



# The Relationship and Creativity between Literary Writing and Cinema

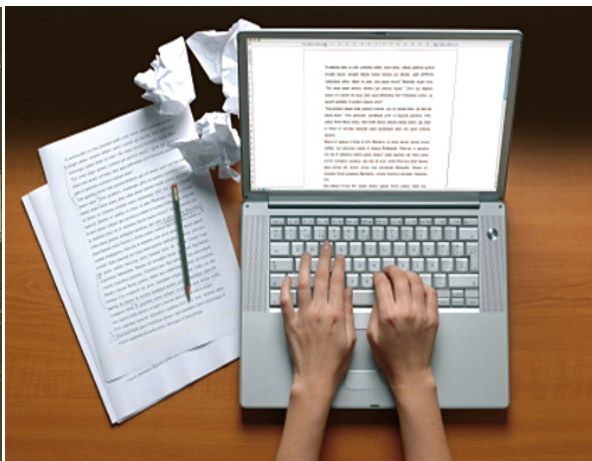
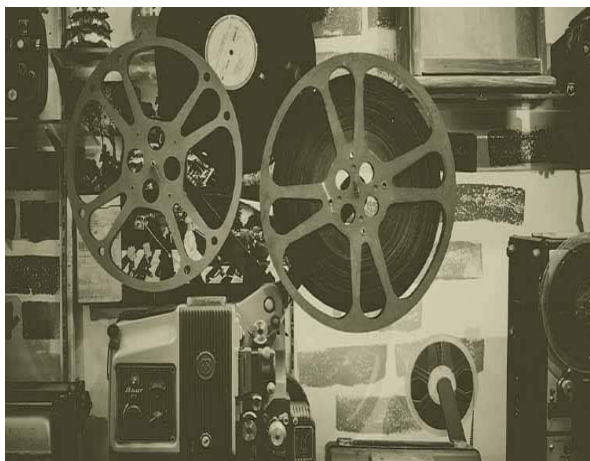
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## Abstract

Confirming the urgency of the problem identified in the title of this research article, first of all, we find here the relationship between literature and cinema which is marked by a kind of undeclared censorship. Depending on the time this distrust tends to more or less inhibit reflection on the interactions between the two arts. At a time when art is going through a crisis in terms of imagination and creativity, critics believe that literary texts can answer cinema's defense, while condemning cinema's lack of openness in works of fiction. However, some literary works present a fictional story that is difficult, or even unsuitable, to transfer to the screen. In this sense, we can sometimes see that the gap between text and script has become too wide. We will analyze in this article the similarities and spatio-temporal divergences between Tahar Benjelloun's novel *The Prayer of the Absent* and the film by filmmaker Hamid Bennani, which bears the same name, and who attempted to translate this novel to the screen. We conclude with reference to the results that the spatio-temporal structure of the novel remains elusive and thus a major obstacle with respect to cinema adaptation.

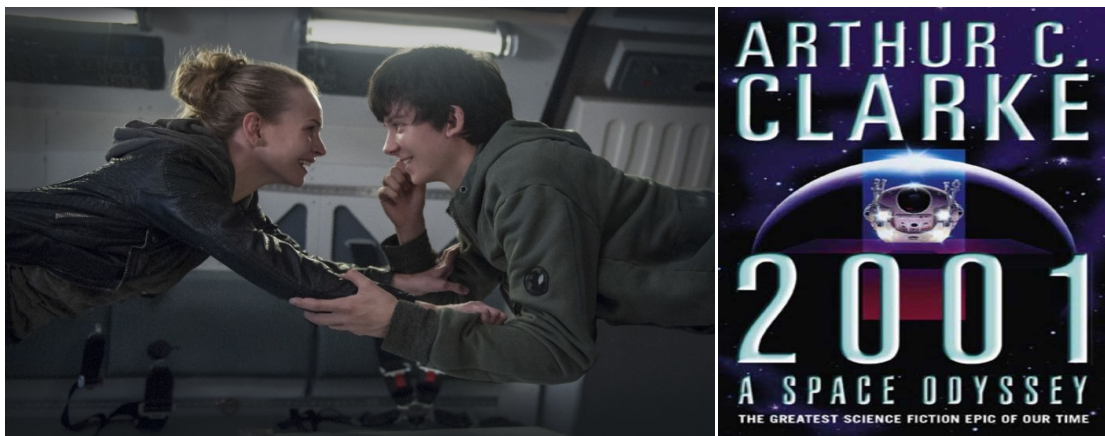
**Keywords:** literature and cinema, cinematography, maladjustment, complex, literature, creativity portraiture, screenplay, literary texts.



