



American Science Fiction Echoed in Arab Sci-Fi Movie Adaptation: When History and Theory Connect Adaptation Studies to Intertextuality

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Abstract

One of the most important reasons for the flourishing of American science fiction in the last century is its proximity to scientific facts and its highlighting the impact of technology on human life. American science fiction in the 20th century discussed many topics that were often related to the zeitgeist. For instance, Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1999) is considered as one of the essential American products within this genre. Arab science fiction and Sci-Fi movies have been influenced by Western science fiction, especially the American ones. This idea can be exemplified by Sami's *The End* (2020), the recent adaptation of Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*. This paper aims to discuss the historical background of these works—i.e., America in the 20th century and the Arab World in the 21st century—to reveal how the context of both American and Arab science fiction highlights their roots, roles, and popularity. Furthermore, this article will introduce the theoretical framework of comparative adaptation studies, crystalizing concepts such as indigenization, transcoding, and transtextuality that identify the relation between adaptation and intertextuality. It concludes that the 20th century America and the 21st century Arab World introduce many social, political, and historical facts that are mirrored in Sci-Fi. Furthermore, it is revealed how most Arab science fictions show a connection with Western works.

Keywords: Adaptation Studies, Science Fiction, Intertextuality, Indigenization, Transcoding



1. Introduction

Perhaps the present-day world is still controlled by the consequences of many 20th-century historical events. The last century changed the mapping of power for the whole world (Ferguson, 2006, 644-645), moreover, the powers of the new world have contributed to several pivotal international events that take a significant role in directing the path of the current century for both the Arab and the non-Arab worlds (Rogan, 2009, p. 7).

However, some factors like the social and political backgrounds of the writers are of extreme significance in shaping their worldview as reflected in their works. Therefore, this paper will introduce a historical background of both America in the 20th century and the Arab World, ālam al-‘arabī, in the 21st century in order to supply information about such social, political, and historical facts surrounding the production of Dick’s novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1999) in addition to Sami’s *The End* (2020) as its Arabic TV series adaptation.

Furthermore, this paper will present the background of both American science fiction and Arab science fiction to highlight the roots, the elements, and the roles of science fiction in America and the Arab World, which are needed to advance the analysis of Dick’s novel and Sami’s series or the investigation of any American science fiction that traveled to the Arab cinema. In addition, it will provide an introduction to the theoretical framework of comparative adaptation study by discussing Hutcheon’s theory of adaptation, especially indigenization and transcoding as two key concepts in the analysis of American fiction to Arab movies. To connect adaptation studies to the historical, social and political backdrop, intertextuality will also be discussed, mainly through emphasizing Genette’s transtextuality and its types.

2. The Historical Backgrounds of the 20th-Century America and the 21st-Century Arab World

This section presents the historical background for comparative studies focusing on the adaptation of American science fiction in the Arab World. The opening part focuses on the context of the 20th-century America. The second part will address the historical backdrop of the 21st-century Arab World.

2.1. The 20th-Century America

The twentieth century is the most tumultuous period of historical events because it changed human history to the present day in a dramatic way (Ferguson, 2006, 644-645). The beginnings of the 20th century witnessed a global conflict called the First World War, which ended with the change of large parts of Europe and the Middle East (Remini, 2008, pp. 253-255). In the 1930s, as the world was still recovering from the consequences of the First World War, the spark was set for a second, more intense, and fierce World War (Ferguson, 2006, p. 142).

The Second World War as the greatest and most destructive war in human history that broke out in the last year of the twentieth century's third decade. The outbreak of WWII had myriad causes and accumulations that were formed after the First World War. The Second World War started with the participation of the world's great powers at that time; those forces were divided into two conflicting fronts: the first was called the Allies, while the other was called the Axis. At the beginning of the war, the Allied countries included France, Britain, and Poland. Many other countries like Greece joined the fight later on the side of the Allies as well. In addition, the most prominent countries that formed the Axis powers front included Germany, Italy, and Japan (Ferguson, 2006, p. 139-143).

When World War II broke out, America was under the leadership of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who won four consecutive elections for the U.S. presidency. At the beginning of WWII, the United States adopted a neutral stance in order to keep the

country isolated from interfering in European affairs and conflicts. The American policy sought to achieve economic prosperity and prevent the country from getting involved in foreign wars. The neutrality adopted by the United States towards the Second World War gradually began to change when the riskiness of this conflict's dissemination in Europe became very acute (Gilbert, 2014, pp. 130-136).

According to the Lend-Lease Act, the United States began supplying military equipment and munitions to the Allies. Furthermore, after Japan showed its aggressiveness in Asia, America used this issue as a reason to disturb the relations between the two countries. A war was launched between America and Japan after the United States refused the concessions made by Japan for maintain the excellent relationship between them. Hence, only seventy-two hours passed before the declaration of war was issued by Italy and Germany on the United States, pushing America to announce the same thing (Remini, 2008, pp. 235-239).

The U.S. arms industry flourished during World War II and provided advanced military weapons. The atomic bomb that America secretly worked on to eliminate its Nazi enemy was at the forefront of these industries. The American atomic bomb had the final touch that ended World War II after the Allies managed to eliminate Nazi Germany and Hitler committed suicide. After Japan refused to surrender unconditionally, the United States dropped its first nuclear bomb on Hiroshima, followed by another bomb a few days later on Nekzaki, which completely wiped it out (Davis, 2002, pp. 373-377).

