From Pages of Literature to the Frames of Comics: Examples of Edgar Allan Poe and George Orwell

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Abstract: Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, comics have increasingly asserted themselves as a significant form of contemporary cultural expression. No longer regarded merely as a subordinate or entertainment-oriented genre, comics and graphic novels have developed distinct aesthetic strategies and interpretive frameworks, establishing themselves as autonomous artistic media. This transformation is particularly evident in adaptations of canonical literary works, where textual and visual translation generates new aesthetic configurations that both depend on and depart from their sources.

This article examines selected adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, analysing the dynamics between fidelity and creative transformation. Drawing on Gérard Genette's theory of intertextuality and hypertextuality, as well as contemporary comics studies, the study investigates the role of the literary source text, the selection and reconfiguration of plot elements, the visual concretisation of metaphor, the construction of narrative space and character, and the emergence of new semantic layers within the comic medium. Particular attention is paid to the tension between adaptation as reinterpretation and adaptation as aesthetic equivalence. The analysis demonstrates that while some adaptations function primarily as illustrative or abridged versions of literary originals, others transcend their models and operate as independent works of art. In the context of a broader cultural shift from logocentrism to pictocentrism, comics should therefore be approached not merely as derivative forms but as participants in a distinct interpretive discourse.

Keywords: E. A. Poe; G. Orwell; Comics; Graphic Novel; Adaptation; Intertextuality / Hypertextuality; Pictocentrism; Visual Narrative / Intermediality

Adaptation of Literature to Other Fields of Art

The adaptation of literature into other artistic media has long been a subject of scholarly inquiry, approached from multiple methodological perspectives. Within the research tradition, scholars have examined the phenomena of quotation, travesty, and pastiche, elucidating both the motives behind and the techniques involved in such transformations (Genette 1982). The adaptation of literary elements into theater, film, and other performative media has also been extensively analyzed, revealing the interplay between textual fidelity and creative reinterpretation (Baetens and Frey 2015). More recently, attention has turned to the migration of literary characteristics into emergent media, particularly digital environments such as video games, highlighting the continuing evolution of narrative forms in technologically mediated contexts (Chute 2017). Among these forms, comics and graphic novels constitute a compelling site for adaptation studies, providing a hybrid space in which textual and visual semiotics intersect.

For the purposes of this study, I adopt an intertextual approach inspired by Gérard Genette (1982) alongside insights from contemporary comics scholarship, including the works of Jan Baetens and Hugo Frey (2015) and Hillary Chute (2017). As a scholar operating within the Polish academic context, I also draw upon the contributions of Jerzy Szyłak (1999; 2000; 2016) and Wojciech Birek (2009; 2014), whose research represents the most significant Polish perspectives on comics studies. It should be noted that the incorporation of diverse theoretical frameworks introduces a degree of arbitrariness in my terminological usage and interpretative stance; nevertheless, this approach reflects the ongoing scholarly debate concerning the autonomy of comics as a medium.

A central point of contention in comics scholarship concerns the extent to which graphic and textual elements should be analyzed independently versus in conjunction with literary traditions. Proponents of the former position emphasize the autonomy of comics as works of art, with distinct historical roots (extending from prehistoric rock paintings), unique expressive techniques (graphic panels, text strips), and an independent interpretive discourse (Sabin 1996; Lopes 2009). Conversely,

advocates of the latter perspective argue that comics are fundamentally interdependent, drawing upon literary achievements and the visual language of painting, a claim substantiated by the inherently heterogeneous interplay of text and image within the medium (McCloud 1993; McCloud 2006). In the following analysis, I align with the latter understanding, focusing on the adaptation of classic literary works into the comic form, specifically examining examples from the oeuvres of Edgar Allan Poe and George Orwell to illustrate the processes and strategies involved in such transpositions.

Without entering into detailed terminological debates, my primary focus lies on the phenomenon of transforming literary artistic expression into multimedia forms, particularly comic books and graphic novels. Within this process, one can observe clear instances of intertextuality, wherein a text is present within another text, manifesting through quotation, allusion, or structural reference (Genette 1982). Equally notable are examples of metatextuality, in which one artistic medium comment upon or reflects the conventions of another, producing a dialogue between forms (Genette 1982). These phenomena, long examined in literary studies, are here explored through two illustrative examples from the world of comics, providing a framework to analyze how discrete elements of literary expression—such as narrative, characterisation, temporality, spatiality, and ethical or aesthetic values—are transposed into the visual-verbal language of sequential art.

