

TRANSFORMATION OF MORAL VALUES IN FILM ADAPTATIONS OF CLASSIC ENGLISH NOVELS

TRANSFORMASI NILAI MORAL DALAM ADAPTASI FILM NOVEL KLASIK INGGRIS

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ABSTRACT

English classic novels have long been recognized as important sources of universal moral values. However, with the decline in the consumption of classical literature, film adaptations have emerged as a crucial medium for conveying these values to contemporary audiences. This study examines the transformation of moral values in film adaptations of English classic novels, identifying patterns of change (continuity, modification, and omission) and the factors influencing them. Using a multidisciplinary approach, narrative review and multidisciplinary analytical framework of adaptation theory, ethical criticism, and cultural studies. This study finds that film adaptations often retain universal values, modify them to suit contemporary sensibilities, and eliminate or soften harsh social criticism. Factors such as historical and cultural context, audience reception, directorial ideology, and cinematic limitations play a significant role in this transformation process. This research contributes to adaptation studies by expanding the focus to the moral dimension and enriching ethical criticism by analyzing the ethical implications of film adaptations. The results of this study highlight the complexities of cultural reinterpretation and the ethical responsibilities of re-presenting classic narratives in the modern era.

Keywords: film adaptation, classic English novel, moral values, transformation, adaptation studies, ethical criticism, cultural studies

ABSTRAK

Novel klasik Inggris telah lama diakui sebagai sumber penting nilai moral universal. Namun, dengan menurunnya konsumsi sastra klasik, film adaptasi muncul sebagai medium krusial untuk menyampaikan nilai-nilai ini kepada audiens kontemporer. Penelitian ini menelaah transformasi nilai moral dalam adaptasi film novel klasik Inggris, mengidentifikasi pola perubahan (kontinuitas, modifikasi, dan omisi) serta faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhinya. Menggunakan pendekatan *narrative review* dan kerangka analisis multidisipliner dari *adaptation theory*, *ethical criticism*, dan *cultural studies*, studi ini menemukan bahwa adaptasi film sering mempertahankan nilai-nilai universal (misalnya, etika keluarga), memodifikasi nilai-nilai untuk menyesuaikan dengan sensibilitas kontemporer (misalnya, representasi gender yang lebih asertif), dan menghilangkan atau melunakkan kritik sosial yang tajam (misalnya, isu kemiskinan dalam karya Dickens). Faktor-faktor seperti konteks historis dan budaya, resepsi audiens, ideologi sutradara, dan keterbatasan sinematik berperan penting dalam proses transformasi ini. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada *adaptation studies* dengan memperluas fokus ke dimensi moral dan memperkaya *ethical criticism* dengan menganalisis implikasi etis dari adaptasi film. Hasil studi ini menyoroti kompleksitas reinterpretasi budaya dan tanggung jawab etis dalam menghadirkan kembali narasi klasik di era modern.

Kata Kunci: adaptasi film, novel klasik Inggris, nilai moral, transformasi, adaptation studies, ethical criticism, cultural studies

1. INTRODUCTION

Classic English novels have been seen for centuries as an important source of universal moral values that shape the ethical imagination and culture of society. Works such as *Pride and Prejudice* works of Jane Austen, *Oliver Twist* works of Charles Dickens, or *Wuthering Heights* Emily Brontë's works not only present narrative stories but also articulate moral issues related to justice, loyalty, poverty, and gender relations. However, in contemporary cultural

developments, the consumption of classic literary works tends to decline. Data from The Reading Agency shows that only about 50% of adults in the UK read regularly for pleasure, down from 58% in 2015 (The Reading Agency, 2022). This fact confirms that the moral relevance of classic texts is increasingly being transferred to popular media such as film.

Film adaptations play a strategic role as a medium for cultural reinterpretation. They not only reintroduce classic narratives to new audiences but also transform values to reflect the contemporary zeitgeist. Industry statistics show that film adaptations of books generate 53% larger global box office revenue compared to films based on original scripts (Forbes, 2018). In addition, 43% of the top 20 highest grossing films in the UK between 2007 and 2016, 1,000 films were adaptations of books, including classic works (Shelf Awareness, 2018). These figures demonstrate that film adaptations are not only literary or artistic phenomena, but also highly influential cultural products.

