BEYOND THE SCREEN: THE RETCONNING OF BLACK CHARACTERS IN POPULAR CULTURE MOVIES THROUGH THE LENS OF BLACKWASHING

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Abstract

The portrayal and adaptation of characters in movies often reflect societal norms and values, with "blackwashing" emerging as a significant phenomenon. Blackwashing refers to casting black actors in roles traditionally portrayed by white characters, often as part of efforts to promote representation and address historical inequalities. This study explores the types of retroactive continuity (retcon) found in black characters within popular culture films through the perspective of blackwashing. The research employs Hutcheon's (2013) adaptation theory, which conceptualizes adaptation as creative reinterpretation rather than mere replication, alongside Friedenthal's (2017) retcon framework and Genette's (1997) qualitative transformation theory for supplementary analysis. Using a qualitative approach, the study applies the documentation method for data collection and Spradley's (2016) analysis technique. Seven adapted films (hypertexts) are compared to their original works (hypotexts), revealing three distinct types of retcon: reinterpretation, reinscription, and revision. These findings demonstrate how adaptation practices not only reshape narratives but also challenge traditional representations to align with evolving social values. The findings highlight how adaptation practices reshape narratives to address historical inequalities and enrich representation in media. This research contributes to the understanding of blackwashing as a tool for inclusivity and social progress in film adaptation. Future studies are recommended to explore blackwashing across diverse cultural contexts and genres to deepen insights into its impact on global representation and audience reception.

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of movies as a literary work and popular culture, the portrayal and adaptation of characters hold a significant place, reflecting societal norms, values, and dynamics. One notable phenomenon within this landscape is the practice of "blackwashing", where characters originally depicted as white are adapted to be portrayed by black actors or actresses. This trend has sparked extensive discourse, where the adapted characters have a pattern of alteration between them, from the original work and the adapted work. In analyzing

the phenomenon, the theory of adaptation by Hutcheon (2013) is employed. Hutcheon (2013) describes adaptation as an acknowledged process of transferring from a recognized work to another work. It involves the creative and interpretive act of appropriation, as well as extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work. It should also be noted that adaptation is a recreation, but without replication. Based on this theory, the analysis continues with a perspective from the analysis of blackwashing, which involves casting black actors in roles traditionally played by white people. This is seen as a direct anti-racism effort, aiming to promote equal treatment and opportunities.

Blackwashing is the opposite of whitewashing, which refers to the practice of casting white actors in roles originally played by non-white characters, resulting in the erasure of people of color from the narrative (Smith, 2021). The adaptation and changes that occur within a work or narrative, especially in the narrative setting, are known by the term Retroactive Continuity. Friedenthal (2017) explains that the process of narrative change initially occurred in oral cultures in disseminating and inheriting narratives. Retroactive Continuity (Retcon) has evolved into a technique in shaping narratives to expand the 'universe' of the story or alter facts within the narrative. Retcon initially became a popular technique used in soap operas with complex storylines. Friedenthal (2017) also outlines many forms of retcon applied in other narrative forms such as comics, superhero stories, the New Testament in the Bible (Biblical Retcon), television soap operas, and even in modern filmmaking.

Figure 1

Peter Parker (Spider-Man: Homecoming) and Miles Morales
(Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse)
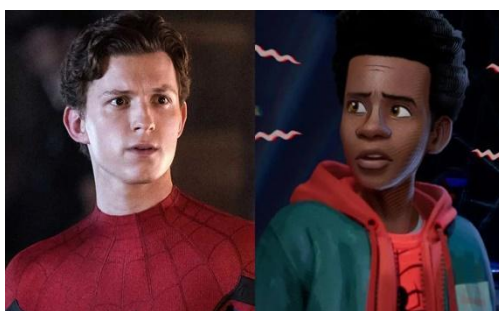
In Spider-Man: Homecoming, Peter Parker is portrayed as a young, white character, consistent with his original comic book depiction. The film focuses on his high school life and the challenges of balancing his responsibilities as Spider-Man. This portrayal aligns with the character's established background. On the other hand, Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse

introduces Miles Morales, a character of African-American and Puerto Rican descent, as a new Spider-Man. The film delves into Miles' journey as he becomes a hero, highlighting his unique perspective and experiences. This introduction of Miles represents a deliberate effort to diversify the Spider-Man universe.