When the war ended, America and the Soviet Union became the dominant power in the world. Then the battle of tanks and cannons ended with the last world war, and the Soviet Union conflict with America took the name of the Cold War. The risk of destroying civilization had significantly increased when the Soviets detonated an atomic bomb that they had manufactured with the help of leaked information from America and Britain. The U.S. response came with an attempt to build a hydrogen bomb (Davis, 2002, pp. 390-395)

In the post-World War II period, the United States' most important fear was the spread of communism in America and all over the world. So, America began to spread its support for free people. Then, with the continued suppression of the Soviets against the rebels and the crushing of liberties in Eastern Europe, the American conflict escalated with the Soviet Union. Since America and the Soviets were working to develop the hydrogen bomb, the danger of destroying the planet arose with the possibility of a confrontation between the communists and the free world (Remini, 2008, pp. 253- 255).

On October 4th, 1957, the Soviets successfully sent their first satellite into orbit Sputnik; the event that pushed the Cold War into a new phase. This phase was called the Space Race and focused on accomplishing superior spaceflight in an attempt by America and the Soviet Union to prove their technical capabilities. The Space Race continued until the beginning of the second half of the seventies of the last century. Furthermore, the matter evolved into sending humans into space for the first time, as the first Soviet cosmonaut reached space in 1961, followed by many other American and Soviet attempts. On July 21st, 1969, American Neil Armstrong became the first person to arrive on the moon in a memorial event watched by more than five hundred million people worldwide. The lunar landing is considered as one of the twentieth century's defining moments (Davis, 2002, pp. 462-465).

The Cold War was accompanied by a period of such international crises as the Vietnam War and the Soviet invasion of Vietnam. One of the international crises that occurred during the Cold War and were about to drag the world into a third world war was the Cuban missile crisis in the 1960s. The beginning of the Cuban missile crisis is related to the time when Fidel Castro, who led Cuba after leading an invasion, admitted that he was a communist. Castro's admission arose the fears regarding Cuba's adoption of a communist system, and what added to these fears was its being only ninety miles from the United States (Davis, 2002, pp. 447-450).

However, the situation became worse when the United States decided to launch an invasion against the communists in Cuba through the Cubans who rejected Fidel Castro and the communist system of government by providing them the necessary American support. The invasion attempt failed, and all the anti-Castro rebels were punished to thirty years in prison. Then, there were threats from the Soviet Union to send support to Cuba if the United States did not stop its interventions in Cuban affairs (Remini, 2008, p. 266).

In the summer of 1962, the matter took a decisive turn when the Soviet Union started building missile sites in Cuba Island, which were capable of launching nuclear missiles against America. Kennedy was the American decision-maker who threatened the Soviet Union with an upcoming war, if the communist did not remove their missiles. Kennedy demanded that the U.S. Navy adopt a strict quarantine on all military apparatus under shipment to Cuba Island. Fortunately, the expected outbreak of World War III was averted after the free world and communism reached a settlement that stipulated the removal of the Soviet Union's missile sites in Cuba and that the United States refrain from invading Cuba (Remini, 2008, pp. 266-267).

The international crises during the Cold War did not end with the Cuban missile crisis, after which many other crises occurred, such as the Vietnam War and the Berlin crisis that followed it. That American-Soviets political, ideological, and military war ended when both countries changed their policies toward that competition. With declaring the end of communism in Eastern Europe and the resignation of Gorbachev as the last President of the Soviet Union, the Cold War ended entirely in 1991 (Remini, 2008, pp. 298-303).

2.2. The 21st-Century Arab World

The Arab modern history has witnessed a lot of significant challenges that have accompanied their search for freedom. They have struggled to escape the oppression at home and abroad and obtain the right to live in peace. The first decades of the twenty-first century



were accompanied by crucial international events for the Arab and the non-Arab people, which dynamically drew the map of the century (Rogan, 2009, p. 7).

The early twenty-first century was simultaneous with the American-Arab collision course. On Sep 11th, 2001, the world received a shock, which the history annals would not forget: a number of suicide attacks that depended on four kidnapped planes crashing within Manhattan's World Trade Center. The planes crashing also included the Pentagon, added to a field in Pennsylvania. This attack caused a large number of casualties and vast destruction. Responsibility for these attacks was blamed on Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda as his organization; also, nineteen male terrorists regarded as responsible for those attacks were identified as Arab Muslims, most of whom came from Saudi Arabia, and who were all connected to al-Qaeda (Rogan, 2009, p. 630).

The American reaction was very decisive. George W. Bush, the then US President, publicly declared the war against al-Qaeda as their grim enemy in order to prepare the American people and the whole world for an unconventional contest. Consequentially, the American-terror war has come to be a curse upon the Arab people. The Arab and Islam identity has been turned to be constantly under suspicion of being involved in terrorism. Therefore, Arab countries have been constantly suffering from irreconcilable pressures by the terrorist teams and Western powers (Hourani, 1991, p. 651).

