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Chains of Adaptation: from *D'entre les morts* to *Vertigo*, *La Jetée* and *Twelve Monkeys*

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The aim of this chapter is to explore what happens when the study of adaptations goes beyond the common binary pairing of a text and its filmic or televisual adaptation. The combination of literary/written text and filmed version, common in adaptation studies since George Bluestone's *Novel into Film* (2003, first published 1957), is decentred in Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006), which demonstrates how adaptation works across a range of media and in different directions, such as novelisation of films or the adaptation of video games into films and films into video games. However, the notion of adaptation consisting of a pair of texts, one source and one target,[1] remains common in the practice of writing about adaptations. The case study method in adaptation studies somewhat encourages this practice, as it structures analyses around close readings of the adaptation in relation to its source. Indeed, Hutcheon (2006: 120) argues that to experience a text as an adaptation (rather than as any other form of text), we must know the source text and be able to compare the two texts. Her point is echoed by Daniel Herbert (2017: 124) who notes that some forms of adaptation, such as the remake, encourage viewers to compare the adaptation with its source.

The connections between texts are seldom so simple. There are various layers of mediation between them: paratextual features (Genette 1987, Gray 2010) such as posters,

covers, blurbs, tag-lines, and even merchandise, can and do affect how texts are read and experienced and complicate the notion of smooth adaptation from one text to another. Translation, too, is often required for adaptation across languages: either there needs to be a translation of the source text, for example the novel being adapted will be translated into the language of the adapters, or there may be other processes of interlingual translation used in the process of adapting a text across languages. These paratexts and translational practices are often overlooked in analyses of cross-cultural adaptations, despite the effect they have on the perception of a text. Some of this may be the related to the way in which translation tends to be made invisible in the West (Venuti 1995), or it may be due to the fact that paratexts and translations have lower cultural capital than novels and films.

Furthermore, adaptations are themselves texts that are subject to adaptation and creative interpretation in various forms. Not only do they generate their own paratexts and translations, as adaptations need to be marketed for various national and international audiences, they also generate reviews and commentary, as well as other forms of textual interaction, which could be fan-fiction, adaptation in another medium, further adaptations in the same medium, or other forms of rewriting. While there has been some critical analysis of remakes as readaptations (e.g. Evans 2014, Mazdon 2017, Palmer 2017, Verevis 2017), this idea of a chain of adaptations remains largely underexplored in adaptation studies.[2] Remakes attract more attention in this sense as they have long been understood as having a triangular frame of reference (Leitch 2002: 39) as the source text for both the first film and its remake is another written text, sometimes a literary text, but always some form of written property (e.g. a story, a pitch, a script, etc). Yet the concept of a chain of adaptations goes beyond this to include adaptations of adaptations, as I shall demonstrate here. This focus on adaptations of adaptations also makes it different from the one-to-many adaptations discussed by Thomas

Leitch (2007: 207-35) and Iain Robert Smith (2017), where multiple adaptations stem from the same source text but do not necessarily adapt each other.

This chapter will focus on the chain of adaptations from Boileau-Narcejac's novel *D'entre les morts* (Among the Dead),[3] first published in 1954, to the film *Vertigo*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock and released in 1958, which is then adapted, quite freely, by Chris Marker's short film *La Jetée*, which itself was remade by Terry Gilliam's *Twelve Monkeys* (1995).[4] It asks how these texts relate to each other, but also, how they relate to their contexts of production, particularly in relation to the concepts of nation and colonialism. This corpus has been chosen partly as there is a clear connection between the texts, but also because of the transnational 'conversation' here: a French book is adapted by an American movie, which is adapted by a French short film which is then adapted by another American movie. And while the relationship between *Vertigo* and *La Jetée* may not be one of close adaptation – there are significant alterations of plot between the two films, among other things – it is understood in the literature on *La Jetée* that it is a remake of *Vertigo*, as Marker himself suggests (see Harbord 2009: 5n5)[5] and there are certainly a number of elements that make the category of adaptation apply.