A detailed examination of these cases enables a critical evaluation of the adaptations in question, including considerations of authenticity, fidelity, and creative reinterpretation. To what extent are these adaptations mechanical and reproducible, versus original, inventive, and intentionally "unfaithful" to the source material? What impact does a given adaptation exert on the perceived status of the original literature, and conversely, how does it contribute to the cultural and aesthetic legitimacy of comics as an autonomous art form? My discussion focuses on the most salient aspects of comic book adaptation, particularly the transference of narrative structures, character construction, and the temporal-spatial organization of literary worlds into the semiotic frameworks of comics. This analysis is not intended to assert the superiority of literary texts over comics; rather, it highlights cultural and aesthetic developments in Western artistic practice since the mid-twentieth century,

reflecting a marked shift from a historically dominant logocentrism toward what has been termed pictocentrism (Mitchell 1994).

Entertainment Comic: *The Fall of the House of Usher* by Edgar Allan Poe

Among the multiple motivations underlying the production of comic books, one of the most salient is the deliberate creation of a work that is simultaneously compelling in its textual and visual dimensions. Here, "attractiveness" encompasses simplicity of artistic expression, accessibility to a broad readership, and the capacity to evoke aesthetic and emotional engagement. Comic books derive value not solely from narrative content but from the pleasure of reading, facilitated by the legibility of the text and the clarity and compositional effectiveness of the visual design, as orchestrated by authors and graphic artists (Szyłak 2000). Rather than experimenting with formal or avant-garde techniques intended to render their work idiosyncratic or esoteric, creators typically prioritize the communicative efficacy of the textual and visual narrative, ensuring that both elements effectively capture and sustain the reader's attention.

This orientation toward pleasure and accessibility is particularly evident in adaptations of literary works into the multimodal language of comics. Comic renditions of Greek myths or Western European literary classics, for instance, are primarily designed to prepare readers for engagement with the original texts rather than to serve as comprehensive substitutes for them. Within the simplified, schematized narrative and pictorial framework presented by comic book authors, the emphasis is on enjoyment and entertainment rather than philosophical, ideological, or complex artistic interpretation. Readers seeking to explore the intricate artistic strategies, ideological frameworks, or aesthetic depth of the source material must consult the original literary work in its verbal medium. In this sense, entertainment-oriented comics fulfill functional and cultural roles distinct from those of literature, providing aesthetic gratification and narrative accessibility without the expectation of exhaustive literary analysis (Jones Jr. 2011).

Let us consider a representative example. In 2023, the comic book *La Maison Usher*, with text by Jean Dufaux and artwork by Jaime Calderon, was published in French, drawing upon Edgar

Allan Poe's seminal horror narrative *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Dufaux and Calderon 2023). The English original underwent significant compositional modifications, not primarily due to translation issues, but in order to adapt the story to the multimodal conventions of the comic book medium. Jean Dufaux, a prominent Belgian scriptwriter and journalist with extensive experience in historical and horror-themed comic series, employed a strategy of "unfaithful" adaptation characterized by intertextual play and thematic reconfiguration. Rather than incorporating direct quotations from Poe's text, Dufaux constructs a narrative thematically aligned with the original story. The characters—including the narrator Damon, his cousin Roderick Usher, and Roderick's sister Madeline—are present, as is the eponymous decaying mansion, which sustains the gothic atmosphere. However, the textual elements are wholly reinterpreted, demonstrating the liberties afforded by the comic form to reshape classical literature for visual and sequential storytelling.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the narrative elements derived from Poe's original work are extensively transformed in the comic book to fulfill aesthetic and dramaturgical functions. A striking example of this transformation is evident in the altered characterization and backstory of the narrator. In Dufaux's adaptation, the narrator emerges as a young card player named Damon, residing in Baltimore and emotionally entangled with a prostitute named Nina. Initially, Damon's journey to the Usher mansion appears motivated by the need to flee from criminals to whom he owes gambling debts. However, the narrative ultimately reveals that the carriage conveying him to the Usher residence was orchestrated by Madeline Usher herself, seeking refuge from her malevolent brother by summoning her cousin. Consequently, this rendition constructs a markedly different biography for the narrator than the one delineated in Poe's original, illustrating the liberties afforded by the comic book medium and the creative strategies employed in what Genette (1982) would term a "transformative" intertextual adaptation.

