelity needed in the process, and the audiences' expectations of the film adaptations of good books might vary from those of bad books. Scilicet fidelity may be more stressed by audiences compared to adaptations based on not very well-known literature.

Authenticity for Nostalgic History

When we look back to the postwar film development in Europe, we shed light on the French New Wave, Italian Neo-realism, and New German Cinema, which on purpose show the truth of reality (Elsaesser, 2005). It is said that the realism created in films makes them powerful. No matter is the reality that audiences are familiar with in daily life or the fact that audiences unintentionally ignore in real life (Carroll, 1985:80-81). By carefully using cinematic techniques like lighting, montage, and other measures in *mise en scène*, the reality of the postwar lifestyle is shown, and the continuity of the film narration is guaranteed (Bazin, 1967-71). Passingly, they protect the national film industry from fighting against Hollywood imports (Elsaesser, 2005:9). Nowadays, films portraying national historical reality raise national audiences' attention to historical heritage and stimulate debate around national culture and identity (Bangert & Cooke & Stone, 2015:34-39).

Davis defined historical films as “those having as their central plot documentable events, such as a person's life or war or revolution, and those with a fictional plot but with a historical setting intrinsic to the action” (1988:270). The ongoing and long-lasting debate focuses on: how much should a fictional film deploy true history? To what extent needs a film to be historically accurate? Historians usually find historical fiction films mere entertainment and a waste of time. The problem of authenticity of historical films usually falls into the education area, where people discuss whether it is a good idea to educate students and convey historical knowledge with historical fiction films. Rosenstone (1995) argues the necessity of historical fiction films, as they lure more audiences than pure historical documentaries. They work to deepen the audiences' interest in learning more about history afterward (Rollins, 2007:4). In other words, depicting accurate history is not the mission of historical films.

Instead of looking at historical films barely from the point of view of historians, who pursue the film's ability to tell the truth and to educate the audience, we can also see

the movie from the point of view of film aesthetics. How is the sense of history created? Other than a *coincidental resemblance* and a *simple truth*, a historical film is a more complex item located between the two. It is in an “unresolvable dual status” as actual history and, at the same time fictional story (Kaes, 2000: 523). Faithfulness to history and reality is created by the props and costumes infused with historical characteristics, historical paintings, and shooting at the real location instead of studios with local people (Davis, 1988:269-273). They provide a sense of credibility and clarity that spectators can quickly grasp (Carroll, 1985:82).

The questions mentioned in the second paragraph of this part are hard to answer, leaving the debate unsettled for decades. Some scholars started to open up new perspectives and look at the contribution of historical films. They help with the understanding of the new audience of the history, and meanwhile, they change the way in which people perceive history (McGarry & Carlsten, 2015:2). At the same time, it enhances our understanding of the present: “where authentic histories claim to educate us about the past itself, imposing narrative order on chaotic reality, these modern-day reconstructions tell us more about our relationship to the past, about the connections between past and present, and our affective responses” (Cook, 2005:2). *Schindler’s List* is a film based on a historical origin that also interacts with trauma in collective memories and national identity. Although the history of the Second World War is not one hundred percent present in the film. It still leaves the feeling of Shoah for the audiences not living in that very moment and for the memories of audiences who have experienced that part of history (Hansen, 1996) through visualized images.

In terms of film adaptations with historical origins, The fictional story in the book was once communicative memory that people get from their daily interactions within their communities. Memory nowadays has become a cultural phenomenon that people can study from their own culture (Assmann, 1995). When this memory is threatened by the transforming adaptations, some audiences might be familiar with the past and who cherish the nostalgic memory of history get offended in this process. How does the

nostalgia for the past and history embedded in historical narrations trigger a new level of fidelity and authenticity from the audiences?

Coping with Changing Context

With the increase of the course of globalization, transcultural communication has become easier and faster. Cultural globalization raised by Cuddy-Keane (2003) emphasizes artwork's transfer through various cultural contexts. When the director from a new era intends to make an adaptation of literature or story situated in a far history, parts of the story that are not suitable in contemporary society and context are usually changed. "Indeed, the cultural survival of texts can be nourished by the ways in which adaptations reimagine them...for a different historic-cultural context" (Rippl, 2015:877). It is common to see adaptations try their best to fit the developing culture and society, as some of the content may lose its meaning when moving out from the specific context (Radu, 2019). "Adapters deal with the reality of reception by updating the time of the story in an attempt to find contemporary resonance for their audience" (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013:142). This cultural context can be the difference in time or place (ibid:145). For instance, an old novel is translated into a film under a new society, or a Swedish fiction film is translated into an American movie for American audiences. Things need to be developed to cope with their specific strategy and the audiences' feeds.

Some film adaptations agree with the importance of cultural context. The discussion of the American *12 Angry Men* argues its Chinese version's success in translating the American story into the Chinese context. It covers the Chinese political system and its aims and function in the global world (Yang, 2018). As for the four adaptations of *Snow White* mentioned above, the characteristics of Snow White become strong-minded, assertive, and independent, which might be a result of the prevalence of feminism in modern society (Juez, 2021).

However, not every adaptation concerning context change will be considered making suitable transformations. For example, the Disney adaptation film *Mulan* is based on a Chinese poem. Disney added western ideology in the movie to serve the audience of the west or the “global taste.” It alters narrative, thematic and stylistic choices to make another blockbuster for global audiences. However, that was not the case in China. Some became angry after watching it because of the stereotypes it conveys and the mistakes it made regarding Chinese traditional culture. Scholars also criticize this film, emphasizing the patriarchal society back to feudal China (Giunta, 2018). And some challenge its faithfulness to the original text. Adaptation inevitably needs to fit into new contexts. The different audience reception of the two films, *12 Angry Men* and *Mulan*, makes it tough to determine how the audiences perceive the recontextualization of film adaptations. How and how close can an adaptation put itself to contemporary society to create a sense of resonance?

To sum up, the nostalgia for the classic origin and the history among the audience are segments that might insert influence on their experiences perceiving adaptations. The task of coping with the changing context sometimes plays the opposite role of nostalgia. The urgent problem is to realize a better way to balance the story and the contemporary society to make the audiences satisfied. If the story is a classic story or a story with historical background, how will the balance change for the audiences?

Adaptation and Derivation

In terms of law, both adaptation and derivative work are covered by the copyright of their origins. In Article 2 (3) of the international copyright treaty, *Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works*: “Translation, adaptations, arrangements of music, and other alternations of a literary or artistic work shall be protected as original works without prejudice to the copyright in the original work.”

An adaptation is usually counted as a derivative work under the protection of the derivative right (Hutcheon, 2013: 89). In the Act's definition section, *derivative work* is defined as follows:

A work based upon one or more preexisting works, such as a translation, musical arrangement, dramatization, fictionalization, motion picture version, sound recording, art reproduction, abridgment, condensation, or any other form in which a work may be recast, transformed, or adapted. A work consisting of editorial revisions, annotations, and elaborations... represents an original work of authorship (Abramowicz, 2005:325).

Hutcheon defines an adaptation as an “extended, deliberate, announced revisitation of a particular work of art” in the academic field, including short intertextual allusions and parodies (2013:170). Fewer media and film scholars give a direct definition of derivative work, which situates more in the field of law. Adaptation in this sense conveys the same idea of derivative work in the academic sphere. Then, what will the world of adaptation be like when an equal mark is put between adaptation and derivative work and fidelity is totally removed?

Fidelity and Liberty

After discussing the decreasing power of fidelity and possible elements that may alter the audiences' level of fidelity, liberty is also waiting for a specific standard. Stories are constantly going through “an endless process of recycling, transformation, and mutation with no clear point of origin” (Stam, 2005:66). What if the director conceals his or her referring to an existing text, or if the origin is not that popular to be recognized, should the work still be considered an adaptation in terms of the audience? According to Hutcheon & O’Flynn (2013), the verb “adapt” at its base means to change instead of to be consistent. Nevertheless, if literature needs to be creatively developed when translated into films, there might be a conflict with the inevitable term of fidelity.

How can an adapter balance fidelity and liberty to guarantee the work's identity as an adaptation in audiences' eyes? Take the example of *The Thirty-Nine Steps* by Hitchcock

here again. The director converts both the plot and the theme. The story is highly simplified while more concepts and themes such as mirth, sexuality, and suspense are added, which we cannot find in the novel (McDougal, 1975:232-238). This film was widely accepted by audiences as a masterpiece, giving us the idea that faith in the themes is not that important for adaptations. Still, the plot is not that important when it comes to another article, whereas the theme must follow the original work (Harold, 2018:89). The two adaptations have different standards to define adaptations, which makes the term vague.

To what extent can an adapter take the liberty when making adaptations to prevent taking the audience down? Suppose adaptation is fluid and subject to transformation and creativity, whereas fidelity is not considered at all. How can the audience conclude a film as an adaptation or a brand new creation? Leitch also argues about where we should draw the line between adaptation and other intertexts (2012). These questions ask for the function of fidelity again. Instead of putting fidelity as a rule that every adaptation needs to follow at the beginning of the process, it is becoming a tool to analyze how a film can be identified as an adaptation or why some adaptations need to be faithful while some do not (Leitch, 2007).

Adaptation Studies in Progress

According to the discussion above, the following parts will focus on the status of fidelity and authenticity in modern society and the films' audience reception under remediation. Fidelity will be the main element that goes through the whole process where its function, object (to define the real origin in intertextuality and to define the audiences' requirements of fidelity in adaptations with different types of sources), and level of liberty based on the audiences' voices are discussed with the case.

As argued above, fidelity has almost disappeared in adaptation studies. The reduction of the power embedded in fidelity might be caused by the development of technology

and the change of hierarchy among media, especially between film and literature. The elements lead to the change in audience habits on accessing stories or entertainment. Yet, if we do not consider fidelity when doing an adaptation, the director and screenwriter can modify as much as they like to reveal their own auteurship; how can we make the audience agree with the idea that it is an adaptation of a book instead of a new piece of artwork. Intertextuality does not give a suitable answer to the distinctions between adaptation and other intertexts, and there is no further term that appears to replace intertextuality regarding this problem. Adaptation still needs to be defined with the help of fidelity, especially to draw a border between adaptation and others. In other words, we need a new and precise definition of fidelity in adaptation studies regarding what to convert and what to preserve to protect the audience's interest or to be positively perceived by the audience. Absolutely, not regarding fidelity as a standard that demands one hundred percent faithfulness to the origin, but a kind of faithfulness with creative transformations. Moreover, the target that the film adaptation refers to might be challenging to decide since stories might have several sources. Defining what the adaptation is faithful to is also a task for future development.

The reality when adaptations are made also functions under cultural globalization. No matter is the relation to contemporary society or the relation to history in a historical origin, the thing is that we need to find out a way to balance the story and the reality, which is highly connected to each director's creativity and their ambitions of creating their own understanding of art. Fidelity in this respect again needs to matter among original work, historical events, and current society. We still need help to know to what extent should the adaptation be faithful to each of these parts to ease the audience. In other words, the nostalgia for the old media, the classic story, and the history will all impact the level of liberty and fidelity that the film needs to follow to satisfy the audiences. Nostalgia might, in a sense, help to create the highest boundary of fidelity asked by the audiences.

Fewer researchers are doing audience research on fidelity but doing comparative analyses on origins and adaptations. The main data I will analyze in the following parts are the comments and reviews from the audiences, including amateurs and film critics. Since my case of *The Emigrants* is highly connected to nostalgia because of its important status in Swedish history, its audiences may have a different or a stricter standard of fidelity compared to other adaptations, which makes this case rational to apply to a general level of adaptation studies.