The sequence of the three films here has been written about by other scholars (e.g. Cohen 2003, Varndell 2014: 161-8, Martins 2015), but none extend their analysis beyond the cinematic versions. Indeed, Alain J.-J. Cohen avoids describing the films as adaptations of each other, preferring to focus on the term 'inspired by'. This seems to me to underplay the connections, both textual and paratextual, between the movies and, moving beyond Cohen's analysis, their other adaptational forms. Daniel Varndell (2014: 168) avoids seeing any of the films as a source for the others, which seems more reasonable for the relationship between *Vertigo* and *La Jetée* than for *La Jetée* and *Twelve Monkeys*, given the paratextual statement that *Twelve Monkeys* was inspired by *La Jetée* in the film's posters and in the credit

sequence. Varndell's argument is based on Deleuze's discussion of series (see Deleuze 1969) and within that context may be reasonable, but approaching the texts from the point of view of adaptation, which necessarily faces a question of which text came first but does not see adaptations as repetitions of the first ('source') text, as Varndell (2014: 2) argues remakes are, then it is arguable that a text forms the source for its adaptation. However, they also spawn other adaptations and other possible readings.

The space allowed for this chapter and the necessity of a cohesive analysis has influenced my choice to limit myself to the three film texts and the novel, as there are other adaptations of the texts in existence. There are too many to list all of them, but categories would include translations, rewritings, further adaptation, and even fan fiction. I am intentionally excluding critical writing from the category of adaptation here, even though one could argue, following André Lefevere's (1992) work on rewriting and translation, that critical work does extend understandings of a text and acts as a form of rewriting. However, to include it would make the concept of adaptation too vague and too all-encompassing. I am sticking to an idea of adaptation of an artistic re-imagining of a text, sometimes but not exclusively in another medium, as it has generally been understood by adaptation studies.[6]

To help structure my analysis of my corpus, I will be referring to Ian Bogost's concept of 'unit analysis' (2006: 3-19). Bogost elaborates this concept as a way of comparing across different forms of media, specifically video games and literary forms. He explains: '[unit] operations are modes of meaning-making that privilege discrete, disconnected actions over deterministic, progressive systems' (Bogost 2006: 3). Using unit operations, then, in adaptation studies would meaning looking at discrete moments, units of narrative or other isolatable features of the texts, rather than trying to compare the entirety of the texts. Bogost's own example is a reading of the film *The Terminal*, about a man trapped in an airport after a diplomatic coup renders his passport void and he cannot enter the country or

return to his previous one. In Bogost's unit analysis, the unit that film stages repeatedly is the act of waiting: the central character must wait in different ways until the narrative is resolved (Bogost 2006: 15-19). The contours of what form a unit are somewhat vague, and Bogost later offers the 'chance encounter' as the unit he analyses across literary, cinematic and video game texts (2006: 73-89). However, this vagueness offers the possibility of adaptation to various situations and media, allowing the reader to define the unit under analysis and then use it as a point of departure for their analysis. In this way, what seem to be disparate narratives can be seen to consist of similar units and points of comparison can be drawn between them.

D'entre les morts and *Vertigo*

The story of *D'entre les morts* will be familiar to all those who have seen *Vertigo*, or even those who have heard it discussed: Flavières is hired to watch his old school friend Gévigne's wife, Madeleine, who is suffering from 'quelque peur irraisonée provoquée par la guerre' [some irrational fear caused by the war] (Boileau-Narcejac 1999: 12).[7] She has apparently become obsessed with Pauline Lagerlac, her great grandmother who committed suicide. Flavières follows Madeleine, saves her from drowning (49) and befriends her. Flavière's feelings grow for her and he falls in love. On one of their trips together, she drives them out into the countryside around Paris, where she falls from the tower of a church (84). Following the intensification of the Second World War, Flavières leaves Paris, to return four years later, after having lived in Senegal for most of the war and set up a lawyer's practice there (103). His alcoholism has increased notably. He continues to be obsessed with Madeleine and revisits the scene of her death. He thinks he sees her in a newsreel (118) and travels to Marseille hoping to see her. He then encounters her in the hotel, though she seems different and less refined (130), and it turns out her name is Renée Sourange (131). The pair start an

affair and Flavières begins to call Renée Madeleine and refer to his life with Madeleine to her. He buys her a grey suit (138) and put up her hair in the same style as Madeleine (160). Eventually, she confesses the plot (181) and he strangles her.

I recount the plot here as it differs in a number of interesting ways from *Vertigo* and some of the elements of setting – Paris in the early years of the Second World War and then Marseille immediately after it – anchor the novel in a way that is pertinent for the discussion of nation in these texts. Any discussion of plot alone, especially a rather short summary as I have just given, simplifies the texture of the novel. For example, the novel keeps stressing how Flavières is tormented by his memories, first of his colleague Leriche, who fell from a roof, and then of Madeleine.