Retroactive continuity (retcon) plays a role in both narratives. In Homecoming, the Marvel Cinematic Universe reinterprets Peter Parker's character by focusing on his younger years, including interactions with Tony Stark. This reinterpretation adds depth to his early superhero career. Similarly, Miles Morales' introduction in the Ultimate Marvel comic book series in 2011 represents a retcon, creating a new Spider-Man with a different background and experiences from Peter Parker. This retcon was part of Marvel's initiative to introduce more diversity into their comic book universe and provide a fresh perspective on the character. And this makes these two spiderman movies fall into the type of retcon that is Reinterpretation. Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse expands on these ideas by introducing the concept of the multiverse, where multiple versions of Spider-Man from different realities coexist. This concept allows for a reinterpretation of the Spider-Man tale, including variations of the character like Miles Morales, Spider-Gwen, and Spider-Man Noir. These reinterpretations offer new ways for audiences to engage with the characters while maintaining the integrity of the original stories.

This research is not the first to analyze blackwashing and the representation of black characters in popular culture films. There have been several studies that have been conducted previously, such as research written by Smith (2021) in an effort to identify differences and efforts by the film industry in dealing with the phenomena of whitewashing and blackwashing through historical and early history approaches. The next research is McKinney (2020) which discusses black representation in film comic books. The third research analyzes changes in postmodernism through Nurhalidasia (2016) whose research uses Linda Hutcheon's Postmodernism theory. The fourth research is by Welang (2018) which analyzes the new concept of black women's identity in American culture. Fifth, research by Bowen (2021) which discusses the De-and Reconstruction of Classical Works.

Despite existing studies on representation in popular culture films, there is a gap in understanding the deconstruction of black characters via blackwashing. While Smith (2021) and McKinney (2020) tackle whitewashing and black representation, respectively, deeper insights are needed into how black characters are deconstructed in popular culture movies.

Although Nurhalidasia (2016) and Welang (2018) discuss postmodernism and black women's identity, none focus on the deconstruction of black characters in films. Bowen's (2021) research touches on adaptation but lacks a specific focus on this aspect. Hence, this study aims to address this gap by analyzing the deconstruction of black characters in popular culture movies through blackwashing, enhancing our understanding of representation in films.

Among the films being adapted are *Avatar: The Legend of Aang, the Disney Princess Universe,* and even *Super Sentai.* The need for adaptation varies widely, including graphic reconstruction, live-action adaptations, and adaptations for local cultural contexts, among others. However, many adaptation works spark controversy among the public and film fans. One such example is the Hollywood/live-action adaptation of The Little Mermaid, which is released in 2023. This film disappoints many fans because the character Ariel, originally depicted as having white skin, is changed to being African American. However, when looking at the perspective of other films, there is a positive reaction to the character alterations in *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse,* a spin-off from the *Spider-Man* film in a different universe. Fans of this film do not have an issue with the change. Essentially, the motivations behind adaptations can be influenced by various factors. The issue lies in the changes that occur, particularly in the portrayal of characters with black skin after adaptation. Thus, the discussion revolves around changes in character settings in films where characters are "blackened", especially in retroactive continuity. It looks into how audience perceptions, narrative authenticity, and cultural dynamics are affected when characters are reimagined as Black. Practically speaking, this study offers a framework for examining whether these modifications promote inclusivity and cultural sensitivity or unintentionally strengthen prejudices. The study can provide filmmakers, screenwriters, and cultural analysts with important insights on how to strike a balance between diversity goals and storytelling integrity by finding patterns in blackwashing tactics. It also challenges artists to consider the ethical and social implications of their artistic decisions, adding to larger conversations regarding racial representation.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Adaptation