Methodology

The Emigrants as the Case

In social science studies, every attempt at a context-free action...will not necessarily accord with the pragmatic action which is defined within a concrete social situation (Flyvbjerg, 2001:42). Accordingly, the main focus of this work – fidelity – asks for a specific context. In this sense, the films *The Emigrants* (1971) and (2021) are suitable cases since they are adapted from one classic novel series and based on one real historical event but produced in totally different social contexts. The old film was produced when fidelity was still in charge, and the film was lowbrow art compared to literature. In comparison, the new version was produced in a society where people respect literature but more often obtain stories from screens compared to reading books. Fidelity as a floating signifier transforms with time (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). The films automatically put fidelity into separate contexts, which can help compare its development through history. The comparison of the two films' reviews will render a transforming necessity of fidelity in the audiences' perspective. Moreover, remediation stresses the relationship among media (Manovich, 2002). The 1971 remediation is considered a masterpiece in the Swedish film industry. The novel as its direct source is translated into a new form of medium. By contrast, the 2021 remediation experiences translation from the novel, "copying" the old films, and is even inspired by a musical based on the same series. With so many media coming together: books, movies, and

musicals, the comparison indicates the developing trend of media convergence in the 21st century.

While fidelity produces faithfulness, liberty protects creativity. Reducing the level of fidelity brings a growing level of liberty. “It is often more important to clarify the deeper causes behind a given problem and its consequences than to describe the symptoms of the problem and how frequently they occur” (Flyvbjerg, 2001:78). The selected critical case needs to be valid to apply to a general level of adaptation studies. The two films are the “*most likely*” cases to observe the change of fidelity in adaptation studies. To justify the balance between fidelity and liberty in adaptation studies, aspects that would limit the freedom are taken into account, for instance, nostalgia and authenticity to contemporary society and to history. These two films allow me to discover the differences in the balance between fictional storytelling and historical accuracy under their specific cultural contexts with a 50-year gap. Because of the classic and historical sources the two films are facing, fidelity is much more essential compared to other adaptations of not that nostalgic texts. The viewer’s knowledge of the level of fidelity needed in these adaptations will attain the highest boundary for all adaptations. To put it simpler, if the audiences of these two films do not emphasize fidelity as criteria for good adaptations or if it works for something else, then fidelity is not that important in any other adaptations from the audiences’ perspective.

Method: Qualitative Text Analysis

Since the two films are made in different time frames, fidelity, authenticity, and remediation will be put into their specific academic and social contexts to launch valid analysis of the audience’s and film critics’ comments and reviews. In addition, to see whether the changes operated by academic scholars also apply to amateurs and critics. In order to conduct this research on the two versions of *The Emigrants*, I call for a method that can fulfill all my needs. First, to discover the audience behaviors when engaging in adaptations instead of my personal review on the adaptations. I need a more

significant amount of empirical data that is qualified for discussing fidelity when watching these two adaptations. The method needs to be designed for analyzing sets of data from audiences. Second, since the data will be derived from the reviews written by the audiences on the Internet, the method needs to have its focus on texts and words. Third, in order to summarize the necessity of fidelity from the mass audience's eyes, I want a method that can generate overall categories from the raw data and finally reach a conclusion that can apply to a general level of adaptation studies. Fourth, considering the transformation of fidelity, the specific contexts will be discussed which ask for a method that can connect media with the society. These demands point to the method of qualitative text analysis. It dealt with texts and enables the coder to create categories and sub-categories from sets of data and emphasizes the understanding of "the many relationships that exist within media and society" (Brennen, 2012:5).

One might argue a single method seems not that convincing. However, qualitative text analysis has already fed all my needs mentioned above for this research especially: my intention to seek diverse thoughts from more audiences and to generate an overall conclusion from the raw data. By conducting QTA, the comments and reviews I collected are qualified and adequate to serve my research interests since most of them discuss fidelity and liberty from different angles. Then it became unnecessary to conduct other methods for probably the same outcomes. In a word, this research can be considered valid with a single method of qualitative text analysis.

Data Collection and Sampling

The next step is to collect data for QTA. It makes sense to only do reception research on film critics' views in the 1970s and the 2020s since the data are available and easier to be compared. The 1970s was a period when discussions on everything were expert-driven with no or less space for the laypeople to express their ideas. It is also not able to collect the audiences' views back in the 1970s in order to conduct a comparative analysis of the amateur's propositions on fidelity. Yet, in the new time, everyone has

equal rights and means to say their words. The discussion on art and society is no longer a thing that is restricted among the experts. The thoughts of laypeople must be considered in contemporary society. As a result, the data will be divided into three parts: the 1970s film critics' reviews on the 1971 version; the 2020s amateurs' comments on the 2021 version, and the 2020s film critics' reviews on the 2021 version. In order to ensure the validity of nostalgia for history and the classic story, all data must come from audiences who have read the original novels or/and who have watched the 1971 film.

The most applicable reviews of the 1971 version come from the articles published in prominent newspapers in the 1970s around the premiere. The newspaper is the only data source that is accessible, there are not many other options. The seven newspaper mentioned include Expressen, Aftonbladet, Svenska Dagbladet, Göteborgs-Posten, and GT, which are all dominant newspapers back in the 1970s.

For the new version, I've been given more chances to collect the audiences' comments on the new film thanks to technological development. The comments are gathered from several commonly used websites that Swedish movie lovers use to discuss films, including MovieZine, IMDB, Letterboxd, Filmtipset, lindelof.nu, and Flashback Forum, gathering forty qualified discussion threads in total. Instead of including all the comments, I selected only those that have relations with fidelity and authenticity.

For *The Emigrants* (2021), I still kept an eye on the reviews from film critics in order to create a comparison with the data of the old film. I looked through websites that share film reviews and picked up those again around fidelity and also the modern ideologies that might influence the adaptation. I collected articles written by film critics from big websites and blogs that are used to share film reviews in Sweden. The twelve articles are from: Filmtopp.se (Eric Diedrichs); Kulturbloggen.com (Birgitta Komaki); Nöjesguiden (Nilo Khamani); Cinetaste (Linus Andersen); SVT Nyheter (Fredrik Sahlin); Sverigesradio (Björn Jansson, Emma Engström); Aftonbladet (Jens Peterson);

Toppraffel (Pidde Andersson); SF Studio; Rörliga bilder och tryckta ord; 8 sidor; lindelof.nu (Leif Stranberg).

For the 1971 film, there was no way for me to collect the audiences' ideas back in the 1970s when there was no online or offline community for laypeople to share their thoughts on a particular film. However, the lack of the audience's voice from the 1970s does not mean that this part of the analysis will be less valuable. According to the data on amateurs' and film critics' reviews of the 2021 version, their thoughts on fidelity have similar overall attitudes without distinct divergences. The similarity suggests that the amateur's ideas back in the 1970s might not be that different from the critics. In this respect, the film critics act as representatives of the amateurs.

Data Coding and Analysis

Data coding was divided into three parts: the reviews from critics of the old film, the comments from audiences of the new film, and the reviews from the critics of the new film. The three kinds of data were gathered separately in three google docs. Among the three types of methods including thematic text analysis, evaluative text analysis, and type-building text analysis (Kuckartz, 2014:68-69), the most suitable one is thematic text analysis as my aim is to develop themes and categories for future use. To start coding, I did first open coding and went through all the raw data with notes and memos added to the right. Themes that are not related to adaptation and fidelity are ignored. In this process, I limit the data to a doable number to save sufficient time to conduct qualitative instead of quantitative research.

Case-related thematic summaries enable me to compress the material and reduce it to those that are really related to my research questions (Kuckartz, 2014:80). I wrote summaries with my understanding for every selected article from critics and every comment chosen from the audience regarding adaptation, fidelity, remediation, and nostalgia. Then I put the repeatedly mentioned points together to come up with possible

categories and themes that might be used in the analysis. To justify the themes and their ability to provide good explanations and avoid data gaps (Seale 2012:277), I took the themes and categories back to the raw data to see whether the codes are actually reflecting these problems and if there can be new ones. Although I had fixed theories: adaptation and fidelity before data collection, the possible aspects, and categories that reflect on fidelity are all extracted inductively from the empirical data since my aim is to develop knowledge of the audience instead of my own understanding of fidelity.

To make the categories and themes more organized, I put them into Excel, followed by direct quotes from the data, then created sub-categories. This process yields the main arguments in the analysis to assist applicants in the broader range of adaptation studies. The analysis was conducted according to the themes and categories, combining the literature and theories. The categories are managed and presented with logical reasons in the analysis instead of putting them casually (Kuckartz, 2014:84).

***The Emigrants* (1971): Faithfulness to a Masterpiece**

The films *The Emigrants* (1971) and *The New Land* (*Nybyggarna*) (1972) by Jan Troell, known as successful adaptations of a masterpiece in Swedish literature, are widely discussed in the Swedish film industry. Film, at first compared to literature, was a newborn that aimed at entertainment and economic profits. The highbrow literature was the main source of stories for those with high statuses and high educational levels. Only those who led a poor life and struggled in low social classes acquire stories from cinemas. The inveteracy of the hierarchy between literature and film was retained even into the 1970s.

To mitigate the stereotype of film, Swedish film companies started to make movies based on well-known and beloved Nordic literature, luring movie-goers with the established reputations of the literature between the end of the 1910s and the beginning

of the 1920s. The 1970s witnessed the oil crisis and inflation in the global economy, making film production problematic (Larsson & Marklund, 2010). Also, thanks to the appearance of TV and VHS, there was no need for people to visit a cinema for leisure anymore (ibid). Everyone can easily access any film and television works on-demand at a lower price at home. Facing these problems, films have been changed and become closer to economic actions to attract more viewers and gain more profits, making directors' lives focusing on art films harsh (ibid:183; Hedling, 2016). Specifically in Sweden, there left small space for domestic films because of the popularity of the Scandinavian crime genre and the domination of Hollywood film in the Swedish film market during the last five decades (Hedling, 2016). The adaptation of *The Emigrants* in this way is able to indicate the problems in the Sweden film industry.

The old film *The Emigrants* was produced in the days when fidelity was in charge and when Moberg as the authority was still alive. In addition, laypeople back in that time were not able to present personal views freely on anything. Discussions were always expert-driven in newspapers and televisions, which made it impossible to collect amateur reviews on the old film. Although making film adaptations of classic literature was a manner to get rid of the hierarchy, the very process of the adaptation still laid emphasis on faithfulness and fidelity. With the director's high respect for the roots, fidelity regarding plots, characters, conclusions, and themes were perfectly protected. Then comes the question: how important was fidelity in this classic adaptation among film critics back in the 1970s? This question will be discussed in the following parts, with six articles on the 1971 film I collected from big newspapers: Expressen, Aftonbladet, Svenska Dagbladet, Göteborgs-Posten, and GT.

The Emigrants (1971): Protecting the Origin

--Your film is an excellent retelling of a great work of poetry. Did you reinvent something in the film yourself?

--No, not a whole party, just details. Of course, I have sought to resolve feelings and moods in the book in my film style.

----- Expressen 08.03.1971: an interview with Jan Troell

The articles in the newspaper on 1971 *The Emigrants* range from introductions to the preparation and production of the film, interviews with Jan Troell, and interviews with Vilhelm Moberg but mostly give positive ideas and expectations. They suggest the film adaptation as a massive project based on a masterpiece in Nordic literature. Everybody knows in the first place how difficult this adaptation would be as the origin contains so much memory and nostalgia of the Nordic people: *“Jan Troell hoped to be able to transfer Moberg's literary style to a corresponding film style...and has managed to avoid almost all style violations. This is Moberg's story in the picture”* (Svenska Dagbladet, 09.03.1971); The director is working hard to do the right interpretation of the great work: *“Jan Troell compresses gently, and the fabric he chooses...does not betray the origin”* (GT, 09.03.1971). Troell aims to reveal Moberg's idea in a picture form and follow as much as possible to show his respect.