## The space between novel and film

### From labyrinthine streets to vast rural areas

In *Prayer of the Absent* by Tahar Ben Jalous, and in contrast to Bennani's film where the journey is linear and limited, the three main characters, Sindibad, Bobby and Yamna, travel throughout Morocco. However, if their travels seem limited to this one country, their journey is fragmented and presents a labyrinthine structure. The cities and villages visited are presented as follows: Fes, Le Sud, Meknes, Tomb of Moulay Idris, Khemisset, Tiznit, Sale, Casablanca, Marrakesh, Dour Neif, Agadir, Desert, Smara, Cheikh Tomb of Ma-Al – Aynāyan, etc. Yet, the journey is not as straightforward as it seems. Indeed, wandering characters start from a point, travel a path, reach a location, start again, but return to the starting point to start again, giving the impression of a confusion of locations. It happens.



### It is impossible to list in a contextual topographic diagram

However, beyond these places that can be identified on a topographic map, there are other imaginary villages that are impossible to list in a contextual topographic diagram, the Waiting Village being one of them. The route is inspired by a movement from the north to the south of Morocco. It may be the discovery of the self, in this movement within the borders of a single country, but it is also the loss of this self in a mysterious journey. The heroes wandering within the same boundaries create an allegory of the search for identity. But this discovery "disintegrates" into vagrancy and, on the contrary, produces a loss of identity.

The places of writing mentioned at the end of the novel, Tangier, Essaouira, Paris, reinforce this confusion that affects both the hero's and the author's path. The latter traces the path of Cheikh Ma-al-Aynayn, a monk who set off to explore southern Morocco in the late 19th century and who faced French colonialists in a desert guerrilla war in the heart of the Moroccan Sahara. Was.

As a result, the handling of space in *The Prayer of the Absent* by Tahar Ben Jalous is subject to a "spatial translation", which can be said to be as much a "spatial translation" as the labyrinthine streets of the city of Fez as a space urban. Chaotic routes at the level of large rural locations crossed during the journey.

On the other hand, "travel" as a frequently borrowed technique in film often presents locations in close-up shots that generally do not allow us to define the entire location. In this way the director ignores what Maurice Blanchot calls "Orphic space<sup>1</sup>" as the internal and imaginary space of the literary text, and is content to adapt to a more or less external space that remains homogeneous and divisible.

In this sense, "filmic spatiality" in Hamid Bennani's screenplay does not seem analogous to romantic spatiality in Tahar Ben Jaloun's work. This literary spatiality is specific and generally dedicated to the expression of detail. In this sense, Gerard Genette underlines:"(...) gives a representation of the extension" and it "is accomplished in the extension" <sup>2</sup>

Thus, the visualization of space in Bennani's film does not really allow us to follow the progression of a bookish spatiality whose limits seem inextricably labyrinthine, like Tahar's *The Prayer of the Absent*. Ben Jaloun.

Thus, faced with the virtual impossibility of translating to the screen the complex interior space of Tahar Benn's *The Absent Prayer*, the film's director Jaloun seems to have contented himself with writing only a fixed exterior space, the interpretation of which does not allow the efficiency and impact demanded by the novel. How to explain the confinement of the film's characters in a unique and linear space that does not allow the exploration of the real geographical landscape exposed by the work.



### **Copy of Maraboutscomplementary locality**

From Fez to Moulay Bouchaib, the protagonist's journey in Hamid Bennani's *The Prayer of the Absent* serves as a refinement on the spatiality of the initial itinerary set out in the novel.

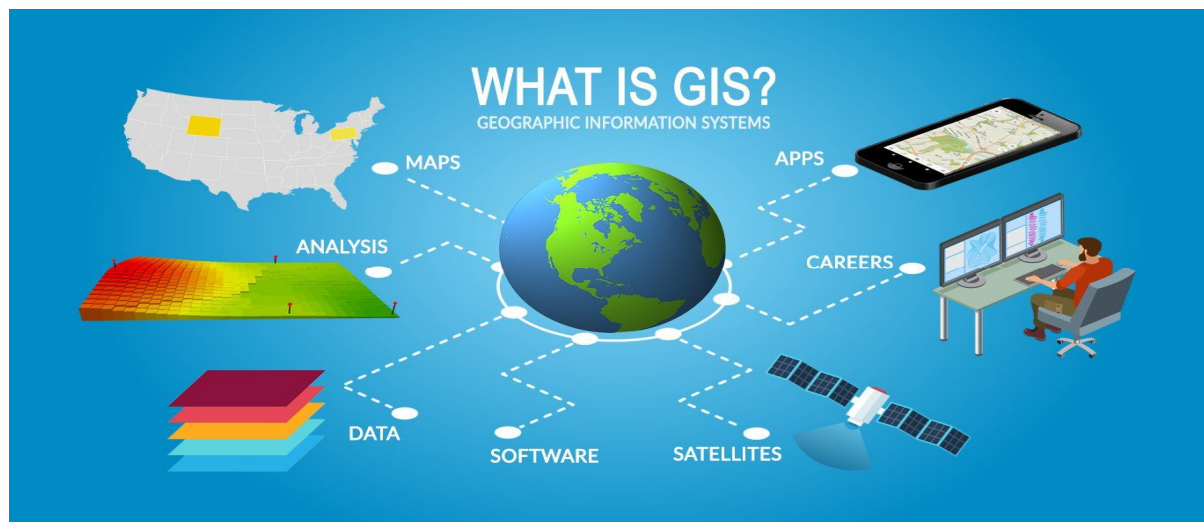
We see that the film somehow thwarted the journey not to the tomb of Sheikh Maa-al-Aynayn, but to the aforementioned marabout and the one in Azemmour, as if it wanted to free the wandering characters from a. The weight that weighs heavily on them, but also and above all to express a major interest in the maraboutic space. Therefore, in Bennani's film the spectacular location of Moulay Bouchaib is presented as something of a compensatory height on the level of locations. This is the most representative location, as can be seen from the tracking shot, which often calls for a composite shot. Thus, the tomb becomes a place of stability and refuge where wandering and wanderlust cease, giving rise to a healing and liberating trance.