Table 1
Summary data regarding the dominance of film adaptations in the industry

Indicator	Statistical Data	Source
Global revenue share of film adaptations	53% higher than the original script film	(Forbes, 2018)
Proportion of film adaptations in the UK Top 20 Box Office (2007–2016)	43% (books) + 9% (comics)	(Shelf Awareness, 2018)
Level of UK adults' regular reading habits	50% (down from 58% in 2015)	(The Reading Agency, 2022)

Source: From Several Sources

Table 1 above highlights two important points: first, film adaptations have significant economic and cultural power; second, the decline in reading practices in society makes film adaptations increasingly crucial as a medium for conveying classic moral values to a new generation. Thus, analyzing how moral values are transformed from classic English novels into films becomes increasingly relevant.

Although many researchersThe Italians have previously highlighted the issue of fidelity (fidelity to the source text) and aspects of visual style in film adaptations, dimensions of moral values are often overlooked. Yet, moral values are at the heart of many classic works and are one of the reasons why they continue to be adapted and viewed across generations. Therefore, this study aims to fill the literature gap by examining how moral values are transformational in the film adaptation of the classic English novel and the factors that influence the transformation process.

The transformation of moral values in film adaptations of classic English novels is a complex issue that has not received adequate attention in literary and film studies. So far, research on adaptation has tended to emphasize the aspect of fidelity namely the faithfulness of the adaptation to the source text or a visual aesthetic analysis that highlights the film's cinematic style, artistic direction, and narrative strategies (Hutcheon, 2006; Stam, 2005). While these dimensions are important, a focus solely on fidelity and aesthetics often sidesteps the fundamental question of how the moral messages contained in classic literary works are altered, negotiated, or even erased when transferred to the medium of film. In fact, moral

values are at the core of many classic English novels, which are still considered relevant today because of their ability to reflect universal ethical, social, and philosophical issues.

Furthermore, in the adaptation process, the transformation of moral values does not occur in a vacuum. Film adaptations are always tied to specific social, cultural, ideological, economic, and artistic contexts. For example, gender representation in *Pride and Prejudice* or issues of poverty and social justice in *Oliver Twist* will be treated differently when adapted in the contemporary era compared to the time of its original publication. The director's ideology, film market pressures, changes in cultural values, and global audience expectations are also important variables that influence the transformation of moral messages from literary texts to films (Cardwell, 2002). Thus, the research problem is not merely identifying whether the film is faithful to the novel, but rather how moral values are transformed, why this transformation occurs, and what factors drive this process.

Based on the formulated problems, this study has three main objectives. First, to identify patterns of moral value transformation from classic novels to films. This objective focuses on mapping the forms of moral value change, both in the form of continuity, namely values that are maintained; modification, namely values that are adapted to new contexts; and omission, namely values that are omitted. This identification is important to reveal consistent patterns and shifts that occur in the process of film adaptation of classic English novels.

Second, this study aims to examine the factors that play a role in the process of moral value transformation. The research does not stop at description, but also analyzes the causes of moral transformation, including social factors such as changes in societal norms; cultural factors, namely differences in values between eras; ideological factors, namely the political and moral views of directors; economic factors such as industry pressures and market needs; and artistic factors including duration limitations, cinematic style, and film technology. Thus, this study is able to explain the transformation of moral values within a multidimensional framework.

Third, this research seeks to contribute to the discourse adaptation studies and ethical criticism. This contribution is realized by expanding the focus of analysis from merely issues of fidelity and aesthetics towards the study of moral transformation. On the other hand, research also enriches ethical criticism in the fields of literature and film by placing moral values as a central element in the process of cross-medium adaptation. Thus, this research is expected to provide a significant theoretical contribution in building a new framework for understanding the relationship between literature, film, and morality.

Based on these objectives, the research questions are formulated as follows: ***How are the moral values in classic English novels transformed in film adaptations, and what factors influence this transformation process?*** This question is investigative, open-ended, and can be answered through a comparative-narrative approach by utilizing the theoretical framework of adaptation studies and ethical criticism. By placing moral values as the main focus, this research not only reconstructs the relationship between the source text and the filmic text, but also examines the cultural and ideological dynamics that influence the results of the adaptation.