The plot of *Vertigo* follows quite closely the actions of *D'entre les morts*, but with a number of narrative divergences in addition to the differences already mentioned. The 'unit', to follow Bogost's terminology introduced earlier, is returning to look for a woman: both texts feature this obsessive seeking for the lost Madeleine and her recreation. Scottie is hired by his college buddy Gavin Elster to watch his wife Madeleine in San Francisco. In a museum, he watches her stare at a picture of Carlotta Valdes, who bears some similarities to her, and whose name she uses to book into a hotel (echoing the Pauline Lagerlac narrative in the novel). Scottie saves Madeleine from drowning at the Golden Gate park and takes her home to dry off. They next drive out into the forest and look at sequoia trees, with Madeleine showing Scottie on a cross section when she was born and when she died. After they kiss, Madeleine visits Scottie's house and they go to visit the old Spanish mission where Valdes lived. Once again Madeleine seems to act like Valdes, before kissing Scottie again and disappearing to climb the bell tower, where she apparently falls to her death.

Scottie is exonerated but has some sort of breakdown. An uncertain amount of time passes, somewhat like the caesura in the narrative of the novel though less specific in its term,

and we then see Scottie searching the places where he met Madeleine, showing his obsession with her that echoes Flavière's. He follows a woman who looks like Madeleine to her hotel and asks to be let in, frightening her. She agrees to go to dinner with Scottie after much persuasion. A flashback reveals the truth of 'Madeleine's' death and Judy (the woman) writes a confession to Scottie, which she then rips up. Scottie buys Judy a grey suit and, later, has her hair done in the same style as Madeleine (and Valdes). They drive to the mission where Scottie forces Judy up the bell tower and tells her he has worked out what happened. A nun surprises Judy who falls to her death.

The film and novel have many details in common – sometimes surprisingly, as the details themselves, such as the new grey suit that Flavières and Scottie buy for Renée and Judy, are not all that important for the development of the story or the characters. These might be conceived of as 'units' in Bogost's sense, as they function as independent narrative events, but they are not as central as the 'return' unit. Narratively, the plots of the texts are very similar, with the key changes that Judy's death echoes Madeleine's, as well as the revelation of the story to the viewer earlier on. These differences give the film a more easily accessible narrative shape, as the ambiguity of the novel is downplayed: it is clearer earlier on what has happened and that Judy is the same person as the 'Madeleine' that Scottie knew. The repetition of the death scene gives the two halves of the film a closer repetitive shape, allowing the second to echo the first. This gives the film a more formal quality but also feels like a more fitting narrative closure that is more in line with the various repetitions in the film.

Where the divergences become more interesting is in the settings of these texts and their sense of connection to a nation. *D'entre les morts* is a French novel, and *Vertigo* is an American – more specifically a Californian – film. This seems almost too obvious: the place of production of a text and the language it is in are not enough to make a text belong to that

nation. Both of these texts are more intimately connected to their locales than just coming from them, as I shall discuss, but at the same time their reception suggests that they are also more than just French or American. *Vertigo*, as the more well-known of the two texts, has had a massive influence around the world, topping the *Sight and Sound* critics' poll in 2012. French film critics, especially those connected to *Cahiers du Cinéma* in the 1960s like François Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard, helped to cement Hitchcock's reception as a serious director (see, for instance, Truffaut's interviews with Hitchcock [Truffaut 1966]). While Hitchcock's adaptation of *D'entre les morts* may have brought it more attention, it had been translated in 1956 as *The Living and the Dead*, although later editions have taken the title *Vertigo* (Boileau-Narcejac 2015). It is more likely that Hitchcock read it in English than in the French original, even though the credits to *Vertigo* cite the French title. Henri-George's Clouzot's *Les Diaboliques* from 1955, based on another novel by Boileau-Narcejac, would have made its authors well-known internationally at that time as thriller writers. While the authors may have been French and wrote in French, their texts circulated beyond France and French-speakers, just as Hitchcock's circulated beyond America and English-speakers. This fact in no way erases their national origin but suggests that to solely think of a text in its national setting elides its international (after-) lives and ignores the fact that cultural products circulate relatively freely internationally.