“Bengt Forslund and I (Troell) selected what should be included, then we wrote the script, which Moberg approved. He has followed the recording with great interest but from a distance. He has not put himself into production” (Expressen 08.03.1971), leaving enough space for Troell's creativity. Yet, the recreations of Troell are mainly focused on retelling the story in a proper way for people to enjoy it from screens. These quotes suggest that the 1971 film is a good one because it is faithful and leaves mostly everything the same as it is in the novel. The most significant change might be the switch of the character focus: *“Vilhelm Moberg tells about freedom, people who are either defiant or dreamers. Jan Troell seems to feel most for the dreamers, and therefore it feels as if his film is first and foremost about Robert. The brothers are two sides of Moberg himself, and that Troell has come closer to Robert than Karl Oskar is just a transfer within a fidelity”* (Expressen, 09.03.1971). It is more like pure remediation in terms of two different media by analyzing their characteristics instead of adapting to create another artwork. Jan Troell is significantly great at revealing the abstract descriptions by words on the screens to fulfill the imaginations of the novel's readers.

Let us again see the quotes where people use the words like “violation” and “betray.” There was a time back in the day when people considered every film adaptation of literature a threat and violation since films were not as reflexive as books (Stam, 2005:12-14). That was also the time when fidelity was highly underlined. Emphasizing fidelity also advocates adaptations as accessories to the origin, which cannot stand on their own under long-lasting comparative analysis (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013:6). At the same time, the hierarchy caused by generic and historical stratification between different media is injected (Griggs, 2016:1-6). The same as the quotes above, not so many articles mentioned the film’s “fidelity” directly, but no article split the film from the original texts. This film was made in this period, making it difficult for Troell since a single act can cause “violation” and “betrayal.” This might be why articles praise the film’s faithfulness to the novels and depict how hard Troell tried to be faithful.

The Emigrants (1971): As a Part of History

Film reviews focused on its historical significance, saying it fills both a part of American history and a part of Swedish history in the 1840s. Since the story is based on a real historical event in Sweden, history, and reality cannot be avoided in the discussion. Historical scholars have been opposing history on screens. They argue that films violate the authenticity of history but ignore the ability that films display history more vividly (Rosenstone: 2015:186). How was history portrayed in the movie in critics’ eyes in the 1970s? Was authenticity to the history important in a fictional film?

The Emigrants show you as the great portrayer of Swedish poverty, not with the burning gaze of the committed but with grip and power in his depictions. It is a gray leaf in our country's history. It is a reality that plays a role in our own current perception. ----- Göteborgs-Posten, 09.03.1971

Since the novels tell a story set back in the 1840s, the scenes on the screen need to be in accordance with the time frame. Many critics mention the historical reality depicted in the film. The settings bring forward the poverty and struggle of the people: “*Poverty*

was so painful and ruthless that it disarms even the most destitute in the 1840s and 1850s. Thanks to Troell's loving detail, we soon feel like we know the people” (GT, 09.03.1971); the characters living precisely in that time: *“Everyone has been able to go into their roles and live precisely because it was a question of portraits of real everyday people”* (GT, 09.03.1971). Articles reflect on the film as a supplement to history by showing people the "real" situation in history directly in front of their eyes.

However, history can never be more authentic in this fictional story than in pure documentaries. It is important to know that showing the reality of the historical event is not the goal of this adaptation: *“The New York of immigrants in 1850 is impossible to portray, to state this is no major reproach against either Vilhelm Moberg or Jan Troell”* (Svenska Dagbladet, 09.03.1971). “It makes little sense to talk about adaptations as ‘historically accurate’ or ‘historically inaccurate’...it is a paraphrase or translation of a particular other text, a particular interpretation of history. The seeming simplicity of the familiar label, ‘based on a true story,’ is a rush: in reality, such historical adaptations are as complex as historiography itself” (Hutcheon, 2013:18). Fictional stories based on historical events need to be “real” enough for the audience to trust but can never be that “real” to be recorded directly into history textbooks.

“The factual ‘error’ of the work will appear to be less the fault of the filmmaker than a condition of both medium and the kind of movie he has chosen to make” (Rosenstone, 1995:122). Historical films are means to stimulate the interests of the audience in history and take them back and enjoy a “reality” that is different from their everyday life. None of the critics take out the natural history to do a comparison with the film like they take out the novel to compare plots and characters. They passively enjoy the fresh and unfamiliar setting of the film narration.

The Emigrants (2021): Many Amateurs do not Like the New

Adaptation

The new technology allows people engaging media in different manners. The once privileged texts on printed papers have lost their dominant status in cultural interactions and communications. “A hundred years after cinema’s birth, cinematic ways of seeing the world, of structuring time, of narrating a story...are being extended to become the basic ways” (Manovich, 2002:87). With more and more people choosing to get access to stories from audio-visual moving images, film adaptations boomed to occupy the market.

The new sphere of technology at present generates new relationships in communities and the novel corresponding behaviors of the users as Joshua Meyrowitz (1985) asserts in his *No Sense of Space: The Impact of Electronic Media on social behavior*: “Information is able to flow through walls and rush across great distances...the social environment created by media of communication describes how electronic media affect social behavior – not through the power of their messages but by reorganizing the social settings in which people interact” (viii-ix). Through new technologies, stories transmit faster disregarding physical barriers. It enables audiences’ feelings of face-to-face interactions with performers and producers (Moore, 2012:7). The gap between audiences and content on media narrows down as the audiences claim more power and initiative.

Remember back in the 1970s, the discussion on films was conducted mostly by critics and experts. That is not the case in the 2020s. Thanks to technological development, the ideas from everyone, regardless of status and identity, have equal rights to be published on the internet and be seen by bigger communities, and even trigger more intense discussions. It is not enough to study only the perspectives of film critics in this new era since amateurs take an overt part in public debates. What also changed is the

hierarchy among media. Instead of reading books, movies turn into the dominant media in storytelling with their easily understandable moving images compared to pure texts. Screens and stories are everywhere and easier to get access to. With the decreased power of literature over the film, is fidelity in the audience's eyes still essential in the 2020s' adaptations compared to those in the 1970s? The same as the analysis in the last part, the audience's comments are around fidelity and authenticity. Advantages are mostly suggested regarding technological developments. Among the massive negative comments, three main drawbacks can be extracted in relation to the two concepts: an excessively short story, a controversial feminist perspective, and inappropriate language.

The Emigrants (2021): Fidelity and an Excessively Short Story

Most audiences inevitably compare the new film with the 1971 version and the novel and come up with passive appraisals: *"I always whine about people comparing to "the book" or previous movies, but here it is hard not to"* (Gordyal, *filmtipset*, 2021). However, in a time when faithfulness and comparative analysis are being questioned, are audiences still underlining fidelity as the main criterion? Stam argues that every adaptor should have its own translation or understanding of the story. If not, it is meaningless to do adaptation (2000:62-63). Is fidelity really something that needs to be gotten rid of?

From the basic information of the films, we see that Troell covers four novels in two films with 395 minutes in total (191 and 204 minutes, respectively), while Poppe squeezes the novels into one film of only 148 minutes. It is undeniable that many plots need to be deleted to finish the story in time. The extremely condensed story is the most apparent problem that appeared. Almost everyone wrote something about the deleted characters and plots. *"It's almost like you write several novels because they contain vital characters, information, and locations that need a certain pace to fit"* (Ellysin, *letterboxd*, 2021). People may say that the disappointment is caused because the new

film is different from its origin. According to Hutcheon and O'Flynn (2013:6), we need to regard adaptations as autonomous works before going further into comparative studies. Among the forty long comments I studied, only two people have not read the novel or watched the 1971 film. These two people have positive reviews of the new version. Yet, they still consider the pace of the film so fast, which fails to deliver enough information: *"I really liked the film (I have neither read the book nor seen Jan Troell's films)...The film felt very stressful, and I wanted more of everything. I did not mind two or maybe three films instead of one"* (smellycat, moviezine, 2021). Films through which people engage with stories are required to have clear and logical narrations according to the audience's feedback. It might be a problem if the audience feels hard to catch up with the story.

The information that audiences ask for most is the reason for migration: *"The misery in Sweden does not feel enough to make it feel likely that this family will travel to America"* (Filmrullen, moviezine, 2021). The director and the screenwriters spent a lot of endeavor on the description of America than that of Sweden (in the film, the family starts to move at the very beginning and arrives in America in 50 minutes, all the plots about Sweden are only shown in flashbacks). *"It's too Americanized, which now in this context becomes very ironic"* (okokok666, letterboxd, 2021). Except for the style, narration, and flashbacks that are Americanized, this film's not giving enough reasons for migration causes problems for the faithfulness to the original story and history as well as the continuity of the whole story. The audience does not even know how living in Sweden is suffering if they have not read the book or watched the old film. It just looks like everybody has their "American dream" and situates America over their own country. As a result, they migrate.

Given all these empirical comments from the audience on fidelity to the source text and 1971 film, we know that, at least for the audience of this Emigrant series, fidelity has not totally left. As stressed by Hutcheon, the point of adaptation is creativity and the possible surprise that might be brought to the audience by transformations and

translations instead of mere repetitions (2013:114). Stam suggests people be critical and not pay attention to fidelity: “we in no way abandon our rights or responsibilities to make judgments about the value of specific film adaptations...and continue to function as critics ” (2000:76). Big changes might be challenging, but adaptations are all about losses and remains (Sandra, 2014). We see how much creativity Poppe has infused into this new film, but the audiences are still asking for their favorite plots and characters back.

Referring to Stam (2005), *strict* fidelity is unnecessary and impossible. It is undeniable that strict fidelity is not suitable in nowadays' film industry, especially in a remediation process (Stam, 2000: 56). But we cannot put an equal mark between strict fidelity and fidelity. Scholars, including Stam, have been looking for alternatives for "fidelity," such as “transformation,” “translation,” “rewriting,” etc. These terms give ideas in the production field, not reception. Is the evaluation criterion for amateurs so easy to be changed by simply inventing a new term to replace fidelity? It is strict fidelity, not fidelity that needs to be abandoned. From the data, there is not one comment refusing transformations. Troell also changed some plots and characters but still made an irreplaceable adaptation. The audience cares about the logic of the narration: whether they can keep engaging themselves in the film. The deletion of the plots and the lack of information obstruct the logic and reduce the credibility of the original story. Fidelity here functions as a tool to identify a good story, not a good repetition. It is no longer a final standard for adaptations, which makes it not that important to find substitutions. It would be “futile to find a methodological approach that entirely rejects fidelity issues” especially for audience research (Constandinides, 2013:5).

The Emigrants (2021): Reality and Authenticity: the New Perspective and the Language

Doing context-based changes is a must in adaptations since some parts of the old story will not make sense if put directly into contemporary society (Rippl, 2015:877).

Historical accuracy should not be that essential in dramatic films. However, audiences do not agree with these arguments. If strict fidelity is not crucial, we find a new definition for fidelity. Then, if strict authenticity likewise is not vital, it also requires a clearer explanation. To what extent should the dramatic film be authentic to history? How can the adapters balance the authenticity of history and of contemporary society in order to satisfy the audiences?