The United States had begun to use its war against terrorism as a pretext for interfering in Arab affairs and spreading its hegemony in the Arab World. Furthermore, many Arab countries were indicted for having connections with Osama bin Ladin. Later, resentment began among the Arab people due to the indifferent American policy towards the Arab suffering. In March 2003, the Arab resentment rose when America gave its case against the Republic of Iraq in the war on terror. The United States alleged that the Iraqi government had connections with al-Qaeda. America also suggested that Saddam Hussein had chemical and



biological precursors for nuclear weapons that would be transferred to the terror organization (Hourani, 1991, pp. 666- 670).

The conflict against the terrorist groups led to a closer relationship between America and Israel, the Arab arch-enemy. The Arab-Israeli struggle was the inevitable outgrowth of more than fifteen years of Arab-Jewish friction after the arrival of the Eastern European Jewish immigrants to Palestine in the 1880s. However, the state of Israel was established officially on May 14th, 1948 with David Ben-Gurion's declaration, following a long series of Western and Zionist plans, intense conflicts, and Western interventions, mainly British and American ones, in the Arab World, which were largely active after the Second World War (Morris, 2008, pp. 50-54).

The Zionist existence on an Arab land triggered an eternal Arab-Jewish conflict. Ariel Sharon, the then Israeli Prime Minister, persuaded the American President that Israel and the United States defied a common war against terror. The Israeli politician took advantage of the second Intifada and the suicide bombings against Israeli people to convince Bush that they fight against terror. In addition, they took advantage of the United States' complacency to unleash incommensurate attacks on the Palestinians, which rapidly escalated tensions among the Arab World (Rogan, 2009, p. 238).

The aggravation of the second Intifada resulted into the violent death of 3200 Palestinians and 950 Israelis. Fury provoked among the whole Middle East after broadcasting the images of the Palestinian suffering people. In 2006, Israeli's war with Hezbollah provoked a disproportionate reply against Lebanon, when Hezbollah's soldiers wounded two Israeli soldiers, killed three other ones, and took three prisoners. Therefore, the war lasted for thirty-four days during which Hezbollah launched a sustained barrage of missiles into Israel. The Lebanese government asked America for assistance, but America refused to intervene with Israel because America had branded Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, and thus supported

Israel with weapons. Furthermore, this conflict demonstrated the unlimited American support of Israel (Rogan, 2009, p. 655).

The second decade of the twenty-first century is considered by many to be one of the most severe and significant turning points in Arab history. This decade was also the tensest for the Arab rulers. Arab kings and presidents observed nervously as the actions of Arab citizens destroy their dictatorships and depose their peers one by one. In 2011, most of the Arab rulers and leaders had been ruling since the half of the last century. Their fears mostly originated from the reverberating bang of toppling Zine El Abidine Ben Ali around the whole Arab World. These revolutions were regarded as an inevitable result of living under autocratic regimes (Sadiki, 2015, pp. 17-22).

In 2011, Sidi Bouzid of Tunis began the downfall of the 23 aged Tunisian autocratic of Zain El Abidine Ben Ali. The spark of the revolution had started when Fayda Hamdy, the council inspector, demeaned a street vendor (Mohamed Bouazizi), causing him to immolate himself. Bouazizi's death galvanized people against the government. Events escalated in the country after news spread throughout the country and demonstrations spread throughout Tunisia. When the Tunisian ruler realized that he had lost the army's loyalty, he resigned and escaped to Saudi Arabia. Bouazizi's self-immolating inspired many revolutions across the Arab World. The 20th-century Arab World witnessed a crucial dramatic change after the long periods of stability under autocratic regimes (Clancy-Smith, 2013, pp. 25-30).

The Arab world challenges had not finished after the Arab Spring. Perhaps the best part in the second decade of the twenty-first century has been establishing the United Arab Emirates Space Agency in 2014, which sought to achieve the Arab hopes of developing their space technologies. Furthermore, the UAE Space Agency has become a member of the National Committee for Space Exploration. This Agency also launched a number of locally manufactured satellites (Bartels, 2021). The Agency's Mars Mission depended on their spacecraft Hope Probe, which was launched in July 2020, and arrived in orbit around Mars in

2021. This mission aims to study Mars for nearly two earthly years or one full Martine year; it is also expected to receive an extension into 2025. Additionally, the UAE Space Agency is preparing for more space explorations to prove that Arabs can reach deep space (Strickland, 2021).

3. The Background of American Science Fiction Novels and Arab Science Fiction Films

This section will be divided into two parts. The first part will introduce the background of American science fiction novels. The second part will present the background of Arab science fiction films to pave the way for comparative studies focusing on the adaptation of American science fiction in the Arab world.

3.1. The American Science Fiction Novels

Despite numerous studies and researches that have been conducted on the science fiction literary genre, it has never had a clear definition on which everyone agrees. Generally, this genre elaborates imaginative or fantastic hypotheses; perhaps the embodiment of these hypotheses involves encountering other world's creatures, time travel, or a presumed future society. Science fiction serves to explore alterity by combining the cognitive aspects with estrangement. However, most science fiction novels are symbolic and provide science fiction reading of our world or a specific society experience coded in the material symbolism (Suvin, 1979, p. 8). Although science fiction began to be commonly used during the 1920s, undoubtedly many science fiction texts were produced before this date, such as Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* (1818) or *Utopia* by Thomas More (1516) (Roberts, 2000, pp. 2-3).