The two texts do, however, firmly locate themselves in their contexts of production and ask to be read as texts about France and California through their references to the immediate present and the recent past. The viewer cannot avoid noticing San Francisco in *Vertigo*: it is always there, as background and as environment. The view from Scottie's confidante Midge's window could be an advert for the city or, with the passing of time, a reminder of what it once was.[8] Paris plays a similar role in the first half of *D'entre les morts*, where Flavières and Madeleine wander (*flâner* in the French) the centre of Paris, with street

names serving as an index of their location. But I'm less interested in this rather obvious use of setting than reading the two texts in relation to the Second World War and colonialism, both of which play a part in each of the texts, and both of which are reflected in various ways in *La Jetée* and *Twelve Monkeys.*

The Second World War is unavoidable in *D'entre les morts*. It is there from the first moments of the book, where Madeleine's condition is blamed on it (13). The first part of the novel takes places in Paris before the German invasion in June 1940, but the threat of war is constant. To readers in the 1950s, this atmosphere would have been of the recent past and no doubt still memorable. Flavières both likes the quiet of the evening, where the streets are empty (30), but at the same time the fact that he is not in uniform has made him feel as if people look at him with hostility (32). This atmosphere at the beginning of the war gives the first half of the novel a sense of exceptionality – the situation that all the characters find themselves is one where there could be a rupture at any time and this gives the relationship between Flavières and Madeleine the sense of something exceptional. Flavières feels relief ('soulagement', 78) when he hears the German offensive has begun, signalling the beginning of the war in earnest for him. This news comes just before his and Madeleine's last trip that leads to her death. The war, then, serves as both a background and a structuring device for *D'entre les morts*. Indeed, it is due to the war that Flavière leaves Paris for four years which is echoed in the lacuna in the narrative between the first and second part of the novel.

The war is present in *Vertigo*, too, but as something more distanced. The film takes place after the war, which is one reason why it moves into the background, but San Francisco was also less directly affected by the Second World War than Paris. While there may have been effects on demographics in the city due to the relocation and internment of Americans of Japanese heritage (who are more or less absent from *Vertigo*),[9] the city was neither physically threatened nor occupied by invading forces. This is reflected in the film, where the

war is mentioned, but as something in the past. It is one of the reasons why Scottie and Elster lost touch. Elster survived the war, unlike Gévigne, whose car was machine-gunned on the road near Le Mans (108). Each narrative is affected by the Second World War, but in ways that are connected to their settings: in *D'entre les morts*, it is experienced as a traumatic rupture, whereas in *Vertigo*, while it also serves as a rupture, it is far less traumatic.

Just as the war is present in each text, colonialism also haunts them. Flavières spends the war in Senegal, where he sets up a lawyer's practice (103). France's African colonies are an absent presence in the novel, much like the war is in *Vertigo*. They are acknowledged and present in the background, but the novel itself does not question or engage with them. The Spanish colonial presence is more complex in *Vertigo*. As Roland Greene (2012: 28) notes, the film's presentation of San Francisco obscures this Hispanic past by focusing on the post Gold Rush white population (as one might expect from a Hollywood film from the 1950s aimed at white viewers, the presence of other ethnicities is minimal). However, as Greene goes on to argue, the story is situated in the longer history of California through the figure of Carlotta Valdes and the Mission San Juan Bautista where Madeleine and Judy fall to their deaths. In a sense, then, the Spanish history is acknowledged, but it remains in a repressed form, associated with madness and death. There are different colonial moments here: the original Spanish missions, and the movement to the Bay area following the nineteenth century gold rush, which altered the demographics of the area dramatically. This is not just a case of European colonialism in Africa, as in *D'entre les morts*, but a history of colonialism that features European colonialism as well as internal migration and the displacement of Hispanic settlers.

What comes through each text is far more than a simple man-obsessed-with-woman trope: in the margins of each there are complex relations with the nation, both in its present form and its history. *D'entre les morts* in that sense reflects its status as a French text,

drawing on and staging the French experience of the Second World War while also acknowledging, albeit obliquely, the French colonial presence. For *Vertigo*, the colonial history of California intrudes on the story and becomes part of the narrative, but as a return of the repressed, connected to madness and death. Reading these texts as a pair highlights, then, the national aspect of each in the contrast between them.