To adapt comes from the Latin *"apere"* (to bind, to attach). Its past form, *"aptus"* (apte), when added to the locution "ad" (to, towards), created the verb *"adaptare"* (to adjust to, in prevision of) (Rey, in Simonet:2010). Adaptation originally began as a scientific term, but from 1860 to today it most often refers to an altered version of a text, film, or other literary source. The phenomenon of adapting black characters in films is part of a paradigm shift in

representation in cinema, involving a process of resemiosis where characters originally described or depicted with white characteristics are changed or "through the process of transmutation" into characters with black characteristics. According to Hutcheon (2006), adaptation can be understood through two perspectives: adaptation as a product and also as a process. As a product, adaptation is an acknowledged transposition of a recognizable work, involving a shift in medium, genre, or context. It's not just a brief allusion, but a comprehensive and specific transposition. As a process, adaptation involves reinterpretation and recreation, seen as either appropriation or salvaging, and is also a form of intertextuality seen as a palimpsest through the memory of other works. In essence, adaptation is a derivative work that is not derivative—a unique creation that stands on its own while being connected to the original work. It's a complex process that includes the act of creation, the product itself, and the audience's reception, all influenced by various contexts.

Retroactive Continuity and The Types

Changes in narrative works have been occurring since the development of oral culture. Narratives undergo changes, including additions, subtractions, and deletions, with the aim of altering the purpose or content of the narrative created and disseminated. Retroactive continuity is the term used to represent changes in a narrative. Officially, the term became popular and has been frequently used since the 1980s. According to Friedenthal (2017), retroactive continuity is a narrative process in which the creator of the narrative wants to change the story or history within the narrative, thus creating a different future story and disregarding the old history as if it never existed.

Friedenthal (2017) further explains that there are three types of retroactive continuity. These three types of retcon are classified based on the extent of the changes that occur in a narrative work. The three types are; (1) *Reinterpretation*, the process of reinterpreting the narrative work on its history or plot. This reinterpretation changes the audience's perspective on the narrative but not definitively. The audience or consumer of the work is given the freedom to choose the history or storyline within the narrative work; (2) *Reinscription*, the process of rewriting the narrative work on its history or plot with solidity. This process changes the audience's viewpoint in perceiving and interpreting the narrative work in the future, (3) *Revision*, the final process in retcon which is the most extreme. This process revises or completely changes a narrative work to the extent of editing and republishing, creating a new edition, and giving birth to a completely different narrative work physically. In Retconning analysis, the quantitative transformation theory (Genette, 1997) serves as a fundamental

reference for assessing the extent of alterations. According to Genette, quantitative transformation involves changes made to the hypotext in the hypertext through the processes of reduction and augmentation. Reduction encompasses three components: concision, condensation, and excision, whereas augmentation includes expansion, amplification, and extension. Our aim is to employ this theory to gauge the magnitude of changes in retconning. In this study, we establish three significant levels of alteration: minor for reinterpretation, moderate for reinscription, and extreme for revision.

Blackwashing

In the concept of retroactive continuity itself, we argue that blackwashing is also included in it. Blackwashing refers to the act of casting black actors to play characters that are intended for non-black individuals (Smith, 2021). Retroactive continuity, or retconning, encompasses the fluidity and adaptability of storytelling, allowing for reinterpretation and reimagining of established characters and narratives. Just as retcons can introduce new plot twists or character developments, *blackwashing* represents a form of reinterpretation that reflects contemporary values and perspectives. It provides an avenue for addressing historical gaps in representation and challenging entrenched norms within fictional worlds. By integrating *blackwashing* into retroactive continuity, creators can foster greater diversity and inclusivity in storytelling, enriching narratives with fresh perspectives and reflective of evolving societal values. Embracing blackwashing as a component of retroactive continuity acknowledges the dynamic nature of storytelling and the ongoing quest for authentic representation in media.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a qualitative approach. This method was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of how "blackwashing" alters black characters in popular culture films. Data collected from this research was taken from multiple literature works and their respective adaptation, such as Spiderman: Homecoming (2017), Spiderman Into The Spider-Verse (2018), The Little Mermaid (1989), The Little Mermaid (2023), Aladdin (1992), Aladdin (2019), Cinderella (1950), Cinderella (2021), Bakuryuu Sentai Abaranger (2003), Power Ranger Dino Thunder (2004), Pinocchio (1940), Pinocchio (2022), Peter Pan (1953), and Peter Pan & Wendy (2023).