While to identify the origin of American science fiction is a complicated matter, it is clear that the second decade of the last century in America witnessed the first steps in forming the development of this literary genre. In 1919, *Thrill Book* appeared as the first Pulp specialized in science fiction, where several low-priced periodicals (pulp magazines) were



printed on wood-pulp paper. The pulp magazines included science fiction texts of writers such as Edgar Rice Burroughs and Jack London (Roberts, 2000, pp. 66-68).

The American Magazine Era is a historical science fiction period that started from 1926 and lasted until 1960. The Magazine Era climate brought into being a sense of science fiction as a distinct genre. In 1926, the American Hugo Gernsback founded his science fiction magazine *Amazing Stories*, which aimed at the creation of fictional content that wisely touched the outer space exploitations and the scientific discoveries. In 1929, the *Amazing Stories*' editor referred to the nascent field as science fiction. Hugo Gernsback intended his content to be a teaching tool, hoping that science fiction stories would equip the readers with knowledge; he even refused to publish these stories with no scientific laws' basis. According to Gernsback's announcement, experts judged the basis of the scientific laws of science fiction writers' texts (Attebery, 2003, pp. 32-33).

Gernsback's magazine intended not only to educate but also to encourage the readers to meditate about the future, predict the futuristic technologies and scientific inventions, and travel across time (James, 1994, pp. 8-9). The science fiction magazines that were prominent in America for half a century deploy a considerable impact on the form of the genre and its subject matter. In the 20th century, the science fiction industry's succession of publishing and apportion had affected the creation of what was written and read. Additionally, the United States' magazine publishers had reinforced the association between the science fiction literary genre and the American culture (Attebery, 2003, p. 32).

Gernsback and his *Amazing Stories* stand for the first period of science fiction magazines. In the 1930s, John W. Campbell founded *Astounding Science-Fiction* to stand for the second phase of the Magazine Era. Hence, the Golden Age of science fiction was announced. To some extent, Campbell depended on Gernsback's visions that the science fiction production should not ignore education in seeking entertainment, and he promoted his contributors to integrate the science within their works. Moreover, part of this success was

due to building on Gernsback's standard format, such as the advertising and the chatty editorials. Several well-known writers appeared in Campbell's magazine, such as Isaac Asimov, Theodore Sturgeon, and Robert Heinlein. The period from the 1930s through to the 1960s witnessed many science fiction texts with a high level of coherence (Roberts, 2000, pp. 37-38).

The American science fiction of the 1940s and the 1950s shows several developments in terms of its maturity, sheer quantity, and complexity (James, 1994, p. 54). The more significant innovation in the fiction belonging to the 1940s onward was the presumed application of the scientific principles of the innovative technologies and methods to the essential questions about the mind and society, which can be exemplified by the stories of Issac Asimov about Hari Seldon. Many collective activities, including religion and politics, were underemphasized by Issac Asimov and many other writers who tried to be in touch with the social dynamics due to their belief in the predictive social science (Attebery, 2003, p. 36).

If the Golden Age of science fiction reflected the American bullishness of the 1940s, several examples of science fiction in the 1950s represent an increasing unease. The early 1950s showed a transference in the dynamics of publishing. The opposing status adopted by the Americans against the communists directly fed the science-fiction imagination. The American President believed that the Soviet Union agents were penetrating American society to turn many American citizens into evil communists. In 1955, Jack Finney precisely embodied McCarthy's fears when he wrote his novel *Body Snatchers*, which described Alien's invasion of an American town; later in 1956, this novel turned into the film adaptation of Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatcher*.

Both the text and the film can be read as political satire. The American science fiction boom occurred in the 1950s, when a new set of science fiction magazines appeared to publish outstanding works that Campbell's had not touched. The *Galaxy Science Fiction* magazine was assumed as one of the most influential in the 1950s, which was established by Horace L.

Gold. *Galaxy Science Fiction* published major stories by many prominent names like William Teen, Fritz Leiber, and Philip K. Dick (Roberts, 2000, pp. 79-81).

The early 1960s witnessed the gradual decline of the Magazine Era; the science fiction field became more characterized by novels compared with its periodicals. The 1960s held up remarkable nervous anticipations, and the atomic weapons pushed the public perception toward anticipating imminent destruction of the world through radioactive doom, especially when the world faced the Cuban missile crisis. The form and subject of the 1960s American science fiction proved experimental and reflected many of this decade's interests, including altered consciousness, sex, and drugs. Moreover, experimental literature with its artistic possibilities proposed the belief in the ability of machinery and technology to finish human problems (Huntington, 1989, p. 2).

In any century, few ingenious figures may be significantly referred to as the great ones. In science fiction, the American Philip K. Dick firmly stands at the horizon of greatness. During the 1960s, Dick's inspiring novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* invited many critics and those interested in science fiction to understand the science fiction motifs he transferred. Dick's novel embodied the human interaction with diverse technologies, robots, and commodities which acquired a life of their own. However, the 1960s and the 1970s witnessed a supreme growth in the genre's popularity, particularly those attracted to cinema and TV science fiction. The success of *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* had paved the way for Hollywood's most top-grossing science-fiction films; in fact, they were so successful and popular that they set the science fiction future foundations for the next two decades of the 20th century (Roberts, 2000, pp. 84-86).