Vertigo and *La Jetée*

In the next link on the chain, *La Jetée* takes on some of the units of *Vertigo*, and arguably some from *D'entre les morts*, but offers quite a different narrative. Catherine Lupton notes that the 'allusions to *Vertigo* are legion' (2005: 95) and highlights a range of details that are shared in both films: the giant sequoia, the woman's hairstyle, the flowers in the department store where he first sees her that reference the florists in *Vertigo* (Ibid.). Indeed, like the adaptation of *D'entre les morts* by *Vertigo*, a surprising number of details are carried over in the adaptation; details that themselves are not significant in the plot of the film, but which serve to index the text being adapted,[10] suggesting connections to knowing viewers (i.e. those who are familiar with that text) and who can therefore read the adapted text precisely as an adaptation (Hutcheon 2006: 120). In other words, these points of reference between the texts highlight the links in the chain of adaptation.

La Jetée is also a man who is haunted by an image from his past, as the narrator tells us at the beginning of the film. It is not clear if the image this refers to is the image of the woman's face, seen on the observation pier at Orly airport, or if it's the image-sequence of a man's death that he witnesses there, at which the woman (played by Hélène Chatelain) is also present. This image, we are told, sustains him through the war. Such a strong mental image is why he is chosen to be sent back in time as part of the scheme to be able to travel in time and find ways out of humanity's post-war predicament.

Before mentioning the rest of the plot of *La Jetée*, I want to argue that the plot of the film literalises the metaphorical return to the past in *D'entre les morts* and *Vertigo*. The holding of a woman's image through the war and returning to it afterward evokes the narrative of *D'entre les morts*, which Marker was likely familiar with.[11] This is the shared unit of narrative between the texts, the return to look for a woman, but it is played out in slightly different ways in each text, and in *La Jetée* it has become literal time travelling. As the rest of the plot plays out differently, this repeated narrative unit, as well as the indexical connections to *Vertigo*, place the film in the chain of adaptations that I am discussing here, but it is clear that this is not a straightforward adaptation. The rest of the film, once the central character has become adept at travelling to the past shows him travelling to the future to look for ways of surviving the post-war moment. A power source is given to him, and he realises the experimenters plan to kill him. The people from the future offer to take him to the future, but he chooses to go back to the pier at Orly and the moment he remembers so clearly, only to be killed there by one of the camp doctors.[12]

Nation and colonialism intertwine in *La Jetée*. The film clearly draws from memories of the Second World War and its effects on Paris, but it was made and released around the end of the Algerian war of independence (1954-62).[13] There was in effect censorship regarding this war (Hilliker 2000: 2), yet it would be one of the reference points that original viewers would have thought of when regarding the film, as well as the less recent Second World War. Marker had also worked with Alain Resnais, director of one of the first Holocaust films, *Nuit et brouillard* (Night and Fog, 1956), and the camp sequences of *La Jetée* would also bring to mind images of concentration camps. The relation to war and colonialism is far more complex, then, than in *D'entre les morts* and *Vertigo*. Lee Hilliker (2000: 3) argues that the film is critical of the contemporary political situation in France, and it would seem that all these possible indices of recent and ongoing colonialism, which are at

the same time ambiguous in what they refer to, bear that out. *La Jetée*'s pessimistic, post-war dystopia is an invitation to reconsider the French nation and its relationship to war.

Yet at the same time *La Jetée* visually celebrates France. The film's title comes from the viewing pier at the Orly airport which serves Paris. Watching planes taxi, take off and land as an activity, the sort of thing one might take a young boy to do, reveals a pride in modernity that seems somewhat out of place nowadays, when air travel is much more common and less of a novelty. The film may begin with the third world war and the destruction of Paris, but how it shows this is through shots of the skyline of Paris, including iconic buildings such as the Eiffel tower. Visually, then, the film highlights Paris, even as it critiques France in other ways. The fact that the survivors gather under the Palais de Chaillot – located across the Seine from the Eiffel tower – should also give pause for thought: this was where the Declaration of Human Rights was signed in 1948 and was also home to the *Musée de l'homme*, an anthropological museum. While the later street scenes (when the man is visiting the past) are also Parisian, they are less obviously images of Paris that would be recognised as such (unlike the earlier iconic scenes and the shots of Scottie in San Francisco in *Vertigo*). These images of Paris are also tainted by the fact that Paris is destroyed in the narrative; the film presents bombed out and collapsing buildings to demonstrate this. The celebration of Paris, then, is never unambiguous.