This research employed the techniques of analysis by Spradley (2016) which concludes 4 phases. The first phase is domain analysis in which the theory *Theory Of Adaptation* by Hutcheon (2006) and *Retroactive Continuity* by Friedenthal (2017) was implemented. The

second phase is the taxonomic analysis in which the relationship between the categories is identified. The third phase is the componential phase. In this phase, the results of domain and taxonomy were signified. Finally, the thematic analysis identifies and interprets the patterns that emerge from the data.

Table 1

The Componential Table

Movies and Its Adaptation	Retroactive Continuity		
	Reinterpretation	Reinscription	Revision
Spiderman : Homecoming (2017) - Spiderman Into The Spider-Verse (2018)			
The Little Mermaid (1989) - The Little Mermaid (2023)			
Aladdin (1992) - Aladdin (2019)			
Cinderella (1950) - Cinderella (2021)			
Bakuryuu Sentai Abaranger (2003) - Power Ranger Dino Thunder (2004)			
Pinocchio (1940) - Pinocchio (2022)			
Peter Pan (1953) - Peter Pan & Wendy (2023)			

To strengthen the framework of this research, it is important to establish the relationship between the given theories, *Theory Of Adaptation* by Hutcheon (2006) and *Retroactive Continuity* by Friedenthal (2017) within the realm of blackwashing in popular culture films. Hutcheon's theory conveys on the dynamic process of the adapted literature, emphasizing cultural influences. Meanwhile, Friedental's theory explores retroactive switches within the narrative, such as altering backgrounds. This study further aims to unravel how black characters are transformed in film adaptations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section is divided into two parts, namely; first, the types of retroactive continuity that exist in black characters in popular culture movies along with examples of data findings, and second is the intersection of retroactive continuity with quantitative transformation as a measuring tool. The existence of quantitative transformation here is only a supporting theory because the theory of retroactive continuity itself still has not found a benchmark for how little, moderate or extreme the changes and additions are.

Types of Retroactive Continuity

Reinterpretation

Bakuryuu Sentai Abaranger (2003) - Power Ranger Dino Thunder (2004)

Figure 2

Yukito Sanjo as Abare Blue (left) and Ethan James as Blue Dino Ranger (right)

The adaptation of AbareBlue (Yukito Sanjo) from *Bakuryuu Sentai Abaranger (2003)* into the Blue Dino Ranger (Ethan James) in *Power Rangers Dino Thunder* (2004) resulted in significant character differences. Yukito, portrayed as a mature and serious individual, is driven by past traumas and a strong sense of justice. In contrast, Ethan is depicted as a geeky teenager with a passion for computers and technology, initially more lighthearted and comedic but gradually developing courage and responsibility. The characters' backstories also differ significantly. Yukito's tragic past, losing his family in an accident caused by the Evoliens, fuels his desire for justice and protection. Ethan's backstory, on the other hand, focuses more on his passion for technology and proving himself to his loved ones.

This concept conveys how Blue Dino Ranger, reinterprets the character of Abare Blue where the reinterpreted version can shape our understanding of the original creation. While both characters share a connection as being the Blue Ranger of the team and possess leadership qualities, their individual journeys and relationships with their teammates are distinct, Blue Dino Ranger Highlights the interconnectedness across the culture to adapt the culture of American.

Spiderman : Homecoming (2017) - Spiderman Into The Spider-Verse (2018)

Figure 3

Peter Parker (Spider-Man: Homecoming) and Miles Morales (Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse)

Regarding comic book adaptations, the filmic universes of Marvel and Sony have offered captivating stories that reinvent the iconic Spider-Man characters. In particular, the films *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse (2018)* and *Spider-Man: Homecoming (2017)* present opposing but complementary depictions of the title character, delving into the idea of retroactive continuity in the form of reinterpretation.