The plot of *La Maison Usher* exhibits significant narrative innovations, particularly in terms of character development and plot construction, which foreground motifs of betrayal absent in Poe's original work. The adaptation introduces secondary figures drawn from the urban underworld,

including various card players and criminals with whom the protagonist maintains connections, such as King Leon and Black Snake. Additionally, Dufaux and Calderon incorporate episodic characters in the form of reanimated corpses, appearing in the final sequences and intensifying the gothic atmosphere of decay and destruction. Perhaps the most striking narrative modification—transcending pastiche or parody—is the inclusion of Edgar Allan Poe himself as a character. Rendered with facial features recognizable from historical iconography, Poe functions simultaneously as a participant in the narrative and as a meta-observer, recording the events that will ultimately comprise *The Fall of the House of Usher*. This introduces a paratextual dimension to the adaptation, as the comic reflects upon the act of literary creation and the specific artistic choices employed in narrativizing the story (Genette 1982).

Viewed holistically, the narrative of *La Maison Usher* shifts focus from the collapse of the Usher family to the adventures of a young card player, Damon, who, while fleeing urban criminals, arrives at the home of his cousin Roderick Usher and learns of Madeline Usher's death. As he comforts Roderick, he observes the latter's descent into madness and uncovers the sinister nature of his obsessive attachment to his sister. Damon is ultimately powerless to confront or punish Roderick, and the spectral appearance of Madeline precipitates her brother's demise, culminating in the literal collapse of the Usher mansion. These narrative transformations indicate that Dufaux's adaptation operates less as a faithful literary transcription than as a standalone story, resembling a crime-thriller designed to satisfy contemporary readers' appetite for suspense and excitement (Dufaux and Calderon 2023; Chute 2017).

This storyline is concretized through the artistic interpretation of Spanish illustrator Jaime Calderón, who employs a convention of realism in rendering the comic. The characters are depicted with meticulous attention to photographic accuracy, encompassing bodies, faces, gestures, and expressions. They are situated within backgrounds of natural or urban landscapes, maintaining optical perspective, proportionality, and compositional harmony. Calderón's panels are predominantly colorful, rendered in warm tones, and arranged chronologically to reflect the narrative sequence of

events. The characters are most often presented in what is referred to as an "American shot," which allows for a balanced depiction of figures and their surroundings. Calderón employs varied angles, privileging expressive close-ups of faces while reserving wide landscape perspectives and occasional grotesque distortions for narrative emphasis. The comic as a whole is structured cinematically, with a multi-threaded narrative that organizes sequential events into thematic clusters subordinate to Dufaux's plot (Calderón and Dufaux 2023; Chute 2017).

The vibrancy of the frames, the rapid pacing of events, the introduction of new characters—including Edgar Allan Poe himself, figures of criminals, and reanimated corpses—and the narrative perspective centered on the young protagonist all contribute to a reinterpretation that significantly alters the semantics of the original text. The adaptation diverts from the melancholic atmosphere and decayed elegance characteristic of Poe's story, substituting instead an adventure-thriller mode dominated by a young, romanticized protagonist. Psychological depth and metaphysical resonance are largely absent, replaced by a sequence of puzzles and narrative events, most of which are resolved, leaving the aura of mystery that Poe meticulously cultivated largely unexplored (Dufaux and Calderón 2023).

Graphic Novel and Literary Adaptation: George Orwell's *1984*

The history of comics may be divided into several distinct stages of formal and thematic development. Following the period in which comics consolidated into book-length publications of several dozen pages, the medium underwent significant aesthetic and narrative transformations (Eisner 1985; Szyłak 2016). Subject matter gradually shifted away from the dominance of superheroes toward protagonists who more often embodied vulnerability than extraordinary power. By the end of the twentieth century, a substantial body of such works had emerged, prompting critics and publishers to distinguish them from mainstream entertainment comics through the designation "graphic novel." The term *comic book* thus remained associated primarily with shorter, serial publications oriented toward entertainment and frequently featuring characters endowed with supernatural abilities. In contrast, the term *graphic novel* came to denote works aspiring to artistic ambition, formal

experimentation, and thematic complexity (Baetens and Frey 2015; Konefał 2015). As graphic novels gained visibility within the literary marketplace, art critics increasingly began to treat them as serious cultural artifacts. Characters ceased to function merely as eccentric or exaggerated figures, and plots were no longer confined to formulaic structures typical of genre entertainment.

