

**Kathleen Loock and Constantine Verevis (eds),
*Film Remakes, Adaptations and Fan Productions:
Remake/Remodel***

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 252 pages

Julie Gueguen

**Electronic version**

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/inmedia/561>

ISSN: 2259-4728

Publisher

Center for Research on the English-Speaking World (CREW)

Electronic reference

Julie Gueguen, « Kathleen Loock and Constantine Verevis (eds), *Film Remakes, Adaptations and Fan Productions: Remake/Remodel* », *InMedia* [Online], 3 | 2013, Online since 15 April 2013, connection on 20 April 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/inmedia/561>

This text was automatically generated on 20 April 2019.

© InMedia

Kathleen Loock and Constantine Verevis (eds), *Film Remakes, Adaptations and Fan Productions: Remake/Remodel*

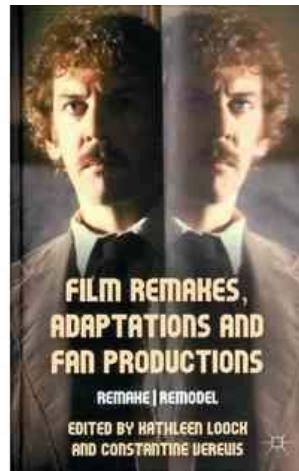
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 252 pages

Julie Gueguen

REFERENCES

Kathleen Loock and Constantine Verevis (eds), *Film Remakes, Adaptations and Fan Productions: Remake/Remodel*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 252 pages

1 *Film Remakes, Adaptations and Fan Productions: Remake/Remodel* is a collection of twelve essays originating from an international conference held in 2010 at the University of Göttingen (Germany) and organized by the American Studies' Research Unit "Popular Seriality: Aesthetics and Practice". Epitomizing the interests of this unit in the reconstruction of the historical, cultural and narrative dimensions of popular serialization, this volume offers an interdisciplinary perspective ranging from American Studies and Literary Studies to Media Studies and Cultural History. Rich with such diversity, *Remake/Remodel* remains nevertheless



particularly coherent in its overall attempt to defend the value of serialization. Through a three-part structure, each illustrating a different type of serial narrative (remakes, adaptations, and fan productions), all the contributors artfully refute the commonly-accepted notion that seriality represents a form of "self-cannibalization" or "desecration" of "some superior original" (p. 2). They explore the complexities and potentials of those underestimated texts by meticulously opposing them to their sources in a succession of compelling case studies, while successfully introducing innovative theories (particularly so in the last part of the collection).

- 2 "Adapt". The quality of this first part resides in the multifaceted reevaluation of a formerly unavoidable principle that shaped adaptation studies for decades. Following this principle, the cultural status of a cinematographic adaptation ought to be determined by its fidelity to its literary source. Any transformation or mutation was thus considered as blasphemy, tainting the original work from which the adaptation sprang. In her essay (p.87-104), Birte Otten denounces the limitations of such a principle, by thoroughly examining its consequences on two cinematographic adaptations of *All the King's Men*, Robert Penn Warren's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. She argues that the fundamental complexity of Warren's original work lost its coherence and overall magnitude, when it was adapted for the second time in 2006, precisely because of misplaced reverence. The challenge of adapting a novel resides in the transition between "telling" and "showing", as it is mentioned in Amy Martin's essay dedicated to the study of *Wuthering Heights* (p.67-86). Martin uses "Brontë's famously layered narrative" (p.70) to demonstrate that, in order to maintain a certain level of coherence, an adaptation must emancipate itself from its source and offer an interpretive reading that might in turn, lastingly shape the collective unconscious.
- 3 "Remake". The second part confronts the preconceptions engendered by said collective unconscious, resisting modernization because of fear of seeing the original interpretation of a text corrupted by a newer version. This so-called loss of meaning is identified here as a process of recontextualization, placing remakes as products of their own time, generating new meanings for new generations. As such, Kathryn Schweishelm proposes an essay based on the comparative study of two versions of *The Stepford Wives* (p.107-121), offering a unique perspective on the evolution of feminism between the 1970s and the early 2000s. Similarly, Kathleen Loock explores the geopolitical transformations that

occurred between the Cold War and 9/11 by opposing several versions of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (p.122-144), as does Sonja Georgi with *The Manchurian Candidate* (p.145-158). Finally, the last and probably most significant essay of this part, written by Constantine Verevis and dedicated to the study of *H Story* (p.159-175), lyrically exposes the tensions between experience and representation, between memory and the ineluctable metamorphosis of meaning.

- 4 “Remodel”. The very juxtaposition of fan productions with the more ‘classic’ semiotic registers examined in this collection is innovative in itself. Yet beyond that, some of the reflections presented in this third part also participate in the opening of new research avenues in reception studies. For instance, in her study of the fan-vidding phenomenon (p.179-196), Robin Anne Reid draws attention to the issue of ethnicity in fandom, often overlooked in favor of gender analysis. In a fairly exhaustive overview of the academic discourse on fandom, she argues that a stalemate could be reached if considerations such as race, ethnicity, class and sexuality were not combined with gender (p.187). The other three essays composing this last part propose, as a whole, a very methodical and engaging survey of the serialization process in fandom ; each of them illustrating the principle of deconstruction and reconstruction of a narrative for very specific purposes. Sybille Machat, in an excellent analysis of fanfic-trailers (p.197-214), demonstrates that reassembled fragments of source texts have the potential to immerse viewers in entirely new, yet familiar universes. Lili Hartwig, explores the variations of tone made possible by the remixing of a film, using typical genre indicators (p.215-230). Finally, Daniel Stein identifies video spoofs as metareflexive deconstructions enhancing the structural weaknesses of certain source materials (p.231-247).
- 5 *Film Remakes, Adaptations and Fan Productions : Remake/Remodel* embodies the audacity and creativeness of a dynamic research unit encouraging young scholars to rejuvenate dusty paradigms. Under the tutelage of Frank Kelleter, director of the unit and initiator of the “Popular Seriality” concept (p.19-44), this group of contributors produced a very convincing volume that will probably become a reference in its field of study.

AUTHORS

JULIE GUEGUEN

Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3