La Jetée takes a more nuanced approach to nation and colonialism than *D'entre les morts* and *Vertigo*, which might be explained by its status as an independent film[14] and by Marker's left-wing sensibilities, but also by its later context of production at the end of the Algerian war of independence. Read in parallel with the earlier links in the chain of adaptation, it serves to highlight their approaches to nation and colonialism through comparison.

La Jetée and *Twelve Monkeys*

The last link in the chain that I want to discuss here is *Twelve Monkeys*. It claims *La Jetée* as an inspiration and also cites *Vertigo*, suggesting Gilliam was aware of the links between *La Jetée* and *Vertigo*, even when he claims, in an interview that accompanies the British DVD version of *La Jetée*, to have only ever seen the film in French and not necessarily needed to understand the narration. The overall lines of the narratives are indeed similar, with *Twelve Monkeys* also revolving around a time travel plot: Cole (Bruce Willis) is sent back in time to solve the mystery of the Twelve Monkeys, which led, within the narrative, to the near death of humanity. Cole has a strong memory from his childhood of a man being shot in an airport, which, the film reveals, is actually his own death.

Twelve Monkeys differs from the earlier film not only formally – it uses moving images, is in colour and does not use a narrator – but also in the way it approaches the various units of narrative that I have been discussing throughout this chapter. Most importantly, while Cole does go into the past and meets a woman, the psychiatrist Kathryn Railly (Madeleine Stowe), their meeting is accidental. She becomes his psychiatrist, then kidnap victim and later his accomplice. His journey into the past is not motivated by his obsession with this woman, as was the case of the central character in *La Jetée* and metaphorically for Flavières and Scottie. He is sent back into the past in order to gather information that can stop the plague that nearly annihilates humanity in the film's narrative. This change in motivation is indicative of the alterations taking place from text to text in adaptation (and particularly in a chain of adaptations like this one). This changing motivation can be seen also in the changing representation of time travel: no longer is Cole's strength his obsessive memory of a moment in the past – while he does have a recurring dream of a moment in the past that parallels that of *La Jetée*, his interlocutors appear to have no interest in it – but rather that he is a good observer. This is a more easily understandable motive for choosing him than in *La Jetée*. The

reason for sending him to the past is also more explicit. Rather than travelling to the past in order to be able to travel to the future to ask for help, it is to find information that can lead to curing the plague. This shift towards more explicit motivation is common in American remakes (Vincendeau 1993: 23; Harney 2002: 73-5) and parallels the movement towards making texts more explicit at a syntactical level in translation (Evans 2019: 164-5). The movement towards a more mainstream (Hollywood) form of cinema can be seen at multiple levels here: the reduction of formal innovation, the clearer motivations of the protagonists, and what Elena Del Rio (2001) analyses as a rhetoric of visibility in *Twelve Monkeys*, that is, the tendency to focus on the visual and making visual of aspects of the narrative that are not clearly shown in *La Jetée*. For instance, the movement of time travel appears physical in *Twelve Monkeys*, with Cole being shot into some sort of tunnel, but relies 'on the traveler's mental and emotional facilities' (Del Rio 2001: 338) in *La Jetée*, where time travel is shown through the protagonist's awareness of and presence in the past, and later in the future. Importantly, in *La Jetée*, time travel is a solitary pursuit, whereas Cole is only one of many 'volunteers' sent into the past in *Twelve Monkeys*, reducing, once again, the importance of his memory from before the catastrophe.

There do remain, as in the other cases I've analysed in the chapter, the same sorts of indexical links between the two films: the image of a blonde woman, travelling back in time, the refuge of humanity underground following a catastrophe. These aspects make clear textual connections between the two films, but they have different diegetic and textual meanings and they are recontextualised in the new film. I would argue that this is typical of the process of adaptation as all adaptations differ from, build on, explore and otherwise rework the narratives of their sources. Over this chain of adaptations, the process is magnified through repetition as features and narrative units from *D'entre les morts* are adapted and

altered in *Vertigo*, and then again in *La Jetée* and once more in *Twelve Monkeys*, which bears little resemblance to *D'entre les morts* even if it can trace a lineage from it.