An example of a graphic novel characterized by restraint and relative fidelity to its literary precursor is *1984: The Graphic Novel*, illustrated and adapted by Fido Nesti and published in 2020, based on George Orwell's dystopian classic *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (Orwell; Nesti 2020). This adaptation demonstrates a pronounced respect for the original narrative structure and ideological framework. While the text necessarily undergoes substantial abridgment in order to condense Orwell's extensive novel into a 214-page illustrated volume, the central thematic and political premises remain intact. The omissions primarily concern descriptive and discursive passages, allowing the visual medium to assume part of the burden of world-building and atmospheric construction. Importantly, the narrative architecture—divided into three parts in the original novel—is preserved in the graphic adaptation.

Although psychological introspection and extended philosophical reflections—particularly those concerning Newspeak and linguistic determinism—are significantly reduced, the adaptation does not fundamentally alter Orwell's central critique of totalitarianism. Instead, it foregrounds the dramatic dimension of individual existence within a surveillance state, translating ideological oppression into striking visual imagery. Notably, the adaptation retains an extended excerpt from the subversive book attributed to Emmanuel Goldstein, an uncommon strategy within graphic storytelling, which typically avoids lengthy textual insertions. This decision signals a marked fidelity to the literary source and suggests that the adaptation seeks not to reinterpret or subvert Orwell's work but to provide a visual equivalent of it. In this sense, the graphic novel aspires less to creative transformation than to interpretative translation, privileging equivalence over innovation.

The most important ideological factors of George Orwell's novel – the anonymity of man in the civilisation of the past, the negative aspects of the existence of the state, the attempt to rebel against

the apparatus of oppression, and the final defeat of the main character – remain intact in Brownell and Nesti's graphic novel. This effect was achieved more quickly than in the original literary work, but just as vividly. From a literary point of view, Brownell and Nesti's graphic novel is therefore a faithful, authentic and successful adaptation.

The illustrator of *1984: The Graphic Novel*, Fido Nesti, likewise demonstrates a pronounced fidelity to Orwell's literary vision, particularly in the visual construction of principal characters—Winston Smith, Julia—and in the representation of the interiors and industrial landscapes of dystopian London (Orwell; Nesti 2020). Nesti adopts a restrained, predominantly monochromatic palette. The pervasive darkness and muted tonal range correspond closely to the pessimistic and oppressive atmosphere of Orwell's narrative. The chromatic austerity reinforces the emotional climate of surveillance, alienation, and existential confinement that defines the novel's world.

Moreover, the compositional density of the pages contributes significantly to the adaptation's interpretative coherence. The accumulation of numerous small panels—sometimes exceeding a dozen per page—produces a visual impression of spatial compression. This formal strategy evokes the claustrophobic conditions in which the characters exist, visually mirroring the novel's depiction of psychological and social suffocation. Nesti employs expansive landscape perspectives sparingly; when distant horizons do appear, they are typically associated with moments of dream, memory, or romantic intimacy. Such visual openings correspond closely to Orwell's compositional contrasts between the mechanized rigidity of totalitarian reality and fleeting experiences of subjective interiority. The graphic novel thus reproduces, through visual means, Orwell's structural opposition between confinement and imagined freedom.

Nesti also maintains consistency in the physiognomic construction of characters. Faces are rendered with realistic precision and convey a broad spectrum of emotional states. The artist frequently employs strong directional lighting, which sharpens facial contours and casts elongated, almost surreal shadows. Yet this chiaroscuro technique does not produce grotesque distortion; rather, it intensifies psychological tension while preserving realism. Most scenes are bathed in the cold glow

of artificial illumination, visually reinforcing the absence of natural light that characterizes Orwell's dystopian universe. Sunlight and moonlight—symbols traditionally associated with renewal or transcendence—remain largely inaccessible to both the literary and graphic protagonists.

Taken together, these artistic decisions suggest that the adaptation does not merely condense Orwell's narrative but seeks to translate its aesthetic and ideological architecture into visual form. Unlike the more transformative strategy observed in *La Maison Usher*, Nesti's work operates within a paradigm of visual equivalence, striving for fidelity not only to plot but also to atmosphere, symbolism, and structural composition.