3.2. The Arab Science Fiction Films

Similar reasons behind the difficulty of delimiting an accurate date of Western science fiction can stand for the difficulty of defining an exact date for the appearance of the Arab World science fiction literature. In *Science Fiction in Arabic Literature* (La

Fantascienza Nella Letteratura Araba) (2013), Barbaro explores the Arab science fiction works that existed both in classical traditions and medieval Arabic literature and in translations related to Western science fiction works. Azzām (1994) refers to earlier Arabic attempts to imagine different wonder portrayals represented by spaceships and giants, which were realized when science arrived, as it provided us with airplanes approaching the spaceships, and the atomic energy stronger than any imagined giants (p. 7).

Many folktales and popular Arab literature address the existence of science fiction elements. *One Thousand and One Nights* and *Hayy ibn Yaqdhan* are regarded as two of the earliest Arabic tales closer to proto-science fiction. Furthermore, *One Thousand and One Nights* has been cited by a number of Arabic bibliographers in the fourth century, including *Al-Fihrist* book by Ibn al-Nadim. Some stories in *One Thousand and One Nights*, such as *The City of Brass*, contained early science fiction elements, such as proto-cyborgs, future technology, and controlling nature. Moreover, *Hayy ibn Yaqdhan* illustrates the role of science in transforming human beings from primitive climates to a philosophical utopia (Campbell, 2018, pp. 61-63). In the 1270s, Ibn al-Nafis wrote *Theologus Autodidactus* that ends with an apocalypse, which according to Barbaro (2013), includes proto-science fiction elements, like futurology, afterlife, and spontaneous generations (p. 34).

The twentieth-century Arab science fiction and that of the early twenty-first century have been highly affected by Western science fiction. The prevalent translated Western science fiction works within the Arab World created a proper environment for the Arab writers to be influenced by prominent Western names, such as Jules Verne and H. G Wells. The Western influence within Arab science fiction was presented in many aspects like structure, topic, and style (Snir, 2000, pp. 275-276). Generally, the Western influence within Arab science fiction resulted from the fact that Western populations have an unrestricted belief in science tolerating the vast development of this genre, in contrast to the Arab



community, which has less association with the science fiction productions for a combination of political, economic, historical, and many other factors (Campbell, 2018, pp. 32-35).

The theory of classical impacts in Arab science fiction literary works by Barbaro (2013) can also be assigned to Arabic science fiction films, which originated from Arab science fiction novels. These Arab science fiction films have sustained the customs of science fiction in fantasy and vice versa. Many Arab science fiction films introduced impossible events depending on intertwining logical and supernatural causes, which led to referring to these science fiction films as fantasy films. Therefore, Arab cinematic productions emphasized genre hybridity with images described as “science-fantasy” (Kasem, 2021, p. 52).

Powerful science fiction elements incorporated with fantasy are presented in the Egyptian film *A Message to the Elderman* (*Risala 'iilaa alwali*) (1998) directed by Galal. The employment of Egyptian history along with assigning a past time narrative serves to create the current Egyptian capital, a future city for the strong knight Harfoush (who was transferred to the twentieth century by a wise man), which stands behind the unique narrative of this film and mise-en-scene techniques. Other Arabic science fiction films adopt diegetic plot devices to introduce unbelievable events while exploring the social issues of the zeitgeist.

In addition, some of the most popular devices include pills, herbs, and drugs like those that appear in Faud's *The World in 2000* (*Al-Alam Sanat 2000*) (1972), which are stimulated from traditional Arab medicine and inspired by Middle Eastern and global mythologies (Kasem, 2021, pp. 53-54). The plot of these films aims to highlight the importance of depending on the actual personal potential and showing the negativity of drugs in society. In fact, drug abuse was a prominent subject in the Egyptian films of the 1980s (Kassem, 2018, pp. 135-142).

Resisting cultural homogenization has motivated Arab filmmakers to produce Arabic, non-Western film commodities (Kraidy, 2010, pp. 4-5). For example, Abdelwahab's *Journey to the Moon* (*Rehla Ilal Kamar*) (1959) is an Egyptian science fiction film that inspects the



context of the 1950s space race. In addition, this film reveals the influence of Western films, such as Pichel's *Destination Moon* (1950) and George Melies' *A Trip to the Moon* (1902). The film also establishes a sort of national myth by allowing one of the characters to launch a spaceship, therefore, depicting Egypt as a rival in the space race. Abdelwahab's film, like most other Arab works, represents the lunar inhabitants as peaceful and hospitable. In contrast, most Western works depict unearthly creatures as threatening foreign others (Kasem, 2021, p. 56).