A Controversial Feminist Perspective

One could expect this new perspective to be a positive evolution in the new society, especially in Sweden, where gender equality and women's power are much more emphasized. Some audiences support the new view, but more of the audiences refuse to follow the change from a male lead story to a female lead one. Some argue the female perspective is not suitable in the story: *"I understand very well that it rubs that a new film adaptation today with a new way of looking at the past can be very different and maybe even ridiculous"* (Dan Kotka, 8sidor, 2021); some argue it is not the right perspective in the history: *"The feminism theme feels well anachronistic"* (Sofia, bildrord, 2021). Audiences advocate the feminist perspective harm the fidelity to the original story and the authenticity of the actual society when the story happened. This switch of focus is actually becoming a drawback in audiences' eyes.

"The very great focus ends up on Kristina. The other characters become very undeveloped" (Glorfidel, filmtipset, 2021). The feminist focus is not only causing problems with authenticity but also the contraction of other characters. Many characters are totally removed, but even the protected characters are undeveloped to leave more time and space for the female focus, specifically Kristina. *"Kristina is an important character and balances Karl Oskar, but it becomes tough to understand why the move is even made if you only look at Kristina"* (benjaminjuhlin, flashback, 2021).

Another exciting group of comments address the term PK, short for “politisk korrekthet”

in Swedish, which is political correctness in English, describing people who are being *overly* careful with the trending public issues, in this case, feminism and refugees: “*Be a female columnist who thought that now was enough with PK – thought about the refugees and the female focus*” (Filmitch, bilderord, 2021). Some say Kristina fails to represent the powerful woman that the director intended to create: “*Kristina was not directly driven to go to the promised land. Nor did she thrive. She was homesick. But since she is a woman and the political climate is as it is, she should be emphasized as a strong and enterprising woman*” (Asklord, flashback, 2021). The comments advocate that the choice of doing an adaptation with a feminist perspective is more like a stunt to draw more audience’s interest. The new perspective in this sense for the audience is not an innovation provided by the director’s creativity but an effort for economic gain and at the same time, it does not work out well since Kristina is not as independent and powerful as she should be.

An Inappropriate language

The last problem appeared when the first trailer came out: the characters do not speak with Småland dialect. The use of rikssvenska (standard Swedish) as the dominant language in this film ruins the imagination of the original story. In addition, it makes the characters lose their identity, which is not faithful to history: “*Not to mention the notion of characters from southern parts of Sweden speaking in a Stockholm dialect. I’m getting tired of this erasing-of-dialects thing that has been perpetrated by the cultural elite from Stockholm. It destroys the charm and cultural identity which signifies the essence of local history*” (Wheecocklove, letterboxd, 2021). Some tease that the dialect forces them to keep jumping out of the storytelling: “*I also bothered with ‘Stockholms-washing’. Personally, this takes me out of the movie all the time*” (Svante, letterboxd, 2021). Even in Troell’s film, characters were not speaking in real Småländska but tried their best to speak in a little Småland accent to create credibility, but not too much since the actors were not come from Småland and also for the aim to

be understood by people from all over Sweden. This is not that hard to be done in the new version as well.

There has been a trend in the western world where people emphasize realism as the core to film production. Many great cinema movements in Europe address reality (Stam, 2005:10-12). For instance, French New Wave and Italian Neo-realism were putting efforts into depicting real situations, filming on everyday locations, and recruiting non-professional actors and actresses who had experienced things happening in the film in real life (Elsaesser, 2005). “A purely formalist definition of realism emphasizes the conventional nature of all fictional constructions, seeing realism as nothing but more than a constellation of stylistic devices, a set of conventions that, at a given moment in the history of an art, manage to crystallize a strong feeling of authenticity” (Stam, 2005:11).

However, as a fictional film, there is no way for this film to be totally historically accurate. Films are inevitably transformed by referring to the narrative purpose (Hansen, 1996:298), time, space, directors, and audiences (Rollins, 2007:4). The same as *Jane Eyre* with its preoccupied theme (feminism) that is suitable in nowadays situation (Griggs, 2016:22), the point of *The Emigrants* is the process of migration and relocation, which is also a dominant issue happening in today’s transnational context. “Adapters deal with the reality of reception by updating the time of the story in an attempt to find contemporary resonance for their audience” (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013:142).

Unlike the old film which was produced only 30 years after the publication of the novels, the new version was made 50 years after the old film and 80 years after the novels. In terms of coping with the new society, Troell did not have that much to do whereas Poppe had a lot to consider about. Rikssvenska and the feminist perspective as well as the focus only on the family are the attempts that Poppe utilizes to bring the story closer to the audience living in contemporary society. Although it is said that stressing historical accuracy in a fictional story is not a wise choice (Hutcheon & O’Flynn,

2013:18), as I discussed with the newspaper articles on the 1971 version, these problems still trigger unacceptance among the audience.

The main goal of adaptation is to create a universe that is coherent with the world in the original text and different from the contemporary world (Hutcheon and O’Flynn, 2013:15). The new background makes fewer differences between the society on the screen and the society people are currently living in, which might mitigate the interests of the audience to explore a story that should be set in an unfamiliar background. In addition, recontextualizing an adaptation concerning time and place needs to be done with the intention of the director’s own creativity to increase the aesthetic of the artwork but not merely for the box office. “The point is not that contemporary filmmakers inject aspects of the present moment into their historical adaptations but rather to show how their adaptations manifest – both consciously and unconsciously – change over time in the relationship between culture, narrative, and film” (Scholz, 2013:193-194). According to the audience, the feminist perspective does not come from the intent of infusing creativity and cannot serve the storytelling in a proper way but to serve the director’s aim of being politically correct.

Based on the audience’s voices, the dominant consequence is that the feminist perspective and rikssvenska make the historical background in which the story takes place fragile. “The production...distorts a given script into a context it will not support” (Coursen, 2005:133). The most frequent pattern in historical films is the setting of the past, for example, the “period look”, “period props”, and “period costume” and their abilities to shape the “space, time and body” (Davis, 1988:271). The change of language and perspective provide a relatively wrong time period of the past. Davis also mentions that historical authenticity is “what makes a cinematic account seem real and worthy of belief” (1988:270). It is hard for the audience to believe in the story which should be situated in the 1840s.

Fidelity, Authenticity, or Credibility?

In short, it seems like audiences are not protecting the fidelity to the original story but pointing at fidelity, while they actually mean the lack of authenticity to the history which makes them hard to keep engaged in the film during the whole process. Can we say audiences get rid of fidelity and take on authenticity instead? As I go through the data, the word credibility (trovärdighet) is more often raised than fidelity or authenticity. One suggests that credibility is harmed by the deletion of plots: *“Quite well done but unfortunately loses strength and credibility when it is squeezed so much”* (Teolinda, *filmtipset*, 2021); while others suggest credibility is harmed by rikssvenska: *“It would be interesting to discuss the problem of creating credibility in films with a historical theme, as the actors of our time do not speak as their characters can be assumed to have spoken and do not have such skills and mindsets as these had”* (Ördög, *flashback*, 2021). The audience even argues that this film is not a good adaptation because of its lack of creativity: *“A remake at its best should either have a unique spin that the director had a burning passion for, or deliver on previously untapped potential. This failed on both ends. A film that never cared about the essence of life, humanity, culture, or filmmaking itself, but simply to meet deadlines and make money”* (DungeonSkramz, *letterboxd*, 2021). Fidelity is no longer the main purpose of doing a good adaptation from the audience's perspective.

By discussing credibility, people suggest whether the story is able to believe in. The lack of reasons for migration, the feminist perspective, and the characters speaking in rikssvenska are all making it hard for audiences to believe. In this respect, fidelity works for the logic of narration while authenticity works for the accuracy of reality, and both end up increasing credibility. The problem is no longer how faithful the adaptation to the origin or how authentic is the adaptation to the history. It is the new version's own validity that matters from the amateurs' perspectives.

Which is the Origin, the Novel or the Film?

When going through the data, something worth mentioning appears. Audiences illustrate the old film as the origin. Some emphasized what the old film did better than the new one: *“The original films gave ample time to introduce characters, their motivations, and their relationships. Gives room to breathe and immerse the viewer in this vast historical setting, because it understood the importance of letting the mundanities of life contrast and escalate toward major conflicts”* (DungeonSkramz, letterboxd, 2021); some appreciate the old film’s steady status in Swedish film: *“Troell’s version is and will always be superior compared to this sentimental crap”* (Wheecocklove, letterboxd, 2021); some consider making an adaptation of a masterpiece redundant: *“The Emigrants (1971) and The New Land (1972) are absolute masterpieces so why did they decide to remake? Stop funding these horrendous money grabs”* (Lukas Sjögren, letterboxd, 2021)! The trend is that audiences compare the new film to the old film more than to the novel.

Adaptations with new media will redefine the old one and ask people to go back to the source (Manovich, 2002:35), nearly every newspaper published around the premiere of the 1971 version had advertisements for the novel series. In comparison, these new comments interestingly ask people to go back to the old film, instead of the old novel, which in other words, shows that people are more likely to take the film as the origin of this new adaptation: *“Just watch Jan Troell’s version over this modernized award bait”* (Vasa, letterboxd, 2021); *“If you have a choice between seeing this and Troell’s original, you should choose Troell’s”* (Glorfindel, filmtipset, 2021). The number of stories is limited. All works are intentionally or unintentionally inspired by the existing works (Stam, 2000:64). The recognizable origin of this new film is the novel, the old film, and also the musical: *Kristina Från Duvemåla*. With so many explicit texts and other proper texts that we have no idea of, Stam stresses intertextual dialogism, which

focuses on the dialogue among texts, beyond fidelity. Why does the main source for audiences be the old film?

Audiences' habits change with technology. In the past, TV was mainstream for everybody, but it was less diverse and flexible than today. The primary source of stories was books, whereas today, the novels that were written in the 1940s became so classic, and fewer people read the books. Instead, they watch movies and TV series for stories. Books are squeezed to the edge by more popular "newcomers" with increasing active participation by which transmitting the information to audiences more effectively (Lewis & Lewis, 2015:140), including movies, games, and the Internet, thus changing how audiences receive stories and other content.

What's more, the convergence of multiple media creates media circles for audiences to actively participate in and reach collective intelligence through social interactions. Jenkins suggests that instead of stressing differences among media, a better way is to reach media convergence, though no one knows exactly how. With media convergence, audiences can freely select their own content on whatever media platforms they prefer, and better to make one device that can carry multiple media such as mobile phones (Jenkins, 2006:1-25). Stories told through books, no matter physically or digitally are components of media convergence. In this case, the story from the old media is included in the new. *The Emigrants*, from books to films and TV series, is not creating a storytelling universe that has different but connected contents on various media like Marvel or DC products (Straumann, 2015). The goal of creating a franchise differentiates transmediality from remediation. *The Emigrants* shows the same story on media with separate logic (not to mention the original film is highly faithful to the novels). Referring to Henry Jenkins asserts in his book *Convergence Culture* that transmedia storytelling needs to be self-contained (2006):

In a perfect transmedia storytelling world, each medium does what it does best so that a story might be introduced in a film, expanded through television, novels, and comics, and its world might be explored and experienced through gameplay. Each franchise entry needs to be self-contained enough to enable autonomous

consumption. That is, you don't need to have seen the film to enjoy the game, and vice versa. (95-96)

Although not every adaptation will reach the final goal to create a bigger picture or universe in transmedia storytelling, the self-contained model also applies to these works (Leitch, 2017:317). There is no need for the audience to engage with both the original books and original movies to be able to enjoy the new version. This film does not form franchises, but we cannot deny its ability to tell the story in an independent way.