The costuming of the characters in *1984: The Graphic Novel* is likewise of interpretative significance. The garments evoke, on the one hand, the utilitarian austerity of workers' uniforms and, on the other, the standardized attire historically associated with members of twentieth-century communist regimes. This visual strategy reinforces the novel's emphasis on collectivism, conformity, and the erasure of individuality. Particularly striking is the representation of Big Brother. Although rendered with stylistic originality, the image inevitably recalls the iconography of totalitarian leaders such as Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin. Nesti deliberately avoids visual diversification in his portrayal of this figure. Instead, he reproduces a single, standardized likeness, repeatedly disseminated through newspapers, posters, and, most prominently, the omnipresent telescreens. The relentless multiplication of this face—characterized by its penetrating gaze and severe moustache—intensifies the atmosphere of surveillance, persecution, and ideological domination. Through this formal decision, the illustrator concretizes Orwell's literary construction of symbolic authority, proposing a visual equivalent that neither contradicts nor reinterprets the novel's ideological premises (Orwell; Nesti 2020).

The combined textual and graphic strategies employed in Brownell and Nesti's adaptation exemplify a model of equivalence between source text and visual reinterpretation. The script's selective abridgement and the artist's restrained aesthetic choices do not fundamentally alter the semantic core of Orwell's dystopia. Rather than reshaping or problematizing the original, the

adaptation preserves its philosophical and political thrust while translating it into a distinct visual-verbal language. In this respect, the graphic novel demonstrates that adaptation need not entail semantic displacement or ideological revision. Instead, it may function as a parallel artistic articulation—one that maintains the integrity of the literary original while simultaneously inaugurating a new mode of aesthetic experience. The result is not a reinterpretation that competes with the source text, but a reconfiguration that confirms its continuing cultural resonance within a different medium.

The Expansion of Comics in the Art Market

In the contemporary circulation of cultural goods and within the broader context of the commercialization of art, even the canonical achievements of literature increasingly assume the status of commodities. This transformation is not merely the consequence of global economic mechanisms but also a symptom of deeper civilizational shifts in modes of production, distribution, and reception. Literature, like any human creation, participates in systems of reproduction and consumption, a process already diagnosed by Walter Benjamin in the 1930s in his reflections on mechanical reproduction and the changing aura of the artwork (Benjamin 1980). For literary works to function effectively within mass cultural circulation, they must be accessible, widely distributed, strategically promoted, and accompanied by critical commentary that frames their reception. Consequently, representatives of the literary field—publishers, institutions, critics, and authors—have established national and international festivals, awards, and promotional structures designed to sustain literature's cultural presence and stimulate its continued production.

At the same time, one may observe an intensified intermedial dynamic in which literary works increasingly enter into relationships with other artistic domains. Canonical texts become reference points and narrative resources for music, visual arts, theatre, cinema, video games, and comics. Through repeated adaptation and reinterpretation, these works often undergo such extensive formal and semantic transformations that the resulting artifact bears only partial resemblance to its source. In such cases, the adapted work acquires autonomy and demands analytical tools distinct from those

traditionally applied to literature. Comics provide a particularly illuminating example of this phenomenon, as they combine verbal and visual codes within a unified semiotic system and thereby reconfigure the literary material they appropriate (Beaty 2013).

Focusing specifically on the aesthetic relationship between literature and comics, the mutual interactions between these two modes of artistic expression—and the adaptation techniques that structure them—have long attracted scholarly attention. Adaptation studies, intertextual theory, and comics scholarship alike have examined the mechanisms by which narrative, character, temporality, and ideological content migrate from the literary page to the sequential panel, revealing both tensions and creative possibilities inherent in such transfers. Juliane Blank, for example, wrote about this in the following words:

> There is no denying that literary adaptations in comics represent something of a rend. This development is largely linked to the "hype" surrounding comics under the banner of the graphic novel term, from which literary adaptation in comics has benefited in several respects. In the last ten years, an international market for literary adaptations in comics has increasingly established itself. Almost every comic publisher also serves this genre, some organize literary adaptations in their own publication series. In 2007, a publishing house was founded in England that initially specialized exclusively in comic book adaptations. A further confirmation of the "hype" can be seen in the fact that publishers who have not yet published any comics also include literary adaptations in comics in their range – obviously in the hope of being able to benefit both financially and improve their image from a result (Blank 2015, 15).