These divergences can also be seen in the way in which the film deals with nation. The two cities in which *Twelve Monkeys* takes place are Baltimore and Philadelphia, with more focus on the homeless and the slum areas than in another of the other texts discussed in this chapter. There are very few establishing shots that give an impression of either city's skyline or downtown, though we do see, as Cole and Railly head toward the airport, Philadelphia overrun by animals from the zoo, which has been prefigured by the rewilded city of the future at the beginning of the film. Indeed, *Twelve Monkeys* shows a post-apocalyptic United States early in the film that looks very similar to the present day one that Cole visits. When Railly and Cole are driving through the countryside, the film tends to use medium shots, focusing on the inside of the car and not on any of the countryside that can be seen from the road. The film therefore backgrounds its setting and allows it to stand in for any advanced capitalist country.

Parallels between the totalitarian government that rules after the spread of the virus and the government in the 1990s are shown by repetition of Cole being washed (once when he returns from the surface in the future, once when he is taken into the psychiatric hospital in the present) and also by the parallels between his interviews with the future scientists and the present day authorities. Some criticisms of the ideology of capitalism, which draw on countercultural criticisms of consumer culture, are also mouthed by Jeffrey Goines (Brad Pitt) in the psychiatric ward, but this placement of them posits them as fringe opinions. The critique of the United States here is therefore both present and somewhat diffused; no alternative is offered, beyond the annihilation of the human race (where *La Jetée* shows a possible future). Instead, the film shows a form of internal colonialism, based on mass

incarceration and forced labour, in the sections of the narrative set in the future. But this need not just be a future for America; it could be anywhere.

Chains of adaptation

It should be clear, then, that looking at chains of adaptation shifts the perspective from the comparison of two texts to tracking the alterations and evolutions of narrative structure and tropes across a corpus of works. What are shared features of some of the narratives disappear in other narratives; here the return to an object of obsession, which is present in the first three texts, disappears in *Twelve Monkeys*. Across these adaptations, various details are repeated and recontextualised in the new texts. The details serve to link them indexically to the texts they adapt, but they may not be important within the narrative (e.g. the grey suit Madeleine wears, the sequoia tree which appears in all the films here). As such, Wittgenstein's (1968: §66-71) notion of 'family resemblances', where members of a family resemble each other but not all family members share the same traits, could be a fruitful way of characterising the relationships between the members of the chain. This notion of 'family resemblance' continues the work of decentering the original (source) by making it one in a sequence of texts which all can be placed in a position of source and target and which are connected through a number of traits. In addition, 'family resemblance' also encourages the exploration of less canonical adaptations, moving away from the comparison of two texts that has traditionally been the focus of adaptation studies. In relation to the corpus examined in this article, it would mean exploring the network of links, affinities and divergences across texts such as the TV series of *12 Monkeys* (2015-current) and a rewriting of *Vertigo* included in Rebecca Solnit's *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* (2006: 138-49). These texts further extend readings of the existing network of texts by exploring further narrative possibilities or, in Solnit's case, minor characters that have been given insufficient attention elsewhere.

Understanding adaptations as 'families' of texts, then, recasts adaptation not as a process of creating a text based on another one but an ongoing, generative process that incorporates multiple texts with many different relationships between them.

Exploring adaptation beyond dyadic structures also encourages the exploration of intercultural relations between texts. In this chapter, the corpus forms a sort of conversation between French and American cultural products which highlights contextual elements and the differing cultural relationships to the past, especially, in this case, the Second World War and colonial histories, which may otherwise be overlooked when addressing the texts as adaptations. Using Bogost's 'unit' analysis, as I have here, can also open up readings of the texts beyond their surface narrative features to explore repeated details (e.g. the grey suit) or other aspects of the texts. Expanding beyond the texts analysed in this chapter, the notion of chains of adaptation would also suggest more nuanced ways of approaching the relationships between texts from different locations across time without reducing them to simple iterations of a source text, but rather allowing them to be read as both independent texts and part of a larger group (as the analysis above read its corpus). In addition, tracing these chains would further develop understanding of the flows of global media and how texts can be revalued by their adaptations elsewhere, as *D'entre les morts* was by *Vertigo* and as *Vertigo* was by *La Jetée* – these adaptations change how we approach the source text and forever alter how it is read.