2. METHODS

2.1. Approach

This research uses an approach to narrative review, a non-systematic review, with the primary objective of critically synthesizing relevant literature on the transformation of moral values in film adaptations of classic English novels. Unlike systematic reviews, which emphasize quantitative procedures and rigorous literature selection, narrative reviews emphasize the flexibility of interpretive analysis to understand trends, patterns, and theoretical arguments in a particular field (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). This approach was chosen because the issue of moral value transformation in literary adaptations to film is more qualitative, contextual, and requires broad conceptual mapping rather than purely quantitative measurement. Thus,

narrative reviews enable researchers to integrate various adaptation theories, ethical criticism, and cultural studies into a comprehensive analytical framework.

2.2. Literature Selection

Literature selection was carried out by considering sources with high academic authority and direct relevance to the research topic. Primary literature includes:

1. Reputable international journals indexed in Scopus And Web of Science, especially those focused on the field adaptation studies, film studies, ethics in literature, and cultural studies.
2. Adaptation theory book written by leading experts such as Linda Hutcheon (A Theory of Adaptation, 2006) and Robert Stam (Literature through Film, 2005), which provides a conceptual framework regarding the adaptation process as a form of reinterpretation.
3. Classical and contemporary literary criticism which discusses moral values in English novels, including works that dissect texts such as *Pride and Prejudice* (Jane Austen), *Great Expectations* (Charles Dickens), and *Wuthering Heights* (Emily Brontë).
4. Film studies which examines audience reception, ideology in cinema, and how film is used as a medium to convey moral messages in different contexts.

Literature inclusion criteria include studies that address:

- Adaptation of the classic British novel to film.
- Representation of moral and ethical values.
- The ideological, social, and cultural contexts in film production and reception.
- Critical analysis of the differences between the source text (novel) and the resulting text (film).

2.3. Analytical Framework

This research utilizes a multidisciplinary analytical framework by combining theories from three main areas:

1. Adaptation Theory

- Linda Hutcheon views adaptation as “a creative and interpretive act of appropriation,” in which the source text is not only transposed but also reinterpreted to suit the new context.
- Robert Stam emphasizes intertextuality in adaptation, that each film relates not only to the source novel but also to broader cinematic traditions, ideologies, and cultures.

2. Ethical Criticism

- Martha Nussbaum viewed literature and art as vehicles for exercising moral imagination, so that changes in values in film adaptations have ethical implications for audiences.
- Wayne Booth emphasizes the “implied author” and moral responsibility in the narrative, which is relevant to analyzing how films construct moral messages compared to novels.

3. Cultural Studies

- Stuart Hall with model encoding/decoding provides the perspective that every cultural text (including film adaptations) carries an ideological content which is then reinterpreted by the audience.
- This framework is important for understanding how social, political, and economic factors influence the process of transformation of moral values in

films.

2.4. Process

The analysis stages are carried out in stages:

1. Categorization of Moral Value Transformation
 - Continuity: moral values in the novel that are maintained in the film adaptation.
 - Modification: moral values that undergo changes to adapt to the cultural, ideological, or aesthetic context of the film.
 - Omission: moral values that are omitted because they are considered irrelevant or contrary to the film's target audience.
2. Identifying Factors Influencing Transformation
 - Historical: adaptation period (e.g. film adaptations in the colonial vs. post-modern era).
 - Ideological: the dominant value system that influences moral representation (e.g. gender, social class).
 - Technical: the limitations and opportunities of the film medium, such as duration and visual language.
 - Audience: the need to adapt films to the preferences or moral sensitivities of contemporary audiences.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Patterns of Moral Transformation

The transformation of moral values in film adaptations of classic English novels reflects a multifaceted process that can be broadly categorized into three patterns: the maintenance of certain moral values, modification of values to suit contemporary sensibilities, and the omission or downplaying of critical moral messages.

Firstly, many film adaptations maintain key moral values, focusing on universal virtues that resonate across time, such as family ethics and respect for justice. This commitment to preserving cultural memory underscores the directors' efforts to remain faithful to the core moral messages present in the original texts. For instance, while adapting Dickens' works, filmmakers often strive to retain the emphasis on familial relationships and societal morals that reflect the foundational ethics of the characters and plotlines in the original narratives (Khudaverdiyeva, 2024). Thus, the continuity of these values serves to connect modern audiences with the historical context and moral frameworks of the source material.