The literary and sociological phenomenon outlined above warrants further clarification, as a discernible pattern emerges within contemporary adaptation practices. On the one hand, there exists a pronounced tendency to adapt literature for the broad audience of popular or mass culture. In such cases, adapters employ simplified graphic strategies, reduce narrative complexity, and substantially abridge the original text in order to enhance accessibility and marketability. The resulting works

prioritize clarity, pace, and visual immediacy over interpretative depth. On the other hand, a contrasting current within comics and graphic novel production seeks not simplification but dialogue. These adapters approach literature as a space for intertextual engagement, metatextual commentary, and formal experimentation. Rather than merely translating the original into visual form, they transform the traditional literary medium into a new verbal-visual sign system, striving for originality—even at the cost of overt divergence from the adapted source.

An examination of the evolving perception of comics and graphic novels reveals that this dynamic has historical precedents. The trend initiated by Andy Warhol, a central figure of pop art, remains particularly instructive. Warhol's comic-style portraits of emblematic figures of Western intellectual history—such as Sigmund Freud, Karl Marx, and Franz Kafka—visually relocated representatives of "high" culture into the aesthetic domain of mass reproduction and consumer circulation (Goldstein 2000). Through vibrant graphic stylization, canonical figures became accessible within the logic of popular culture, illustrating the permeability of boundaries between elite and mass artistic forms. Warhol and his successors effectively demonstrated that the symbolic capital of canonical works could be repackaged for the consumer market without entirely relinquishing their cultural prestige.

This process extended beyond visual portraiture into broader textual and graphic adaptation practices. Religious, philosophical, and scientific works increasingly underwent transformation into comic book series, illustrated albums, and graphic novels (Jones Jr. 2011; Weiner 2012; Kalinowski 2021). In such adaptations, creators typically selected the most visually compelling episodes of the original works, condensing narrative structures into concentrated scenes and prioritizing dramatic turning points. Adaptation also necessitated decisions concerning narrative voice and stylistic strategy. While traditional comic books tend to privilege dynamic dialogue and action-driven sequences over extended descriptive passages, graphic novels frequently reintroduce more sustained narrator-driven commentary, thereby negotiating between literary discursiveness and visual storytelling. Despite this effort at balance, the resulting works often diverge substantially from their

literary prototypes in aesthetic configuration. The transformation of medium inevitably produces a shift in expressive logic: what was once articulated through linguistic complexity becomes reorganized within a multimodal framework governed by sequential imagery, panel rhythm, and visual symbolism.

Beyond the literary dimension of adaptation, the graphic component of comics constitutes an equally decisive factor in the transformation of canonical texts. Every creator of a comic book or graphic novel must determine a distinct artistic style through which the adapted narrative will be mediated. This stylistic decision manifests itself within individual panels, where conventions of realism, fantasy, expressionism, or grotesque deformation generate specific aesthetic and interpretative effects. The selected visual idiom may either facilitate a meaningful dialogue with the literary source or, conversely, distance the adaptation from it. In this sense, graphic style is not a neutral vehicle of representation but an interpretative act in itself. The illustrator must anticipate how scenes, atmospheres, and psychological tensions originally articulated through verbal means can be transposed into visual composition—through framing, perspective, colour palette, panel rhythm, and spatial arrangement—before the adaptation is materially realized.

In conclusion, the aesthetic properties of comics and graphic novels confirm their status as artistic forms grounded in a complex and multidimensional process of literary transformation. Adaptation in this medium is not a merely mechanical transfer of narrative content but a semiotic reconfiguration in which textual and visual codes intersect to produce new layers of meaning. Simultaneously, the commercialization of culture enables adapters of classical literature to attain public visibility and market recognition, contributing to the economic success of publishers while extending the circulation of canonical works. From a broader cultural perspective, the adaptation of literary classics into comics and graphic novels exemplifies the pictocentric orientation of contemporary society, in which visual modes of communication increasingly dominate over exclusively verbal forms (Mitchell 1994). Within this framework, comics and graphic novels evolve beyond the status of derivative adaptations and assert themselves as autonomous discursive

formations. It therefore becomes increasingly untenable to regard them solely as secondary to literature; rather, they should be recognized as constituting a distinct artistic and theoretical discourse within the contemporary cultural landscape.

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