Spider-Man: Homecoming explores the life of a teenage Peter Parker, played by Tom Holland, as he struggles to deal with his newfound superhuman responsibilities and high school obstacles. Under Tony Stark's guidance, this version of Peter is presented as a more enthusiastic but inexperienced crime-fighter who is still getting his bearings as a hero. His journey is characterized by development as he grows into a more self-assured and competent Spider-Man, emphasizing themes of resiliency and self-discovery. However, *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* presents viewers to a new iteration of the character, Miles Morales, who is voiced by Shameik Moore. Miles, an African-American and Puerto Rican descent youngster who is multiracial, is a welcome diversion from the conventional Peter Parker stereotype. His narrative entwines with several versions of Spider-People from different realms, exhibiting a range of origins and aesthetics while upholding the fundamental characteristics of the Spider-Man persona.

These portrayals differ from one another not only in terms of narrative structure but also in the way they accept the concept of retroactive continuity. *Spider-Man: Homecoming* reinterprets Peter Parker's origin narrative to fit within the established Marvel Cinematic Universe and reimagines his early days as a superhero in a contemporary environment. Meanwhile, *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* expands the *Spider-Man* mythology by introducing audiences to the concept of the multiverse, providing a new perspective on the Spider-Man character through the eyes of Miles Morales. This adaptation is based on the Spider-Man version of the Marvel Universe, or more specifically, S*pider-Man: Homecoming*. Ultimately, Spider-Man: Into the Spider-

Verse reinterprets the Marvel version of *Spider-Man: Homecoming* with a new character, Miles Morales.

The Little Mermaid (1989) - The Little Mermaid (2023)

In the transformation present in the film adaptation of The Little Mermaid (2023), the addition can be easily seen by looking at the film's duration, which is almost twice the length of the hypotext (The Little Mermaid 1989), from 01:22:48 to 02:15:32. The blackwashing from the cartoon version to live action, in this case, does not have many changes to the film's narrative flow. However, its contribution to the film's appearance is evident in the physical portrayal, particularly in the type and color of hair, eye color, lip color, tail color, and the scales on Ariel's 'bra'.

Figure 4

Ariel
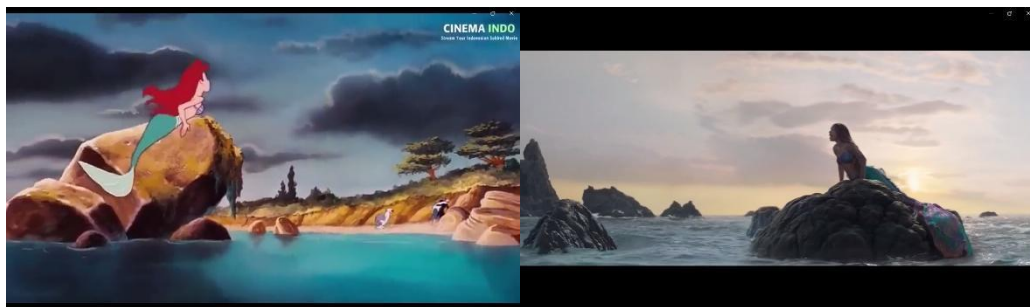
In the hypertext, there is also an alteration where Ariel has a braver spirit, thus playing the role of the 'hero of the day'. Nevertheless, based on the quantitative transformation, there is almost no reduction of any kind. On the contrary, the augmentation of the expansion type is very apparent. Therefore, it can be said that the type of retroactive continuity is reinterpretation.

Peter Pan (1953) - Peter Pan & Wendy (2023)

Figure 5

Tinker Bell

The adaptations between Peter Pan (1953) and Peter Pan & Wendy (2023) are evident in the character's attitudes and the causes of the story's conflicts. In both films,

blackwashing occurs with the character of Tinker Bell. The influence of blackwashing on this character affects several aspects of the narrative and character portrayal. In Peter Pan (1953), Tinker Bell is depicted with fair skin, possessing a proud, witty, and envious personality. Tinker Bell in this version becomes the cause of conflict by betraying Peter Pan due to jealousy of Wendy, who is closer to him. In stark contrast to the Peter Pan & Wendy (2023) version, Tinker Bell, under the influence of blackwashing, has a more calm and friendly demeanor. Tinker Bell in this version is depicted as a problem solver and supportive in helping Peter Pan and Wendy resolve conflicts.