Finally, it is important to differentiate what I am calling a chain of adaptations from the notion of 'franchise', which may include a huge range of texts across multiple media that refer to, extend and otherwise interact with a source text: something like *Star Wars* consists of the franchise of films and TV series, as well as an enormous range of merchandise including toys, clothing, video games, novels, Lego, and so on. All of the texts following the first film can be considered forms of adaptation. Where the notion of chain that I am

elaborating differs is that there is little or no 'shared world' (Herbert 2017: 85) between the texts. All of the instances of Star Wars, from the original film to a Lego set, create and maintain the Star Wars universe in some way. The links between these texts are 'made by industrial design' (Herbert 2017: 86), that is, the intellectual property owners have tried to maintain control over the different elements and created them in order to exploit viewers'/consumers' interest in that world. The corpus of texts I have analysed is less homogeneous and, despite similarities of plot and detail, narrate different worlds. However, the notions of franchise and chain of adaptation begin to blur into each other once one considers the varieties of unofficial and non-canonical sequels and products. In each case, importantly, adaptation connects more than two texts and so new approaches to adaptation and comparison are needed.

Notes

[1] Using the common translation studies terminology, 'source' refers to the text that is being adapted, 'target' to the adaptation.

[2] Jan Baetens (2018: 32) also notes that the process of adaptation is a 'chain' but does not discuss what happens to adaptations of adaptations as I do in this chapter.

[3] Following the French title of Hitchcock's film, the book is now published as *Sueurs froides* [Cold sweat] in French (Goodkin 1987: 1171). The copy I am using has this title but is, as far as I am aware, the same as the original publication in terms of the text.

[4] A further remake of *La Jetée* was made by Sam Brooks as a student film in 2016 and is available on his youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rer6of654a4 (accessed 17 August 2018). However, it reduces the length of the film to five minutes and uses live action rather than *La Jetée*'s use of still photographs. There are other narrative developments

too, but to discuss these in detail would require more space than currently available. Catherine Lupton (2005: 83) lists further texts that cite or adapt *La Jetée.*

[5] Marker's statement is, as one might expect from Marker, not quite as straightforward as this. He refers to *Vertigo's* 'remake in Paris' in an essay on Hitchcock first published in *Positif* in 1994 and now available in English translation online (Marker n.d.). This statement has been taken to refer to *La Jetée*. Friedlander (2013: 184) also calls *La Jetée* an 'homage' to *Vertigo*.

[6] I would also include translation as form of adaptation, following on from work by Lefevere (1992), Hutcheon (2006) and Laurence Raw (2013), all of whom have connected translation to other forms of adaptation (see also my discussion in Evans 2016: 126-48).

[7] Further references to this novel are given parenthetically in the text. Unless otherwise noted, translations from the novel are my own.

[8] Here I draw on Roland Barthes's argument that photographs show evidence of the past in *Cameria Lucida* (1984, especially p. 115) and Laura Mulvey's extension of this hypothesis in her *Death 24x a Second* (2006) to include cinema.

[9] On the post-war experience of Japanese-Americans, see Robinson 2012.

[10] On C.S. Peirce's notions of icon, index and symbol, especially in relation to film, see Silverman 1983: 19-24.

[11] As a fan of *Vertigo,* a film he discusses again and revisits scenes from in his *Sans Soleil* (1983), it seems likely that Marker would have read the novel it was based on in French.

[12] For a philosophical reading of the time loop in *La Jetée* see Zupančič 2003: 19-22.

[13] Lupton (2005: 86-7) discusses the production of the film.

[14] *La Jetée*'s independent status is reinforced by the fact that Parker Tyler (1995: 204-5) discusses it in his *Underground Film: A Critical History,* first published in 1969.

Filmography

Les diaboliques, film, directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot. Paris: Filmsonor, 1955.

La Jetée, film, directed by Chris Marker. Paris: Argos Films, 1962.

Nuit et brouillard, film, directed by Alain Resnais. Paris: Argos Films, 1956.

Sans soleil, film, directed by Chris Marker. Paris: Argos Films, 1983.

The Terminal, film, directed by Steven Speilberg. Hollywood, CA: Dreamworks, 2004.

Twelve Monkeys, film, directed by Terry Gilliam. Hollywood, CA: Universal Pictures, 1995.

12 Monkeys, TV, created by Travis Fickett and Terry Matalas. Los Angeles, CA: Atlas Entertainment, 2015-.

Vertigo, film, directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Hollywood, CA: Alfred J. Hitchcock Productions, 1958.

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