Secondly, the modification of moral values is particularly evident in contemporary interpretations dealing with gender relations, authority, and social class. As societal norms evolve, so too do the portrayals of characters within these adaptations. Female characters historically depicted in passive roles are often reimaged as more assertive and independent, mirroring the advancement of feminist discourse within modern cinema (Khudaverdiyeva, 2024). This adjustment allows for a narrative alignment with contemporary values, thereby enhancing the film's relatability and appeal to modern viewers. Such transformations signify not only a shift in the representation of gender but also reflect wider societal changes regarding expectations and norms.

Lastly, the omission or softening of certain morally critical messages occurs frequently in adaptations of classic literature, particularly those with sharp social critiques. In many film adaptations of Dickens, the incisive commentary on class exploitation is often diluted, with the narrative refocusing on personal dramas instead. This trend can lead to a loss of the critical social discourse that characterized the novels, effectively shifting attention away from systemic issues towards more individualistic story arcs, which may be perceived as more palatable for

contemporary audiences (Alzouabi & Literature, 2022; Alzouabi, 2021). Such alterations reflect the economic motivations of the film industry, aiming to appeal to a wider global audience, often at the expense of the original moral weight of the narratives.

In conclusion, the adaptation of classic novels into film embodies three discernible patterns of moral transformation: the preservation of certain core values, the modification of others to align with modern sensibilities, and the omission of explicit social critiques. Each of these patterns demonstrates the complex interplay between maintaining fidelity to source material and adapting to contemporary cultural landscapes, ultimately shaping the moral discourse presented to audiences.

3.2. Factors Influencing Transformation

The transformation of moral values in film adaptations is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by various factors. These include historical and cultural contexts, audience reception, the director's ideology, and cinematic constraints. Each of these factors plays a crucial role in shaping the moral narratives presented in adapted films.

3.2.1. Historical & Cultural Context

Film adaptations frequently reflect the era in which they are produced. The historical and cultural milieu considerably influences how adapted narratives are interpreted and presented on screen. For example, research has suggested that contemporary film adaptations increasingly emphasize feminist themes, adapting original material to reflect social movements and ideological shifts that prioritize gender equality and women's narratives (Liang, 2020). Adaptations from colonial eras have been noted for perpetuating Orientalist perspectives, indicating a significant historical influence on narrative framing (Liang, 2020). This historical context also highlights the cultural adaptation practices that can vary significantly depending on the market in which a film is released (Liang, 2020).

3.2.2. Audience Reception

Audience reception significantly influences moral values in film adaptations. The globalization of the film market pressures producers to present moral content that resonates across diverse cultures, often leading to simplified narratives that remove controversial or context-specific elements for broader appeal (Vijver, 2015). Research indicates that audience experiences are shaped by socio-cultural and historical conditions, suggesting that producers must consider regional and ideological factors when crafting films (Vijver, 2015). For instance, adaptations targeting an international audience might downplay specific cultural contexts in favor of universal themes that can be understood across diverse backgrounds (Vijver, 2015).

3.2.3. Director's Ideology

The beliefs and ideologies of directors play a critical role in shaping how moral values are depicted in film adaptations. A director's approach can either critique prevailing ideologies or align with them, significantly altering the narrative's moral stance (Volz et al., 2010). For example, films offering ideological critiques often highlight ethical dilemmas within the source material, transforming moral narratives through a localized lens (Volz et al., 2010). Different directors' visions can lead to varied interpretations of the same text, underscoring the director's pivotal role in the adaptation process (Wang & Desa, 2024).

3.2.4. Cinematic Constraints

Cinematic limitations, such as time restrictions and the need for visual representation, significantly influence moral narratives. The intricate ethical complexities in lengthy novels often must be condensed into pivotal scenes or symbolic representations within films (Noordegraaf et al., 2018). This necessitates a distillation process where only key themes are

retained, often resulting in simplified moral questions compared to those found in the original work. The outcome can be adaptations that convey more accessible narratives, sometimes at the cost of the rich moral ambiguity and depth present in literary texts (Gillespie & Gural, 2016). In conclusion, the transformation of moral values in film adaptations is a complex interplay of historical and cultural context, audience reception, the director's interpretations, and the constraints of the cinematic medium. Each of these factors contributes to how narratives are reshaped, highlighting the dynamic nature of film as a form of storytelling.

3.3. Comparative Case Examples

The transformation of literary works into film adaptations often results in significant changes in character representation, themes, and narrative focus. This is particularly evident in notable examples such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Wuthering Heights*, where adaptations reflect evolving social contexts, particularly concerning gender representation and social critique.