## Several verbal incidents relating to Melabout as a geographical location

In this sense, several verbal incidents relating to Melabout as a geographical location, which reflect aplomb and balance, punctuate Bennani's film. However, these events are not diverse and boil down to a few action verbs where Samadhi is highlighted. For example, Yamana can be heard saying in minute 28 of the film:

“Take me to Moulay Bouchaib. This marabout calls me to him. He gave me revelations. Children will set the city on fire and will remain among those who died in the cemetery.



Or a little later, at minute 47' of the screenplay, Bobby offers Mokhtar, 'I know a pirate down south, he'll fix you up'.

The two extracts allow us to access the maraboutic space as a stable "leitmotif" in the face of the constant movement of the characters. As a result, and since the director gives the impression of not being able to define a chaotic space in the novel, the marabout helps to condense and centralize the mysterious space at this stage and therefore presents himself as a compensatory subject.

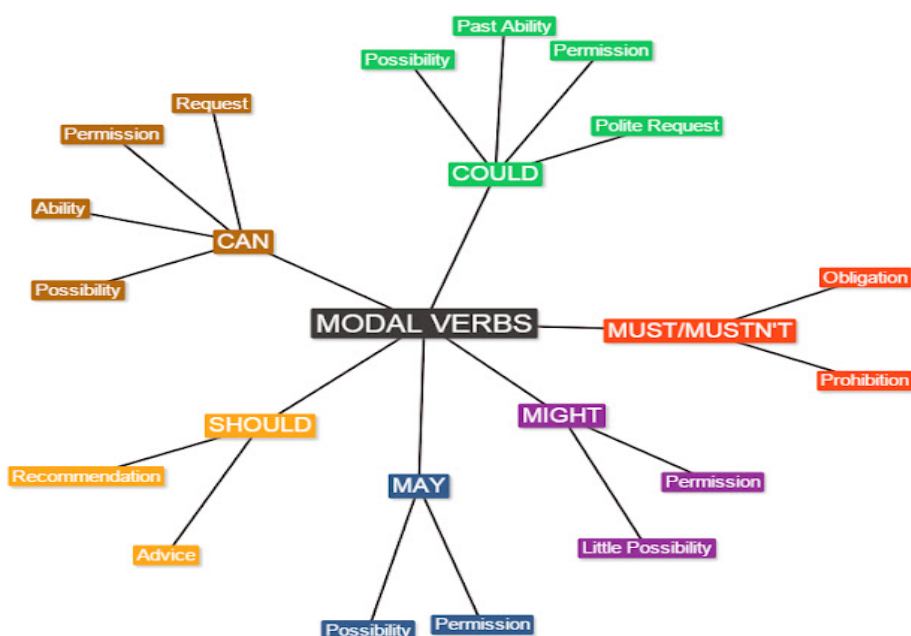
However, returning to The Prayer of the Absent by Tahar Ben Jaloun, we see that the maraboutic space is part of a movement that has become almost stagnant. The characters do

not stop and constantly move from one place to another. There are many verbs related to walking and running.

Characters sometimes seem to "go ahead" (PA-11), drop everything and follow (PA-55), "go south" (PA-57), sometimes in an abstract "Start looking" (PA-11), "to change, to sweat, to risk your well-being and to endure long periods of anesthesia" (PA-17). The choice of verbs reflects the tension between the certainty of the journey (south) on the one hand, and the uncertainty of the journey, and loss in vagabondage, on the other.