Intramedia Technological Development

If the film becomes the origin in the audiences' eyes, people may argue that compared to remediation this case looks more like an intramedia adaptation (Leitch, 2012:92). That is where I introduce the development of technology and hypermediacy. Based on the audience comments, the new movie's merits are basically cinematography that perfectly shows the landscape and the view: *"The film is very visually beautiful as it takes us to rocky and barren Småland landscapes and beautiful views from a professionally staged America as it may have looked at the time"* (retard_messiah, *moviezine*, 2021). Some audiences emphasize the improvements in Computer-generated Imagery, background music, and costumes which are more to do with technology: *"The film's greatest strength is definitely that it is quite nicely filmed. Mostly practical effects and CGI are used in a pretty good way"* (Svante, *letterboxd*, 2021). Accordingly, it is interesting to see that the 1971 version was mostly nominated or awarded for best director, best script, and best picture whereas the 2021 version was nominated or awarded for best visual effects, best music, and even best suit.

New filming technics like close-ups, POVs, and new editing technics like 3D, CGI, and BGM (Sandra, 2014) are all influencing the storytelling and narrative style. Hypermediacy illustrates the improvement in terms of technology (Bolter & Grusin, 2000:31). Compared to the old version, the new version is able to have brighter colors, prettier landscapes, and lovely costumes. Although the two versions are both films that

share similarities in telling stories on screens through dialogues, performances, and cinematic narratives, they are not one hundred percent the same as for the fifty years gap and innovation in the film industry. In this sense, these two films are intertext and intratext; old and new at the same time.

The Emigrants (2021): Film Critics Looking at the New Film

After analyzing the amateur's comments, giving up fidelity does not seem like an appropriate action, and pursuing authenticity is also not necessary. Is it true as well for the film critics? To what part need filmmakers be faithful in film critics' eyes? Can we find a specific definition for fidelity that copes with the current society and academic development? If not, how can we distinguish adaptation from other art forms? In the following part, I will focus mainly on the issue of fidelity and liberty and these questions will be discussed together with the data collected from film critics' articles on the new version of *The Emigrants*. Nine film critics can be divided into two parts: four critics who have negative attitudes and five critics who have neutral or positive attitudes towards the new adaptation. However, all of them illustrate the pity that some of the themes disappear together with the deletion of important characters.

Film critics: Disappearing Characters, Plots, and the Theme of the Story

Film critics feel the reduction of characters and plots is a big problem for this new version as this caused the vanishing of the main theme of the original story. *"In the new film, it is primarily a travel project for Kristina's family and not a big movement that runs through the whole of Ljud parish, and the whole country. It was a crowd of 19 people who had gathered at Åkerby crossroads"* (Leif Strandberg, 2021); Jens Peterson has the same argument: *"The collective that in Moberg's story together dares to take the step and leave the village, is scaled down to the nuclear family Karl-Oskar and Kristina."* (2021). The films' keeping its focus only on Kristina and her family makes

this film more like a family issue instead of a collective migration issue. This may be why the audiences feel the film does not give enough reasons for the family to migrate.

The conflict of religion is cut: *“Karl Oskar's brother Robert, who is a central figure in that theme, is completely gone, as are Kristina's uncle Danjel and his wife, who are persecuted for their faith in Sweden. And with that, another theme falls into the background. It was not just starvation, but the state and the church's control of the individual, that caused many to emigrate to America...”* (Jens Peterson, 2021); the attraction of the Gold Rush in America is also cut: *“Some will surely be disappointed that several of the book series' most prominent characters have been deleted - there will be no digging gold in the US for the most stressful soundtrack in history with Robert and Arvid”* (Eric Diedrichs, 2021). The reductions in plots and characters are taking away the themes that stick with them and the reasons people migrate at the same time. It is not only because of starvation that Swedish people migrate in history. These deletions make the new version unauthentic to history in the eyes of film critics. Although this is also taken by the other critics as an attempt to make the migration closer to nowadays reality.

Film crew: Disappearing Characters, Plots, and the Theme of the Story

“I want to interpret The Emigrants novel series in a new way...through the eyes of Kristina. Kristina and Karl Oskar's brave choice to emigrate from this country more than 100 years ago for the opportunity to create a new life for themselves and their children, is as relevant today for people around the world as it was then”, says Erik Poppe, the director. Simply from the words of the two directors, we recognize the different starting points: Jan Troell, respects the novel with personal preference while Poppe, changes the way of narration to make it closer to contemporary society.

“In The Emigrants, we follow Kristina and Karl-Oskar's courageous choices to leave everything behind for the chance to build a new, better life for themselves and their family. It's a sensational adventure they take us on, which is about finding their place

in the world, finding a new home”, said Fredrik Wikström Nicastro, a producer of SF Studio. The words of the director and the producer suggest that it is not the personal feelings of the film critics that this new film is not giving collective information on emigrants in the 1840s. The film actually pays attention merely to the family. In other words, the nuclear family is a representative of migration happening today. This also explains the differences between the two posters (one focuses on the whole migrating group, and one keeps focus on Kristina and Karl Oskar).



Swedish poster of *The Emigrants* (1971) Swedish poster of *The Emigrants* (2021)

Many scholars stress the connection between media in remediation works (Bolter, 2007). Jenkins emphasizes media convergence and argues that old media will never disappear but be transmuted by new devices (2006:13). Except for the adapters’ aesthetic pursuit and economic demand, things must be changed to cope with the new media, which also made fidelity impossible. According to Hutcheon, the most important parts that can be changed in an adaptation process are the main story, the separate units of the story, the themes, the characters, and the conclusion (2013: 10-12). The new film’s changes mostly stay within these elements. However, it still triggers queries. With so many changes in the basic themes and perspectives, is this film still be considered an adaptation?

Stam (2000:62) stresses translation over fidelity. During the process of translation between different languages, many contents and expressions need to be deleted or altered to fit into different cultural contexts and language habits. It is pretty much the same as the operation from literature to film. Nevertheless, even if we use translation instead of fidelity, the new text at least needs to be based on the original text and convey the original meaning. Here we go back to the articles from film critics, the new film is considered no longer conveys the original meaning of the story. Is it still an adaptation or a translation? With the new term, still, by no means can we define to what extent adaptations need to be faithful to the origin in order to make the audience satisfied and assure their interests. In other words, by no means can we have a concrete distinction between adaptation, derivation, and even transformation and appropriation. Fidelity might be a proper term to circulate between adaptation and other forms.

Film Adaptation and Liberty

After discussions of the transformations of the new film, the film's identity as an adaptation is doubted. The four critics who have negative attitudes towards the new adaptation refuse to accept its identity as an adaptation. Jens Peterson argues the new film does not give the right interpretation of the origin: *"As an interpretation of Moberg's classic about a collective, it is thin. The ancient language is gone. The correspondence with Sweden is gone. If the characters were called something else, we could see the film with different eyes, but it is launched with a very well-known brand. The film poster promises Vilhelm Moberg's The Emigrants the last letter to Sweden. This is another Kristina. Literally, another letter"* (2021); Leif Strandberg feels the feminist characters are not faithful: *"What remains is not a film about the Swedish emigration to America. It's more like a little movie trifle with a sad ending about a girl from Stockholm who travels to America and gets a country house. In the subtitles of the film, the filmmakers themselves suggest an alternative title: 'To all mothers who dare'"*

(2021). Not only the film critics, but some audiences also share the same thoughts. "...if you want to address this (feminism), do something else and not change a story to what it is not" (*filmtich, bilderord, 2021*); "To make this a 'portrayal of women' is just crazy. Then it sounds as if you are just using the brand 'emigrants' to pull in some jacks" (*Vrioon, moviezine, 2021*). How should we treat a film that the crew identifies as an adaptation but some of the viewers refuse?

Some comments also mention the musical *Kristina från Duvemåla* mentioning the feminist perspective, sharing their support for the musical and disappointment with the new film: "Why do a remake of a masterpiece? This time we'll tell the story from the woman's perspective, they said. Well, that has been done already, in the extremely popular musical" (*Henrik Harej, 2021*). Some film critics see the musical as one of the origins: "This is not the Kristina who sings her feelings in "Kristina från Duvemåla". The musical gives a fuller portrait of her hard life and homesickness" (*Jens Peterson, 2021*). This leads me to wonder how much liberty a film adaptation can take to feed the audience's requirements compared to other kinds of art forms. Why the same change can be a positive adaptation in the musical but a negative one in the film? This implies that the levels of liberty of adaptations through different media might diverge for the audiences.

"Adaptation" itself is a flexible term because it is highly based on the knowledge of the working cast and the audience (Hutcheon, 2013:120-128). One film is an adaptation if the director says so. Yet, if no audience knows there is a source for this film, it is not an adaptation for the audience. In other words, a film can be an adaptation and not an adaptation at the same time. In this case, the viewers know very well about the source and choose to deny its identity as an adaptation because of its unfaithfulness or failure to give the right interpretation of the source (Stam, 2005:4-7). The film critics by stressing their ideas of giving the right and proper interpretation of the original story help to distinguish the film's identity as an adaptation from other intertexts. To put it simpler, the liberty of film adaptations has a minimum standard which is to reveal a

proper interpretation of the classic historical origins in new narrations in the film critics' eyes.

Amateurs and Film Critics Looking at the Same Film

The same as the amateurs, film critics also have problems regarding the deletion of plots and characters, rikssvenska, and the feminist perspective. In terms of the critics who have positive and neutral attitudes, they usually share discussion on one element critically with both good and bad effects brought by that element. Whereas the amateurs only depict one aspect (Excluding rikssvenska, since all the film critics as well take the language as something problematic for the storytelling and the historical background).

For instance, the feminist perspective becomes merit in these critics' eyes: "*Carlehed does Kristina justice - it feels almost luxurious to take part in her efforts that highlight the interesting idea of centering the female story*" (Nilo Khamani, 2021). But they still agree that the only focus on female characters makes it hard for male characters and sometimes not able to support the overall narration: "*The feeling of his Karl-Oskars is constantly present with a kind of disturbing, restless nerve. Always working with something, constantly observing, he moves in and out of the picture when you least expect it. Sometimes almost spooky. Since the camera rarely leaves her, Lisa Carlehed has to pull the big load*" (Eric Diedrichs, 2021).

The deletion of plots makes the story sometimes incredible and rushes to the end without any emphasis: "*The plot is also sometimes well modernized. Kristina sometimes throws away her old values so quickly that it does not feel credible*" (Birgitta Komaki, 2021). Moreover, neutral and positive critics reflect on the disappearing characters that take away the themes which were important in the original story. Yet they also take this as an attempt to bring the migration issue closer to today's relocating situations: "*The parallels to today's immigrants is clear. Hunger and poverty in the*

homeland and the dream of a better life” (Birgitta Komaki, 2021). “It is a reminder that many of us have moved to find a new home, and that the similarities in the stories we carry more than often bridge the differences” (Nilo Khamani, 2021).

Furthermore, all the critics share the same opinion as the amateurs but are able to dig deeper into the effects that are brought by the transformations than the amateurs. For example, the amateurs raise the problem of the deletion of characters and the lack of reasons for migration separately without figuring out the logical connections between the two parts as the critics do. It is because some important plots and characters are deleted causing the missing of important themes that escaping from poverty becomes the only reason for migration, which does not seem sufficient. In this respect, film critics act more critically and logically in dealing with the transformations compared to the amateurs. However, the problems raised by amateurs and film critics are not that different.