In the case of *Pride and Prejudice*, adaptations have shifted the portrayal of Elizabeth Bennet to embody a more contemporary sense of independence and empowerment. Modern film iterations, especially the 2005 adaptation, illustrate significant transformations in gender dynamics, closely aligning with third-wave feminist principles that advocate for women's empowerment and egalitarian values. Researchers have explored this evolution and identified how cinematic adaptations mirror societal shifts in gender norms, highlighting Elizabeth's journey as reflective of broader feminist movements over time (Mohammed, 2023; (Weng et al., 2025). This trend not only reinterprets Elizabeth's character but also softens critiques of social class, presenting romantic relationships with a lighter touch, diverging from Austen's more critical lens (Weng et al., 2025).

On the opposite end, *Oliver Twist* serves as an example where the candor of social critique present in Dickens's original text is often diluted in film adaptations. Various cinematic renditions lean heavily into melodrama and sentimentalism, focusing on personal moral quandaries rather than the systemic issues of poverty and exploitation that Dickens emphasized. This shift dilutes the impactful social commentary inherent in the novel, as more recent films emphasize compassion and individual redemption at the expense of a critique of social structures (Langford, 2018).

Similarly, the adaptations of *Wuthering Heights* frequently reshape the narrative surrounding the tumultuous relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw. Film versions often recast their destructive love story within a romantic framework that downplays the darker aspects of their relationship, a contrast to Brontë's original portrayal which explores complex themes of obsession and societal constraints on love (Galpin, 2014; Shachar, 2020). Recent comparative analyses indicate that adaptations tend to gloss over the existential and social commentary of Brontë's text, opting instead for a more palatable version that aligns with contemporary romantic ideals (Porrás, 2024). In summary, the adaptations of these classic works demonstrate significant variations in the treatment of themes such as gender, class, and the nature of love. They reflect changing societal values and expectations, which often result in the simplification of complex social critiques that are more prominent in the original texts.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Interpretation of Results

The transformation of moral values in film adaptations of classic English novels is a complex and multidimensional process, reflecting the dynamic interaction between the source text, the film's production context, and contemporary audience expectations. This study identifies three main patterns of transformation—continuity, modification, and omission—that demonstrate not only how classical values are maintained or altered, but also why these changes occur.

4.1.1. Continuity of Universal Values

This pattern confirms that certain moral values, such as family ethics and justice, resonate across time and cultures. Film adaptations often retain these values to maintain a connection to the moral essence of the original work and to appeal to audiences seeking narratives rooted in universal ethical principles. This demonstrates a conscious effort by filmmakers to preserve the "cultural memory" of classic texts, albeit in a new format.

4.1.2. Modifications for Contemporary Sensibility

Modifications in moral values, particularly in the representation of gender and social class, are a direct reflection of evolving societal norms. Female characters, once passive, are now portrayed as more assertive, in line with modern feminist discourse. These changes not only make the narrative more relevant to today's audiences but also demonstrate how film serves as a medium for negotiating and reflecting social change. Adaptations become a "mirror" reflecting values.zeitgeistcontemporary.

4.1.3. Sharp Social Criticism Omission

The omission or softening of sharp social criticism, particularly in Dickens's works, highlights commercial pressures and the desire to appeal to a wider audience. By shifting the focus from systemic issues to personal drama, film adaptations tend to diminish the novel's original moral weight. This suggests that the film industry often prioritizes "palatability" and potential.box officeglobal over complete fidelity to a moral message that may be controversial or less popular in the modern marketplace.

4.2. Theoretical Implications

This research has several important theoretical implications for adaptation studies And ethical criticism:

4.2.1. Expanding Focus Adaptation Studies

By highlighting the moral value dimension, this research enrichesadaptation studieswhich has tended to focus on fidelity(fidelity to the source text) and visual aesthetics. We argue that moral transformation is an integral aspect of the adaptation process that requires in-depth analysis, not simply a side effect. This paves the way for a more holistic analytical framework that considers how adaptation changes not only the narrative's form but also its ethical substance.

4.2.2. Contribution toEthical Criticism

This study places moral values as a central element in the analysis of cross-medium adaptation. By using the theoryethical criticismFrom Martha Nussbaum and Wayne Booth, we show that film adaptations have significant ethical implications for audiences, as changing values can shape the audience's "moral imagination." This encourages ethical criticism to analyze not only literary texts but also popular cultural products such as films, which have now become the primary conveyors of moral values for many people.