The differences in Tinker Bell's characteristics or attitudes fall under transmotivation, which involves the absence of a betrayal action that leads to conflict. The reduction of betrayal scenes in the cause of the conflict also falls under concision reduction, as it maintains the continuity of the conflict and the core of the story. Therefore, when linked to retroactive continuity, the adaptation falls into the category of reinterpretation.

Reinscription

Alladin (1992) - Alladin (2019)

Figure 6

Genie in Aladdin

In the film Aladdin, adaptation changes have been made to the character Genie, a Genie. This character underwent significant changes. In the 2019 live-action, Genie is played by Will Smith, who as we know, Smith comes from the black race. Thus, presenting a more humorous and transformative version of Genie in the 1992 Cartoon Aladdin. This change brings a fresh perspective to the character without fundamentally changing his narrative role.

In the animated version (1992), Genie's introduction is marked by a high-energy musical number, featuring rapid transformations and humorous pop culture references.

In the live-action version (2019), Genie's introduction retains the essence of the music, but integrates Smith's signature performance style, depicting a modern and energetic twist. Structurally, the 2019 Aladdin film has taken place a reinterpretation and rewriting rather than a total revision. Re-interpretation by strengthening Genie's character which has been added to be even more humorous, by adapting to developments over time and existing culture. In this context, the 2019 film Aladdin structurally experiences a type of retcon: Reinscription (redrawing a text, idea or concept to give it a new meaning).

Revision

Pinnochio (1940) - Pinnochio (2022)

Figure 7

Blue Fairy

In the movie Pinocchio, a frontal adaptation change was made to the character of the Blue Fairy. This character underwent a change in race, specifically the skin color, from the white race in the 1940 *Pinocchio* movie to the black race in the 2022 *Pinocchio* movie. This change influenced and adjusted the storyline of *Pinocchio 2022* to align with the contemporary context of when this adaptation was made. Besides the frontal change in appearance, this film also altered many scenes.

The Blue Fairy scenes were divided into: Blue Fairy Appearing, Blue Fairy Magical Power, Blue Fairy Giving Advice, Blue Fairy Order, Blue Fairy Disappearing. When adapted into the 2022 Pinocchio, changes occurred in the order of these scenes: Blue Fairy Magical Power, Blue Fairy Appearing, Blue Fairy Introducing Herself, Blue Fairy Magical Power (again), Blue Fairy Advice, Blue Fairy Order, Blue Fairy Disappearing. Structurally, in the 2022 Pinocchio movie, there was a reordering and addition of scenes: a reordering of Blue Fairy Appearing and Blue Fairy Magical Power, and the addition of a Blue Fairy Magical Power scene. In this context, the 2022 Pinnochio movie structurally underwent a type of retcon: Revision (changes in structure and additions to the previously

non-existent structure in the hypotext).

Cinderella (1950) - Cinderella (2021)

Figure 8

Fairy in Cinderella

In the film Cinderella, there is a frontal adaptation change in the character of the Fairy Godmother. In the 1950 film Cinderella, the fairy godmother is depicted as an old, white woman. However, in the live-action Cinderella (2021), this character is played by a black actor, Billy Porter, which brings changes in appearance and depiction. These changes influence and adjust the narrative of Cinderella 2021 to add a modern touch to the characters.

The structure of the Fairy scene in the Cartoon Cinderella (1950) is: Fairy Godmother Appears, Magical Transformation of Fairy Godmother, Fairy Godmother gives advice, Fairy Godmother disappears. In the 2021 film adaptation, there are changes and additions to the scene, as follows: Fairy appears with a magical entrance, fairy introduces herself, magical transformation of fairy, gives fashion advice, and disappears. Structurally, in the 2021 film Cinderella there is a rearrangement and addition of scenes. In this case, the 2021 Cinderella film experienced a type of retcon: Revision (significant changes to character changes and the addition of structure that was not previously present in the mortgage).