All the data above illustrate that most of the merits and drawbacks the audiences and the film critics give are quite the same and highly refer to fidelity and authenticity and their ability to create the credibility in the new story. The difference is that film critics usually reach out to more concrete conclusions about the changes and why they think the changes are not suitable, which to some extent answers the doubts of the audiences. Here we can go back to the lack of data for the 1970s films. Since the amateur and film critics basically share the same kind of critics, it may suggest that in the 1970s, amateurs and film critics also have similar attitudes towards the film, which makes the lack of data not a big deal for the validity of this research.

Nostalgia for Historical Classic Origin

As I discussed earlier, fidelity functions, refer to the audience, for creating credibility and proper interpretation of the origin, not as a standard to define the quality of an

adaptation. However, we cannot put aside the nostalgia embedded in Swedish people's minds, involving the nostalgia for the past, the memory, and the classic literature. The fast changes and developments in technology will cause social anxiety and explain why nostalgia matters to audiences (Sandra, 2014). The audience mentions several reasons why the company remakes a masterpiece. As a successful story, it is safe for both viewers and producers: *"Now in this modern filmmaking landscape of sequels, remakes, and a general reliance on nostalgia bait to draw in viewers and producers afraid to give original IPs a chance, it was inevitable for this beloved story to get the same treatment"* (DungeonSkramz, 2021). The audience also takes this adaptation as a way of economic gain with the help of the Swedish people's nostalgic memory: *"This is a great story about the misery of our ancestors and we should experience it. The Emigrants (1971) and The New Land are absolute masterpieces so why did they decide to remake this? Stop funding these horrendous money grabs"* (Lukas Sjögren, 2021). Some audiences show their sentimental respect for the old film: *"Misses Småland very much"* (vonade, 2021).

As heritage artwork carries nostalgia, it bears national and international past and history. This story's adaptation can never be a casual product since there are contents that must stay unchanged no matter in what kind of cultural or historical context in accordance with the fact of the past. *The Emigrants* is one of these stories that carry history and nostalgia primarily within Swedish people's collective cultural memory. If the adaptation heavily threatens the novel readers' memory they collected from history or community (Assmann, 1995: 125-133), they will be easily offended. Making a faithful and authentic adaptation, at the same time, is extracting the memory and empathy from most of its audience (Cook, 2005:2). The important thing that is lost in the process of reproducing history in a dramatic work is the "ethical dimension, in which audiences are deemed to have been duped into accepting inauthentic versions and forgetting the 'truth'" (Cook, 2005:3).

Looking at the classic origin, the films are inevitably put into comparative analyses by the audiences. For filmmakers, classic literature is “proved to be an inexhaustible and almost foolproof resource” for the film market (Scholz, 2013:1), but also a challenge, because of the changing level of fidelity and liberty in the audiences eyes. Will people stress more fidelity and authenticity because of its historical classic origin compared to other not that famous literature? The answer might be a yes. The historical and classic root of *The Emigrants* renders less tolerance in transformations for the audiences. By highlighting credibility and proper interpretation, this audience study is able to be applied to a wider range of film adaptation studies in terms of fidelity.

An Audiences Study on *The Emigrants*

In conclusion, as a vital standard of good film adaptations, fidelity alters its obligations not only in the scholars’ eyes but also in the audiences’ perspective. According to the data, new standards have emerged and are different for amateurs and film critics. For amateurs, things fall in credibility. As two different kinds of media, the film can never show one hundred percent fidelity to the books. As a story, it can never reflect one hundred percent authenticity to history. What is left, is the credibility, whether the audience can trust the story and how much the audience can engage themselves with it. The plot, the characters, and even the history can be slightly changed as long as it makes the story coherent and understandable. While for film critics, it is the interpretation that they stress the most. The new critics argue one adaptation needs to do the right interpretations and be equipped with the most significant themes of the original story to be called an adaptation. If not, it may just be a derivative work or a totally new artwork. The plots, the characters, and even the history can be changed as long as it still takes the themes along with the new narration. Nevertheless, for the old-time critics, film adaptation should be as faithful as it can, which means the standard of fidelity stepped down from the 1970s to the 2020s in the eyes of the audience.

We see fidelity from its emergence has been playing a pivotal role in adaptation studies. Fidelity is not fading out at all, especially among the audiences. It is something that people would like to ignore but never succeed. Nowadays, fidelity is no longer the final goal that an adaptation chases after but a tool that helps to create a more concrete story. The fidelity of classic literature is a prism through which adapters grasp the central theme and learn from the successful nostalgic narrations to tell their own stories according to the audiences. Regarding authenticity, it is never the main purpose of a historical drama. Audiences do not ask for perfect historical accuracy from dramatic films and TV series. For that purpose, we have historical documentaries. Authenticity based on the audience, likewise, provides credibility in films that prevent them from kicking out of the narration. There is no need for us to get rid of fidelity or pursuit authenticity when analyzing this film. In addition, we cannot overlook the nostalgia brought by the original story and history, which ask for more faithfulness to the origin than other adaptations. With the nostalgic origin of these two films, this conclusion from the empirical data can be applied to a larger amount of adaptations, regardless of the sources.

Conclusion

This case study offers the opportunity to justify the development of fidelity in audiences' perspectives thanks to the two film adaptations that came out at totally different times. The fifty years gap between the two films provides large transitions in social and cultural contexts:

In the aspect of media, the fifty years from the 1970s to the 2020s witnessed the fast innovations in technology, and the connections between various media become more flexible. With the appearance of more portable, accessible and affordable media like mobile phones compared to books, the everyday media practice of audiences experienced great changes. "Printed word tradition which has initially dominated the

language of cultural interfaces, is becoming less important while the part played by cinematic elements is getting progressively stronger” (Manovich, 2002:87). Stories that were once read from books are now watched on television, computers, or mobile phones. Screens become the populist way to engage in stories among the audiences. Moreover, due to the gap between literature and films narrowing down in contemporary society, films are no longer a secondary choice. In the aspect of adaptation and remediation, stories transmit freely from one medium to another. More and more films are produced based on pre-existing stories from books. The films provide stories in a more vivid way and everyone is eligible to watch films. Furthermore, in the aspect of society, the dominant ideology changed. Such as the prevalence of feminism.

Adaptation Studies in Scholars’ Perspective

Adaptation was born with transformations. It is a usual way of telling stories, even before any media was invented, but properly with another name or without a name. When stories were transmitted through communities from person to person, everyone was subconsciously adapting the original story. Just as simple as what usually happens in the children’s game Chinese Whisper or Telephone. When the term adaptation first appeared in the media industry, fidelity was more like a guard protecting the dominant literary art, which was in the first place, contradicting the instinct of adaptations, which is transformations. It was because of the hierarchy between film and literature that fidelity became so centered in adaptation studies. Film adaptation usually acted as mere entertainment which had a lower status than the high art of literature. We see film adaptations of popular or classic literature as a way to raise the status of the film and at the same time guarantee a better economic return. Since films were already a lower status medium in terms of aesthetics than literature, the only way to make film adaptations not that bad compared to the literary origin is to follow one hundred percent of what the original texts express. In other words, fidelity was the main goal that every “good” adaptation chased after. This again contradicts the instinct of remediation concerning the various characteristics of different media.

However, with the development of the industry, film nowadays compared to literature, takes a bigger market around the globe. Scholars as well especially after 2000 started to take the stance against fidelity and suggest analyzing film adaptations as independent artwork without comparative analysis. They refuse to put fidelity as the only target since they would like to emphasize creativity in adaptation. This improvement is a must since the nature of adaptation and remediation is a process of variation. What they do is try to find alternatives for fidelity. Since every new story is inevitably influenced or inspired by pre-existing stories which made the origin sometimes hard to distinguish, intertextuality takes charge. Yet, if we continue playing Chinese whisper with more than ten participants, the word or the sentence of the last person might be totally different from the original word of the first person, which makes them fail the game. That is a new creation instead of an adaptation. Intertextuality lays emphasis on the course through which the participant transmits the word or sentence. It is not able to deal with the outcome or identify whether it is an adaptation or not. It might be a time for fidelity to come back to the field. In addition, since most of the adaptation studies centered on literature to film adaptation (Scholz, 2013). It is also time to take other adaptation forms into account. To justify the level of fidelity and liberty of adaptations with different media forms for the audiences might also be an interesting field to discover.

Adaptation Studies in Audiences' Perspective

Putting the perspectives of the scholars aside, the main aim of this research is to find out if the development of fidelity and adaptation studies in the academic field also applies to the audiences including amateurs and film critics. It is time to get back to the research questions of this thesis: 1) How does fidelity transform with the changing context in amateurs' and film critics' eyes? 2) What role does realism, including, authenticity to history and contemporary society, play in dramatic stories in amateurs'

and film critics' eyes? 3) As an adaptation, how much liberty can an adapter take in order to make the audience satisfied?

According to the data of the film critics' reviews on *The Emigrants* (1971), fidelity is emphasized when discussing the film adaptation in newspapers, which is in accordance with the scholars. However, in contemporary society, fidelity does not lose its importance in the audiences' eyes. The confirmed fact is that fidelity does not work as a standard to justify the quality of an adaptation and is no longer the main purpose of the new adaptation telling a so nostalgic story of Swedish society in both amateurs' and film critics' eyes. It functions as a tool to approach the credibility of the story and the proper interpretation to guarantee the film's identity as an adaptation. Although fidelity, as well as comparative analysis, are terms that are outdated for adaptation scholars, they are still indispensable for the audiences in the case of *The Emigrants*.

As the main function of fidelity alters, and it no longer restricts transformations, there is no need for the audience to get rid of it. What is required is the level of fidelity that the audiences ask for, which might ease the life of adapters as well. The level of fidelity will help make the distinction between adaptation, derivation, and other art forms clearer. Based on the data, the old film is automatically an adaptation with respect to the novel, while the new version's identity is doubted with the many changes. Fidelity in this respect is able to function for the definition of adaptation, to at least distinguish adaptation from other art forms and at the same time tell the adapters how much liberty he or she can take when planning to do a film adaptation that can satisfy the audience who have read the original literature. More straightforward discussions on similarities and differences between adaptation and other works need to be placed. Intertextuality is not helpful for this purpose. This also advises that more audience and reception studies need to be done instead of developing adaptation studies barely in the academic area. Film adaptations, in the final analysis, are made for all audiences not only for scholars who conduct critical analysis for academic improvements.

It is also necessary to take the condition of the level of fidelity into account. In what kind of circumstances will the level be higher than in other circumstances? The type of origin plays a main role in this question since the level might be different for classic origins, popular origins, not well-known origins, historical origins, as well as non-historical origins, etc. A classic origin may work as an authority. It may be harder to make changes doing adaptations of Shakespeare's works than those of a high school student's homework. The expectations of fidelity might be higher for adaptations with classic origins.

The historical accuracy provided by authenticity in film adaptations also falls in the improvement of credibility for the audiences of *The Emigrants*. The film's ability to show reality is also connected to the director's ability to balance the context of the original story and the context in which the target audiences are living in. Changes along with the new cultural context according to the data must be in relation to the director's creativity and expressing his or her artistic pursuit without other purposes including higher box office or to be politically correct. Dramatic film's authenticity usually falls into the education field where people discuss whether it is a good idea to educate students with dramatic historical films. Scholars have debated on that for years, but according to the data in this thesis, it is not that important to provide an accurate history on the screen for the audience. The only thing the audiences of *The Emigrants* ask for is how much they can trust the storytelling. It is a good historical film as long as it delivers a strong sense of credibility which situates the audience in the right time frame.