Arab science fiction filmmakers frequently depend on the popularity of comedy in commercial cinema. Most Arab science fiction movies are regarded as comedies, which make their science fiction elements funny and help reflect their ironic attitudes in their subject matter. Since the 1980s, new filmmakers have been attempting to make more serious films, and this shift is attributable to the comprehensive transformations in the production of Arab science fiction films (Alashri, 2006, pp. 13-14). The production of the 21st-century Arab science fiction films has witnessed a considerable increase. In particular, Egyptian science fiction indicates a greater extent of foreign TV and film inspiration. This century has also witnessed emerging competitors to the Egyptian cinema, like the Emirati, Palestinian, and Syrian science fiction TV and filmmakers who have been reflecting their Arab futuristic perspective (Kasem, 2021, p. 60).

Egyptian science fiction examples show alien and new cyber elements, such as Sami's *The End (El Nehaya)* (2020). *The End* series introduces an apocalyptic vision represented by tipping the current world scales through depicting the Arabs as the futuristic superpower that controls the hegemony, and eliminates the dominance of the Western power over the world. In addition, this series has predicted the devastating outgrowths of technology on the planet Earth, which ends with the devastation of all forms of technology here and a return to primitive life. The 21st-century science fiction works attack many social and political concerns mostly through introducing an apocalyptic reading. For instance, in his post-

apocalyptic film *The Worthy* (*Almukhtarun*) (2017), Mostafa tackles water pollution, fear, subjects of war, and hunger. Besides, *Aerials* (*Alhaweat*) (2016) directed by Zaidi is an Emirati horror science fiction movie that imagines the invasion of the earth by an alien spaceship.

Arab science fiction is a substantial genre with its unique characteristics, history, and a niche in Arab cinema. Its poor cultural recognition is attributed to such different factors as the many titles that have not been identified as science fiction and many works that have not been analyzed extensively. The limitations of low budgets are caused largely by many producers' belief in science fiction as a foreign product, which is hence unattractive to a local audience. Ideologically, the nostalgic bounds of Arab with their glories of the past deepens the themes of nostalgia in many Arab science fiction films. However, development in marketing and taking advantage of the advanced technology in the current century exhibit signs that this genre will be more visible in the Arab World. In addition, various production systems proposed by advancements in TV programs like *Spacatoon* emphasize Arab futuristic visions through animated science fiction themes (Kasem, 2021, pp. 55- 59).

4. The Theoretical Framework

This section intends to propose the theoretical framework of comparative adaptation studies. It will be divided into two subsections. The first subsection will be introducing adaptation studies indigenization and transcoding. The second subsection will be devoted to addressing intertextuality. These combination of these two frameworks will build the theoretical backbone.

4.1. Adaptation Studies: From Transcoding to Indigenization

The inception of a novel-to-film criticism and the publication of Bluestone's *Novels into Film* (1957) sustained the popularity of adaptation studies in literary studies (Snyder, 2011, p. 219). In contemporary times, adaptations are everywhere such as on the Internet, dramatic stages, and movie screens. Adaptations are not new to our current time; Shakespeare



transformed his written stories to stage and hence attainable to new audiences (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013, p. 2). Some of the most important reasons behind the popularity of the adaptation studies field are its ability to facilitate the understanding of cultural differences, social changes, commercial imperatives, narrative form, and power relationships. Its obsession with examining the procedures and inspirations that stand behind an adaptation is another significant reason as well (Sanders, 2016, pp. 9-13).

The history of adapting literary texts into various forms is a protracted one. Many plays, paintings, and sculptures have been motivated, for instance, by historical events. Even the history of cinematic adaptations of theatrical or literary texts is as long-aged as the cinema itself and as old as the appearance of screen adaptations (Leitch, 2007, pp. 20-25). Many reasons contribute to forming the belief that literature is better than other media formats like films. Yet, this tension between film and literature has informed the theory of adaptation. Adapting literary works into various media forms has been frequently judged on the assumption that the objective of the process of adaptation is only repetition rather than other reasons such as assessment or reinvention (Cartmell & Whelehan, 2010, pp. 5-6).

The Canadian scholar Linda Hutcheon (1947-), who is considered as one of the most remarkable intellectuals within the adaptation studies field, does not regard adaptations as inadequate compared with their primary sources. Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* is principally about the progress of adaptation as an academic realm; it was first published in 2006 and later re-edited with O'Flynn in 2013. Hutcheon's theory of adaptation has discussed a variety of media, including opera, films, video, pop music, and games. Hutcheon and O'Flynn (2013) infer that, like parodies, there is an overt link between the prior text and its adaptation; also, unlike parodies, this connection is usually acquiescently publicized by adaptations (p.3). Hutcheon and O'Flynn (2013) proclaim that the arrival of new channels and new media has been highly momentous in the intensifying demand for adaptations, which implies that recognition and remembrance are aspects of the risk and the pleasure of

presenting an adaptation; that is why they do not consider adaptations as inadequate to the prior sources (p. 31).

A Theory of Adaptation (2013) provides a detailed analysis of comparative adaptation theory, in addition to a critical discussion of the process of adaptation. Likewise, it examines the modifications that accompanies the adaptation process through six questions; these questions are what (forms), who and why (adapters), how (audiences), where and when (contexts). Like the adapted work, an adaptation is framed in a context (time and place), society, and culture. The questions of where and when are devoted to studying the vastness and variegation of the context of an adaptation, which includes, for example, material considerations. It focuses on multiple possible factors of change that accompany the adaptation process made by the commands of the individual adapter, form, the particular audience, and the contexts of creation and reception.