Adaptations in this case may include changes in the plot, addition or subtraction of characters, and modification of dialog to ensure that the story remains interesting and acceptable to the film's audience. Successful adaptations not only retain the original essence and message of the source work, but also utilize the uniqueness and power of film transformation to provide a different and exciting experience for the audience. Although this may be subjective to each individual as it relates to varied tastes.

As previously reviewed, this research only focuses on blackwashing in film adaptations, as for things outside of this, we ignore it. So, things related to changes that have nothing to do

with or are not influenced by blackwashing are completely ruled out. This needs to be emphasized due to the difficulty in understanding whether the changes in the hypertext are due to 'skin color changes' or not. On the other hand, in relation to the palimpsest theory by Genette (1997), although Genette has introduced three types of transformation in an adaptation work, namely formal transformation, narrative transformation and quantitative transformation. We only use quantitative transformation because it has a structured sequence of measurements related to subtraction and addition.

The method we used to determine retroactive continuity is as follows:

Table 2

Quantitative Transformation as 'Measuring Tool' of Retroactive Continuity

Reduction (-)	Retroactive Continuity	Augmentation (+)
Concision	Reinterpretation	Expansion
Condensation	Reinscription	Amplification
Excision	Revision	Extension

The method for reading the Table 2 involves first looking at the reduction and augmentation sides to determine the type of retcon. A minus sign (-) indicates a reduction, while a plus sign (+) indicates an addition, making it easier for the reader to understand the content of the table. The meeting point or result of both is the middle column, which represents the type of retroactive continuity. If there is a discrepancy between the findings and the table guide, the most prevalent tendency among the findings is taken in this case.

The retroactive continuity proposed by Friedenthal (2017) is included as a newcomer classification in the grouping of adaptation works. In this research, the theory is corroborated by the grand theory of adaptation proposed by Genette (1997), especially in Quantitative Transformation which is divided into reduction and augmentation as in the table above. The connection is assessed by the way retcon sees a form of adaptation based on the acceptance of the form of adaptation and the few-extreme changes in adaptation that occur. However, these connections do not always find equal results, so there is an imbalance in determining the type of retcon that occurs in adaptation works. Determining based on the more dominant tendency can be an approach to solve the problem. In addition, strengthening and connecting with other theories, such as the theory of narrative and formal transformation by Genette (1997), can be a consideration in determining the retcon of adaptation works.

Blackwashing in this study also does not show a certain type of retroactive continuity

or transformation. Blackwashing that occurs often involves the main character to show the differences that occur. However, these changes do not significantly affect the main story or narrative of the adaptation. Adaptations with blackwashing only have certain changes, such as attitudes, additional side settings, or ways of communicating. The results of this study prove the existence of blackwashing in adaptations as an addition and influence of the growing popular culture.

CONCLUSION

The research delves into the concept of blackwashing in film adaptations, emphasizing the portrayal of characters based on race and the impact of these changes on the overall narrative. By analyzing various adaptations and categorizing the types of changes through retroactive continuity, the study sheds light on how adaptations can influence cultural perceptions and representations. There are three types of retroactive continuity according to Friedenthal (2017), namely *Reinterpretation*, *Reinscription* and *Revision*. The importance of understanding these adaptations in shaping diversity and inclusivity in storytelling is underscored, along with the intersection of retroactive continuity and quantitative transformation as a measuring tool. Ultimately, the study underscores the significance of blackwashing in popular culture movies and its role in promoting more diverse and inclusive narratives. However, the study is limited by its focus on a specific set of films, which may not fully represent the broader scope of blackwashing in popular culture.

Future research should expand the analysis to include a wider range of genres, cultural contexts, and media formats, such as television and streaming platforms. Additionally, exploring audience reactions and the broader societal impact of blackwashing could provide further insights into its role in reshaping narratives and promoting social change.

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