The story of *The Emigrants* with its classic and historical origin bears much more nostalgia than other film adaptations. This nostalgia might enhance the significance of fidelity and meanwhile, limit the liberty for adapters to protect the interests of the audiences. Since the level of fidelity varies with different origins, the level of liberty changes in accordance with fidelity. This case study offers a boundary for film adaptations that need the highest level of fidelity and the lowest level of liberty. However again, the highest level of fidelity, in this case study, serves for better

storytelling and proper interpretation, instead of a higher level of faithfulness to the origin. This case suggests that fidelity does not contradict liberty but in fact, works together with liberty in order to produce a comprehensible interpretation. Since audiences of this nostalgic story do not emphasize fidelity on its own, this study might provide an overall view of many more film adaptations no matter what source texts they are facing.

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Appendix

Data websites

<https://www.moviezine.se/movies/utvandrararna-2021>
https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4697290/reviews?ref_=tt_urv
<https://letterboxd.com/film/the-emigrants-2021/reviews/by/activity/>
<https://letterboxd.com/film/the-emigrants-2021/reviews/by/added/>
<https://bilderord.wordpress.com/2022/01/10/utvandrararna-2021/>
<https://www.filmtipset.se/film/utvandrararna-2021>
<https://www.moviezine.se/nyheter/nya-utvandrararna-hyllas-och-sagas-av-kritiker>
<https://www.flashback.org/p63668442>
<https://www.lindelof.nu/om-olika-resor-till-amerika-tankar-efter-att-ha-sett-filmen-utvandrararna-2021/>
<https://www.filmtopp.se/recension/utvandrararna-2021>
<https://kulturbloggen.com/?p=148101>
<https://ng.se/recensioner/film/utvandrararna>
<https://www.cinetaste.se/2021/12/23/utvandrararna/>
<https://www.svt.se/kultur/film/filmrecension-utvandrararna-svt-kulturnyheter>
<https://www.aftonbladet.se/nojesbladet/film/a/Qty3gPA/tunn-och-kapad-nyinspelning-av-vilhelm-mobergs-utvandrararna>
<https://sverigesradio.se/artikel/recension-utvandrararna-med-lisa-carlehed-och-gustaf-skarsgard>
<https://www.toppraffel.se/2021/12/bio-utvandrararna.html>

<https://press-international.sfstudios.se/post/sf-studios-releases-trailer-for-erik-poppes-the-emigrants>

Examples of Articles on Newspapers in 1971 on *Utvandrarna* (1971)

EXPRESSEN • Måndagen den 8 mars 1971 BEKANTAS BEKANTA 23

Premiär för "Utvandrarna"

- Efter år av arbete
- 13 mil inspelad film
- Sju satsade miljoner

Av ANDERS BJORKMAN

I dag är det premiär på "Utvandrarna", den första av Jan Troell två filmer på Vilhelm Mobergs böcker. Antigen, kanske man får tillägga. Detta sju miljoners filmäventyr har nämligen tagit år av diskussioner, förberedelser, filmning och efterarbete.

Med hjälp av DN-Expressens klipparkiv och producenten och manuskrivaren Bengt Forslunds dagbok från inspelningen, ska här i korthet historien om filmäventyret, som blev två filmer, berättas.

I januari 1967 gick Moberg och sig Troells film "Här har du ditt liv". Moberg blev förjurt. Han hade hittat sin "Utvandrar"-regissör. Andra sedan böckerna kom ut hade författaren avböjt alla filmidéer, men nu hade alltså SF en chans. Man avväntade dock till bästa efterom Troell var upptagen med en annan film.

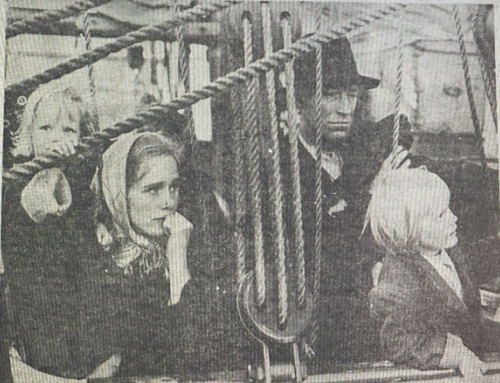
I oktober träffades Forslund, Troell och Moberg. Tycke uppstod och under vintern '68 utarbetades ett scenario. Moberg förklarade sig

Zetterlund med dotter Eva-Leva, Hesse Alfredson, Agneta Prytz, Halvar Björk och många andra. Men nu kunde förarbetet starta.

I april rekommenderar Troell Forslund i Småland, Klässatorget i Långsjö blir det ideella i Korpmoen. Samtidigt slutför de manuskriftlet tillsammans. Seston länge har det varit sig rätta till två filmer.

Amerika i Skåne

Så Amerika. I augusti letas inspelningsplatser där och man finner de bästa. Men inte sjen Ki-Chi-Saga, som Karl-Oskar ska bo i till sig vid. Någon månad senare hittades den — i Skåne. Krageholmsjön norr om Ystad visar sig



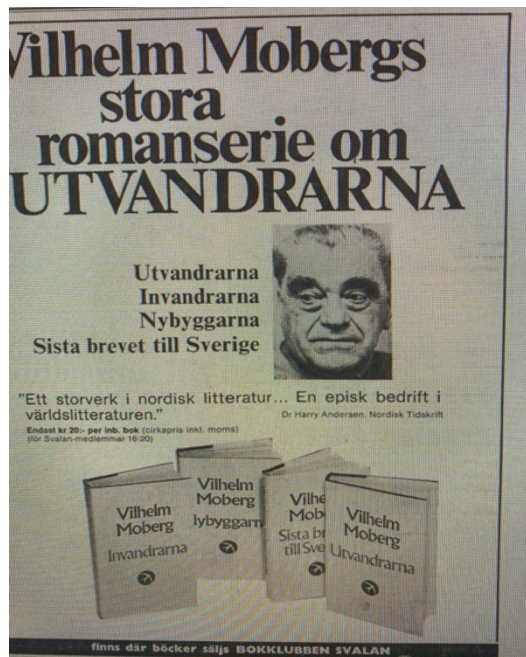
I kväll har filmen "Utvandrarna" av Jan Troell efter Vilhelm Mobergs böcker premiär. Kristina och Karl-Oskar, Lise Ulmann och Max von Sydow. Minnar Scorsese så skenest "Charlot".

FOLKIFARTEN Tisdagen den 9 mars 1971

Premiär på "Utvandrarna"



Advertisement of the Original Novels on Newspapers Around the Premiere of Utvandrarna (1971)



Examples of Free Coding of Film Critics' Reviews on Utvandrarna (1971)

of such high quality that the guests the next day should not be able to do any work. Moberg made his only visit during the recording on April 18. The same evening the party was held and, according to Forslund, Moberg was responsible for the entertainment he promised and more. No work was performed the following day.

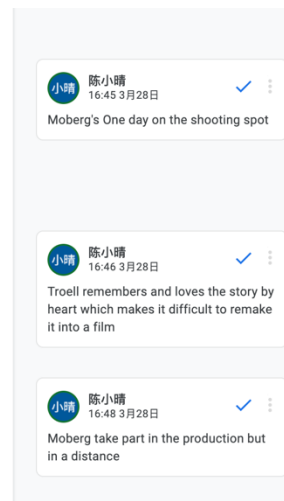
Many times I have struggled with anxiety

Approved Was filmati-Moberg's great novel series your idea from the beginning?

No, the initiative was probably Bengt Forslunds. I was very happy with the offer, but was hesitant for a long time. The question was whether it could make sense to film the books, which had touched me very personally. At first, I thought I was bound by the model. And so it was important to find your own cinematic gateway to the work. The danger that constantly lurks is that you make a historical plan work.

Moberg is known for getting involved, how has the collaboration gone?

Bengt Forslund and I made a selection of what should be included, then we wrote the script which Moberg approved after making some good additions. He has followed the recording with great interest but from a distance. He has not put himself into production.

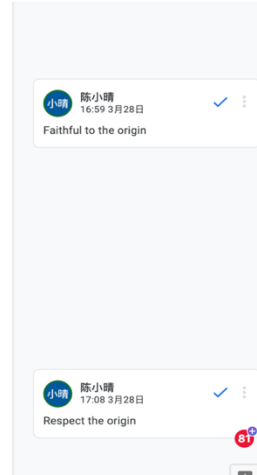


The biggest and most expensive recording in the history of Swedish film premiered on Monday. This applies to *The Emigrants*, the first of two films the Swedish Film Industry made for Vilhelm Moberg's emigrant epic. Jan Troell has both directed and photographed and co-wrote the script with Bengt Forslund. Ake Janson reviews *The Emigrants* here, which he does not consider to be a film for filmmakers. He states that it is faithful to its origin. The actors are highly praised --- Ake Janson.

The film adaptation of *The Emigrants*
Liv Ullmann in Jan Troell's film version of Vilhelm Moberg's *emigante*, a more perfect Kristina can not be imagined

Vilhelm Moberg's emigrant epic is one of the greatest works of novel literature. The film adaptation has also become the largest and most expensive in the Swedish massive volumes will be two films, and now there is the first, which is a mammoth with a playing time of three hours and eleven minutes.

The Swedish film industry has left the huge task to Jan who is not only the film's director but also its photographer and together with Bengt Forslund the screenwriter. Jan said he, when just over two years ago, hopes to be able to transfer Moberg's literary style to a corresponding film style. H56ur such a magic should go to is certainly not easy to say, but when the result can now be viewed, it can in any case be stated that Jan has managed to avoid almost all style violations. That this is Moberg's story in the picture, no one can miss.



Categories and Sub-Categories of Film Critic' Reviews on Utvandrarerna (1971)

Category	Sub-Category	Effect
The Pre-Production Process	Recruit proper actor and actress	To faithfully depict the story in the novels
	Find the proper shooting location	To faithfully depict the story in the novels
	Meetings with Moberg and making adjustments to the script	To faithfully depict the story in the novels
Reflect parts of History	Parts of Swedish history	
	Parts of American history	
Find the characteristics of different media (literature and film)	Troell worked to show the same story on screen	To faithfully depict the story in the novels
	Moberg worked to adjust his texts in accordance with the characteristics of films	To leave space for Troell's creativity

Examples of Free Coding and Case Summaries of Amateurs Comments on *Utvandrarna* (2021)

<https://www.moviezine.se/movies/utvandrarna-2021>

1. I remember being optimistic six years ago when it was announced that a new film adaptation of "The Emigrants" would be made. Although I love Jan Troell's films "The Emigrants" and "The Settlers", I see myself as open to certain new interpretations. For example, there was one thing that the new film adaptation could do better than the previous one: Småländskan. When Jan Troell was to make his film, the author Vilhelm Moberg wanted all actors to speak Swedish. The director, in all his genius, did not agree with this, but let each actor speak his own dialects, albeit with a heavy root. No perfect Småland, in other words, but something that could be corrected with a new recording. With Daniel Espinosa in the register and Peter Skavlan as screenwriter, it looked like that was what we would get. Unfortunately, this was the path that director Erik Poppe and screenwriters Siv Rajendram Eliassen and Anna Bache-Wiig would take. I was bothered that such classic lines as eg "We are the best friends", was not said in Småland. It's a big mistake on the part of the director, and I stand for that opinion. I also hope that you who want to see this film, did not like any of the male characters from the book or the previous films, because all are either grossly diminished, or completely removed from history, in favor of scenes where Kristina and Ulrika splash in the bathtub. Among the first things in the film that is said about Karl-Oskar is that he is arrogant, and of course the character Karl-Oskar is somewhat arrogant, but here it is drawn up to the max, so much so that he is very unsympathetic. Obviously, some people seem to think that Kristina had one too small in the films from the 70's. At first I did not understand what they were talking about, but now I understand ... All those who were afraid that this movie would be very PK,

"Bröderna Lejonhjärta". I see myself as open to certain new interpretations. But "The Emigrants 2021" chose to focus on the wrong things and tell a story that is too big in a film that is too small, that I can not recommend it. Karl-Oskar's and Kristina's love story weighs less for the filmmakers than Kristina's relationship with her mother, it feels like, and it's not "The Emigrants" for me. Good acting (though I think someone other than Tove Lo could have played Ulrika) and beautiful costumes. But that's what I thought of when I sat in the cinema: The costumes should not be beautiful in "The Emigrants". Lisa Carlehed was good. But the script was mediocre and another director was needed. Maybe Espinosa would have done better. My rating is 2/5.