An adaptation has its unique aura, and existence in time and space where it transpires to be (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 6). According to Hutcheon and O’Flynn (2013), the process of adaptation implies the idea of “transcoding” as it extensively transposes a specific work or works (p. 7). A variety of factors and forces that accompany the adaptation process indicate making adjustments or alterations dictated by several purposes like the nature of the source text, medium, the reason for adapting the text, and culture of adaptation (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 9). Commonly, the story is the essence of what is transformed across various genres and media, which handle this story in different ways, performing, and modes of engagement—narrating and interacting (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 13). Also, when a story- argument is adapted, “equivalences” are pursued with new sign systems for the diverse elements of the story, such as its world, events, characters, themes, points of view, contexts, motivations, imagery, consequences, and symbols (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p.10).

“Transcoding” may entail a shift of genre and that of a medium, or a modification of frame and consequently context, which can result in an obvious different interpretation



(Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 34). Likewise, “transposition” would also refer to a transition in ontology from biography or historical account toward a drama or fictionalized narrative and from real to fictional (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 43). Moreover, novels involve many details inferred into gesture or action through the screen or stage adaptation (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 61). Along with the shift from telling to showing, an adaptation performance must be dramatized, and narration, description, or depicted thoughts must be transcoded into verbal expressions, visual images, activities, and sounds (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 67).

It requires extensive time to alter how a story is received radically. It is not just the (re)accentuating comprehended by the context influence but, more importantly, the (re)interpreting of a story, which can change radically (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 166). The adapters handle the reality of reception by revamping the story’s context, aiming to expose a contemporary resonance for the audience of this new version, additionally, when it gets to adapting, the context of reception and creation are equally significant (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 165-166). There is a reciprocal relationship between the producing and receiving societies (the adapted text or its adaptation), since dominant images added to contemporary events strongly affect our perception and interpretation (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 155). The idea of “indigenization” depends on the belief that adapting works across cultures is not a translating words concern (Hutcheon & O’Flynn, 2013, p. 173). Experiencing an adaptation in both the interacting and showing modes of engagement implies that social and cultural connotations have to be adapted into a new world, within what Pavis (1989) refers to as “language-body” (p. 30).

Friedman (2006) has also used the term “indigenization” to indicate this sort of intercultural encounter. The purpose of the general anthropological usage in considering adaptation is that it denotes agency as the adapters of itinerant stories exert authority over what they adapt (Friedman, 2006, p. 174). In the move from the telling mode to performance,



many differences like national culture, philosophy, race, religion, and gender may develop gaps, which require to be filled by dramaturgical aspects, either kinetic or physical (Friedman, 2006, p. 173-174). Gestures, dress, and facial expressions along with architecture are set to reveal cultural facts that are an index of the values, conventions, and ideologies through which we predicate activity and order experience (Klein, 1981, p. 4). Hutcheon and O'Flynn (2013) declare that indigenization can elaborate curiously hybrid works, while formulating three types of indigenization: historicizing/dehistoricizing, racializing/deracializing, and embodying/disembodying (pp. 152-158).

4.2. Genette's Model of Intertextuality

'Intertextuality' denotes the presence and impact of pre-existent texts in the formation of a new text (Still & Worton, 1990, p. 17-18). The interrelatedness of several textual components of the correlating texts and the writer's vision contribute to producing any new texts (Still & Worton, 1990, p. 19). Likewise, the involvement of intertextual features is continually accomplished intentionally or unintentionally by several literary figures, particularly authors (Still & Worton, 1990, p. 19-20). Furthermore, for Bell (1993), 'intertextuality' is a concatenation of correlated texts that influence the current text (pp.167-169).

The term 'intertextuality' was first introduced in the essay of Julia Kristeva's "Le mot, le dialogue et le roman" (1967); however, for several scholars, the notion of intertextuality was first noticed in the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin and Ferdinand de Saussure (Booker, 1996, p. 58). A fusion of Saussurian linguistics and Bakhtin's literary theory mainly constitutes Kristeva's focus and philosophy, while the concept of dialogism stands behind Kristeva's interest in Bakhtin's theory (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 36-37). According to Bakhtin, there are two classifications of utterances or texts: monologic or dialogic, which indicate an ideological attitude. The monologic generally imposes a specific logic and significance, while



in comparison, the dialogic text has discourse and constantly interacts with other texts (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 37-38).

Kristeva (1980) declared that no text is autonomous of the other relating preexisting texts; all texts are in fact intertexts (p. 42). Following Kristeva, many scholars have employed her term ‘intertextuality,’ such as Roland Barthes, the first influential theorist who elaborated on Kristeva’s term. According to Barthes (1977), no text indicate a set of expressions setting a solo “theological” meaning, yet a multi-address area where a variety of non-original writings blend and clash (pp. 146-149). Jacques Derrida also found a model that shares many standard features of Barthes and Kristeva’s ideas regarding intertextuality (Allen, 2000, pp. 81-84).

Intertextuality proposes a mutual relationship between the author and the reader, as the author is able to produce the present text while the reader can infer the current connotations (Allen, 2000, p. 71-73). Through the process of generating a text, the author may address a set of elements and codes from other texts involving inferences, allusions, quotations, and engaging his/her experience of understanding other related text (Allen, 2000, p. 76-77). Consequently, interpreting, examining, and understanding all literary texts require an awareness of the textual elements of other correlating texts, where their textual elements exceedingly influence and exist in that text (Allen, 2000, p. 79).