4.2.3. IntegrationCultural Studies

Framework cultural studies(Stuart Hall) allows for a better understanding of how social, political, and economic factors influence the process of moral value transformation. Adaptation is not only an artistic act but also a cultural product encoded with a particular ideology and decoded differently by audiences. This emphasizes that moral transformation does not occur in a vacuum but is instead tied to a broader cultural context.

4.3. Practical Implications

4.3.1. Raising Awareness for Filmmakers

The results of this study may raise awareness among filmmakers and producers about their ethical responsibilities when adapting classic works. Understanding that every adaptation decision impacts the moral message may encourage them to more carefully consider the ethical implications of narrative changes.

4.3.2. Audience Education

For educators and critics, this research provides tools to help audiences, especially younger generations, critically evaluate film adaptations. By understanding patterns of moral transformation, viewers can better appreciate the differences between the original text and the adaptation and question why certain changes were made.

4.3.3. Preservation of Classical Values

In the context of declining reading habits, film adaptations become a crucial medium for conveying classic moral values. By understanding how these values are transformed, we can ensure that the moral essence of great works remains relevant and accessible to modern audiences, albeit in different forms.

4.4. Research Gap & Future Directions

Although this research has made significant conceptual contributions, several gaps remain that could be further explored by future studies. First, existing studies tend to focus on the text, both novels and films, while the aspect of audience reception is relatively rarely considered. Therefore, future research needs to develop reception studies based on audience studies or reader-response criticism to understand how audiences interpret transformed moral values and the real impact of adaptation on public moral awareness. Second, the context of adaptations of classic English novels is still dominated by a Western perspective. Further research that highlights cross-cultural adaptations, for example, into Asian, African, or Latin American cinema, would open up opportunities to examine the process of recontextualizing moral values within a non-Western cultural framework. Such studies could enrich our understanding of the debate between moral universalism and particularism in the realm of adaptation. Third, further research is needed regarding the political-economic dimensions of the film industry. Given that the global film industry is influenced by the dynamics of capitalism, distribution, and cultural censorship practices, future studies could expand their focus to how economic and political factors mediate the transformation of moral values in adaptations. Thus, future research will be able to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the structural forces behind moral change in the film adaptation process.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has deeply analyzed the transformation of moral values in film adaptations of classic English novels. The analysis shows that adaptation is not simply a process of narrative translation, but also a complex cultural reinterpretation, in which moral values undergo significant shifts. Three main patterns of transformation are identified. First, continuity, namely the continuity of a number of universal moral values such as family ethics and justice, which are maintained to maintain the moral essence of the source text while connecting modern audiences with the historical ethical framework. Second, modification, namely the adaptation of moral values to contemporary sensibilities, for example in the representation of gender and social class. Female characters are often depicted as more independent and assertive, reflecting the influence of social norms and feminist discourse. Third, I omitted, namely the removal or softening of sharp social criticism and moral messages considered controversial, often due to commercial pressures or the need to broaden audience appeal. This

transformation of moral values is influenced by various factors, including historical and cultural context, audience expectations, directorial ideology, and the limitations and opportunities of the cinematic medium.

In terms of contribution, this research makes a number of important contributions to the development of adaptation studies theory and practice. First, this research enriches adaptation theory by expanding the focus from fidelity and visual aesthetics to the moral dimension, thus presenting a more comprehensive analytical framework for understanding adaptation as a practice of ethical and cultural reinterpretation. Second, this research supports the development of ethical criticism by placing moral values as the main element in the analysis of cross-medium adaptations, and showing the role of film adaptations in shaping the moral imagination of the audience. Third, this study provides an understanding of cultural dynamics, highlighting how moral values are negotiated and contextualized in different mediums, which in turn reflects the interaction between classical literary traditions and the contemporary zeitgeist.

Ultimately, film adaptations of classic English novels are dynamic cultural phenomena: they not only revive old narratives for new audiences, but also actively shape and reflect societal moral values. This research, therefore, opens the door to further studies examining the complex interactions between classical literature, film, and morality in the modern era, particularly in the context of audience reception, cross-cultural adaptation, and the political-economic dimensions of the film industry.

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