Case Summary

Open to new adaptations of classic but mostly give negative thoughts on the new adaptation. Reflecting on the deletion of plot and character, feminist perspective that left less space for other characters. Standard Swedish makes he or she jump out of the narration and fail to trust the story is situated in the 1840s.

2. Vilhelm Moberg's books about the American emigrant couple Karl-Oskar and Kristina have now been given a new film adaptation entitled "The Emigrants". I have now been to that film and seen it in the cinema and with this review I will tell you what I thought. But first a little about the plot. At home on the farm in Småland, Kristina (Lisa Carlehed) and Karl-Oskar (Gustaf Skarsgård) see how life dries up. In the west

This screenshot shows a Weibo comment thread with five entries. Each entry includes a user profile (陈小鹏), a timestamp, and a comment. The comments are: "Rise of the female power, neutral" (14:14 3月2日), "PK" (14:10 3月2日), "Indians as tool not people with rights" (15:35 今天), "Film as the origin" (15:35 今天), and "No feelings of reality" (14:10 3月2日). A sixth entry, "The film as the origin" (14:10 3月2日), is partially visible at the bottom.

This screenshot shows the continuation of the Weibo comment thread with five entries. The comments are: "plot" (16:24 3月3日), "wrong interpretation" (15:41 今天), "the film as the original" (14:15 3月2日), "Refuse its identity as an adaptation" (15:41 今天), and "Merit" (14:15 3月2日). A sixth entry, "Merit" (14:15 3月2日), is partially visible at the bottom.

Categories of Amateurs' Comments with Quotes on Utvandrarna (2021)

	A	B	C	D
1	Category	Sub-category	Codes	Notes
2	Not faithful to the original story	Deleting characters	I also hope that you who want to see this film, did not like any of the male characters from the book or the previous films because all are either grossly diminished, or completely removed from history, in favor of scenes where Kristina and Ulrika splash in the bathtub.	Comments are not saying too much about the results that deleting characters might bring to the new film, usually just mention a bit that some characters are deleted, their sadness or anger.
3			The original films gave ample time to introduce characters, their motivations and relationships.	
4			No atmosphere to speak of and they removed one of my favourite characters	
5			Sad that many characters were missing.	

		Deleting plot	I see myself as open to certain new interpretations. But "The Emigrants 2021" chose to focus on the wrong things and tell a story that is too big in a film that is too small, that I can not recommend it.	The pace is too fast to follow
			Quite well done but unfortunately loses strength and credibility when it is squeezed so much.	
			all are either grossly diminished, or completely removed from history, in favor of scenes where Kristina and Ulrika splash in the bathtub.	

	Lack of Historical details and reasons to migrate	The misery in Sweden does not feel enough to make it feel likely that this family will travel to America
Feminist perspective	The focus on Kristina leaves less space to develop other characters	The perspective therefore feels quite forced and uninteresting, as it only moves the focus to one character, in this case a mother/wife. When in fact, the original story concerns the family as a whole, and the trials and challenges they all faces in their journey to the new land.
		Very great focus ends up on Kristina, the other characters become very

Speaking Swedish	Stockholm washed	I also bothered with "Stockholms-washing". WHY do you cast zero songs as Smålanders in the 1850s? Personally, this takes me out of the movie all the time.	
		oh yes let's redo vilhelm moberg's most småland masterpiece in swedish film and literature in stockholm	
	Not faithful to the society and history	I also bothered with "Stockholms-washing". WHY do you cast zero songs as Smålanders in the 1850s? Personally, this takes me out of the movie all the time.	The conclusion for standard Swedish make the audience jumping outside the narration
		No perfect Småland, in other words, but something that could be corrected with a new recording. It's a big mistake on the part of the director, and I stand for that opinion.	
		I was bothered that such classic lines as eg "We are the best friends", was not said in Småland. It's a big mistake on the part of the director, and I stand for that opinion.	
		And it feels a little strange that the characters we get to follow who before the emigration live in Småland speak Swedish instead of Småland.	
		I remember being optimistic six years	

Categories and Sub-Categories of Amateurs' Comments on Utvandrarna (2021)

Category	Sub-category	Effects
An Excessively Short Story	Deleting Characters	
	Deleting Plots	Losing Continuity in the Narration (Credibility)
Reality and Authenticity	Feminist Perspective	not a proper perspective in the history (nostalgia); less space for other characters; political Correctness; only focus on female does not support the whole storytelling
	An Inappropriate Language	Stockholm washed; Not a proper language in the history
Film as the Origin		
Not an Adaptation of the Origin		
Musical as the Origin of Feminist Perspective		
Merits	Good Acting	
	Good Cinematography	
	Good Costume	

Examples of Free Coding and Case Summary of Film Critics' Reviews on *Utvandrarna* (2021)

and with great anguish, Kristina decides to follow her Karl-Oskar to America. The film depicts their journey across the sea and life in the new country.

Kristina is the main character in the film. A woman's perspective on life fraught with homesickness, godliness and longing for village community and relatives. It is her struggle and development that is portrayed. She becomes a more complex person than the man. In addition, the female role is more complicated with many moral aspects. To be accompanied on the journey by the village whore Ulrika is not something that the godly Kristina wants. For Karl-Oskar, the goal is always clear, to break new ground and be able to satisfy his family. A main theme throughout the film is the love between the spouses. Life is hard but the physical love is there as well as the tenderness and dependence at work.

Lisa Carlehed as Kristina is good but many times the dialogue is for the mother. She does not sound like a woman from the 19th century but more like a woman of today. The way to speak does not go together with the story. The plot is also sometimes well modernized. Kristina sometimes throws away her old values so quickly that it does not feel credible. It disturbs in an otherwise very gripping well-played film. Gustav Skarsgård fits like the gnarled Karl-Oskar. Tove Lo in the role of Ulrika is round and flirty like a nanny, she easily adapts to the new life. Sofia Helin as the pious Judith smiles and warns Kristina of deviations from the true faith. Used to be regarded with respect as a priestess.

It's a gripping depiction. The parallel to today's immigrants is clear. Hunger and poverty in the homeland and the dream of a better life. The difficulty of learning the language, of not

noticeable mainly through the priest and his lisping wife. But the film also shows that people grow and change through life. Through difficulties and sorrows mature they and self-confidence grow.

A film that shows a piece of Swedish history where love and strength shine through.

Case summary:

Basically neutral attitude to the new film. The rushing narration makes the film sometimes incredible. Language is also a problem that violates the background of the story. The biggest problem might be the themes including learning English and the issues of religion are gone, but make the story closer to the migration in the new time.

Utvandrarna (23.12.2021)

Kristina and Karl-Oskar are back on the cinema screen! This time was interpreted by Erik Poppe. In the new film adaptation of Vilhelm Moberg's novels, Kristina's (Lisa Carlehed) perspective emerges. It is the conflicts we encounter, both the external ones with Karl-Oskar (Gustaf Skarsgård) and with the Swedes she encounters in North America, but also the internal conflicts that become apparent during the move. Ulrika (Tove Lo) remains in Poppe's interpretation and is also centered more than before, while other characters such as Robert and Danjel are gone.

The Emigrants is a film with both highs and lows. The acting is a dialect coach from being nearly missing. Carlehed, Skarsgård, and Lo make fantastic acting contributions that in

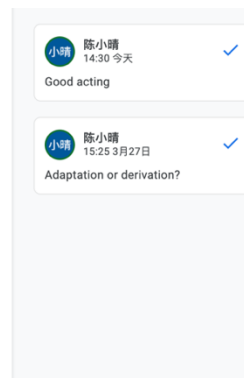
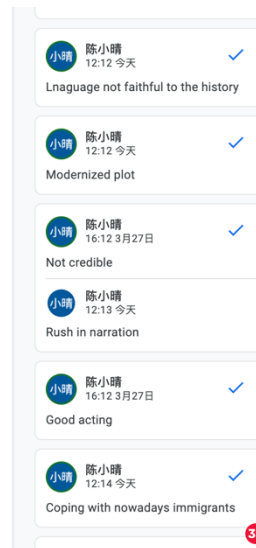
The actors are good. Gustaf Skarsgård and Lisa Carlehed play the biggest roles. Tove Lo makes an impressive debut as Ulrika: in anger, happiness, and disappointment. Credible images of the 19th-century environments.

Erik Poppe's film is skillfully made, but as an interpretation of Moberg's classic about a collective, it is thin. The ancient language is gone. The correspondence with Sweden is gone. If the characters were called something else, we could see the film with different eyes, but it is launched with a very well-known brand. The film poster promises Vilhelm Moberg's "The Emigrants". The last letter to Sweden. This is another Kristina. Literally another letter.

Moberg's novel world has plenty of memorable characters and gripping fates, a rich fiction based on real events. Of this, only crumbs remain. Oh, Kristina. The gold turned to sand.

Case Summary:

Basically a negative attitude. The most outstanding problem is that he doesn't take this film as an adaptation because Poppe does not have the right interpretation of Moberg's story.



Categories of Film Critics' Reviews with Quotes on Utvandrarna (2021)

Positive and Neutral Attitude	Feminist perspective	Carlehed does Kristina justice - it feels almost luxurious to take part in her efforts that highlight the interesting idea of centering the female story
		The feeling of his Karl-Oskars is constantly present with a kind of disturbing, restless nerve. Always working with something, constantly observing, he moves in and out of the picture when you least expect it. Sometimes almost spooky. Since the camera rarely leaves her, Lisa Carlehed has to pull the big load
	Deleting plots and characters	The plot is also sometimes well modernized. Kristina sometimes throws away her old values so quickly that it does not feel credible
		The parallels to today's immigrants is clear. Hunger and poverty in the homeland and the dream of a better life". "It is a reminder that many of us have moved to find a new home, and that the similarities in the stories we carry more than often bridge the differences
		Some will surely be disappointed that several of the book series' most prominent characters have been deleted - there will be no digging gold in the US for the most stressful soundtrack in history with Robert and Arvid

Categories and Sub-Categories of Film Critic' Reviews on Utvandrarna (2021)

Category	Sub-Category	Effects
Positive and Neutral Attitude	Feminist perspective	Leaves less space for other characters; to cope with the new society and shows the director's creativity
	Deleting plots and characters	Important themes in the original stories are gone and the narration rushes; making the migration closer to nowadays migration situation
	Standard Swedish	Not faithful and to the history; not credible
	Good cinematography	
Negative Attitude	Deleting plots and characters	Important themes in the original stories are gone
	Feminist perspective	The only focus on Kristina and her family is not what the original story delivers
	Standard Swedish	Not faithful to the history; not credible
	Not an adaptation	
	Good cinematography	