The well-known French literary scholar Gérard Genette (1930-2018) preferred to make use of Julia Kristeva’s concept of ‘intertextuality’ according to his own vision under the term ‘transtextuality’ in order to cover the whole realm of intertextuality (Allen, 2000, p. 98). Genette invented five subsections (intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, hypertextuality, architextuality) of transtextual phenomenon (Allen, 2000, p. 99-100). *Palimpsests* as Genette’s massive study where he presented his term ‘transtextuality’ reaffirmed his approach to poetics. For Genette (1997), transtextuality is basically all that imposes correlation (covert or overt) with other texts (p. 1). Through transtextuality, Genette (1997) aimed to draw maps that help to interpret and clarify the text systematically (p. 1).

In his new approach, Genette (1997) attempted to separate himself from post-structural approaches (p. 1). When he termed the first type of transtextuality as intertextuality, Genette (1997) did not imply the post-structural concept since he reduced its implications to a relationship that depends on the actual presence of an earlier text within another (p. 1-2). Genette's (1997) new approach reduced the meaning of intertextuality to matters of allusion, quotation, and plagiarism, moreover, his version denotes a determinable and pragmatic intertextual connection related to a particular aspect of individual texts (p. 2). Furthermore, Genette's (1997) first type (intertextuality) represents a tree with three branches, each representing a single species: The first branch, "explicit and literal form," refers to the explicit existence of aspects of a text in another one through the practice of quoting (with or without references). The second branch, "explicit and canonical," refers to the practice of plagiarism. The third branch, which is the implicit type, chiefly depends on the practice of allusion (p. 2-3)

Genette (1997) claimed that the term 'paratext' refers to his second type of transtextuality, which emphasizes a variety of clues that encircle a literary work and serve as a 'threshold' to other texts (p. 3). In addition, these materials help to control and conduct the reader's reception of a text, such as dedications, prefaces, and tables of contents (Genette, 1997, p. 3). This threshold includes two types: the peritext elements and the epitext elements; the first one entails components like notes, titles, prefaces, and chapter titles, whereas the second type consists of such elements as reviews, private letters, and interviews (Genette, 1997, p. 3-4).

With the advent of his study, Genette referred to the research of J. Hillis Miller (1928-2021), the American deconstructive critic, that emphasizes the prefix 'para' and how to explore the threshold that once positions us from inside the material boundaries of a text and yet outside it (Allen, 2000, p. 103). However, the paratext preoccupies the threshold of a text;

in a logic illustrated previously by Derrida, it constitutes the text and frames it as well for its readers (Allen, 2000, p. 104).

For Gray (2010), in his study of contemporary media, ‘paratext’ indicates more than starting a text, as he demonstrates how cast interviews, trailers, and posters affect stimulating and producing the expectations of media works before they are aired (pp. 11- 16). Many simple questions concerned with the manner of the text presence, such as, by whom? what purpose? and when published? can pragmatically direct the text’s readers of the paratext’s various functions (Genette, 1997, p. 3). Paratext elements also help construct the text’s intentions, such as how it should or should not be read (Genette, 1997, p. 4).

Genette’s fourth type of transtextuality is hypertextuality that is about any bond which connects a text to another earlier text. The hypertext implies that any text emanates from an earlier text, which is, according to Genette (1997), either out of simple transformation that he called “*transformation*” or out of indirect transformation, which he labelled as “*imitation*” (p. 7). The basic intention of Genette’s (1997) fourth type draws on the opposition between telling the similar thing differently and telling the dissimilar thing similarly (p. 7-8).

Yet, it may be as such: text B is not in touch with text A, but without text A the other one is unable to exist because it emanates from text A (Genette, 1997, p. 8). The transpositions of texts can be through processes like excision, amplification, self-expurgation, and reduction (Allen, 2000, pp. 109). Furthermore, Genette would argue that the meaning of hypertextual works hangs on the knowledge of the readers of the hypertext, that the hypertext imitates or transforms it for the reason of pastiche (Allen, 2000, pp. 109-110).

5. Concluding Remarks

Analysing *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* necessitates knowledge of the historical backgrounds of the 20th-century America and the 21st-century Arab World, since they help identify a set of socio-political aspects that have contributed to shaping Dick’s novel in addition to Sami’s *The End* as its TV adaptation. The current paper presented an

overview of many elements related to the background of American science fiction novels and Arab science fiction films; it also reflected upon several aspects in the formation of Dick's novel along with Sami's series and supplied the analysis of these two works with essential facets of the genre. This paper provided a short exploration of the theoretical framework needed for this study, beginning with adaptation studies through introducing the history of the field and Hutcheon's perspective as one of the main adaptation theorists. Then, indigenization and transcoding as two key concepts of this comparative study were examined, which help to assess a set of changes in the move from the novel's world to that of the series. In addition, there was a short discussion of intertextuality from the perspective of Genette and his transtextuality, which implies the correlation between any text (i.e. novel, movie,...) and an earlier one.

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