### Presence of neutral verbs such as go from neighborhood to neighborhood

We can also see the presence of neutral verbs such as go from neighborhood to neighborhood (PA-68), cross to a new city (PA-39), navigate (PA-20), run, reach, arrive, trace the outline. bastion (PA-41), follow, go, leave, transport, search, go, walk (PA-60), retreat, walk, etc. These actions show the dynamics of the characters.



Verbs like toss, get lost, get confused, turn over, snatch, run away, wander in the streets (PA-68), wander in the square (PDA-147), etc. They contain a significant axiomatic load that provides information about the characters' distress as well as their state of instability due to the forces of nature.

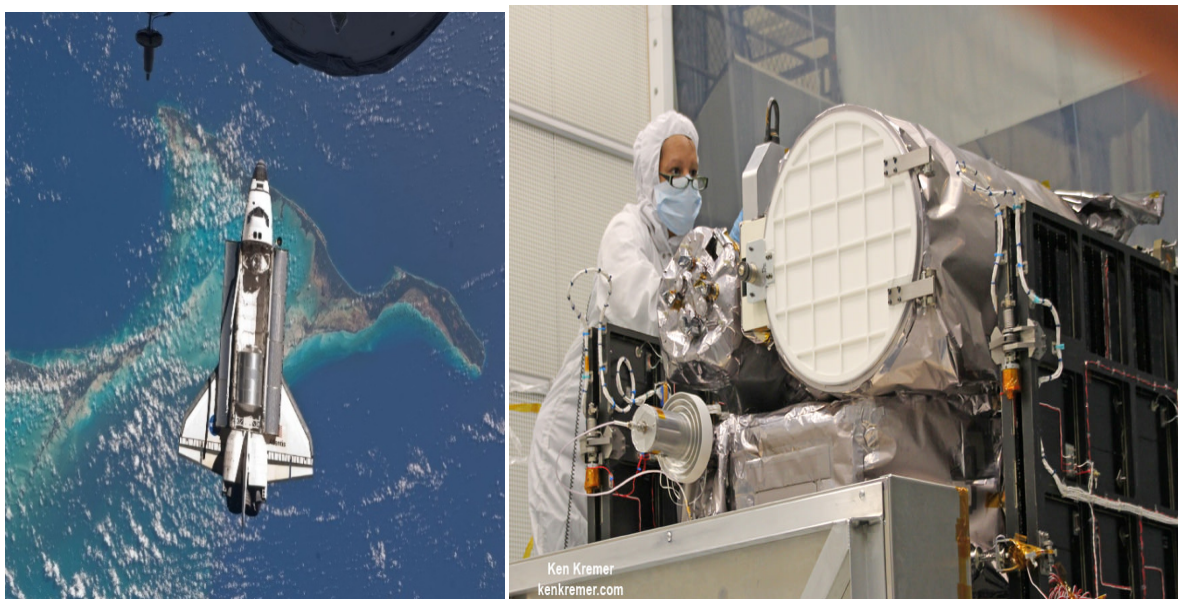
Other verbs of movement, such as walking around the city (PA-29), walking in silence (PA-29), wandering (PDA-29), running away (PDA-32), "sends us far away" (PA-15) . Taking (PDA-33), wandering (PA-89), hanging out and other verbs reflect a state of exhaustion, but also of loss of meaning and landmarks. The initial destination, the south, disappears and the sea voyage becomes a mobile and inaccessible point.

After the South - "They come from the North to take you to the South" (PA-38) Another comes to the South and from the South to the North, the characters come back, lost and more

unsure of somewhere else. Maraboutic spatiality is therefore expressed in the work for both real and chimerical, geographical and mental existence. It is an abstract destination, an allegory of death answering the mystery of creation as it is implied through the Word Source and Origin.

### **The maraboutic space in Bennani's film is presented as a compensation**

Thus, we can say that the maraboutic space in Bennani's film is presented as a compensation for the non-representation of the romantic spatiality of Tahar Ben Jaloun's *The Prayer of the Absent*, on screen in its entirety, in its complexity and Saw the chaotic form. So we can say that romantic temporality in *The Prayer of the Absent* by Tahar Ben Jaloun is a real challenge to be embodied in images. The presence of night in the film somehow attempts to translate the imaginary world upon which the diegetic universe of the source text is built.



However, many scenes, especially those that correspond to moments of Shaykh Maa-al-Aynayn's story for the benefit of the child, were sacrificed despite their importance especially when told at night. His presence in the film would have given the script greater readability and comprehensibility. Because at this stage the night presents itself in the novel as the source of inspiration for Yamna. Otherwise, between Yamna and the child These moments of encounter can be considered as a keystone in time, insofar as healing is also carried out through what is told to the child at night.

### **Conclusion**

Our work, carried out above on the comparison between the novel by Tahar Ben Jelloun and the film by Hamid Bennani, allowed us to note that even if the screenplay leads to a faithful adaptation of the novel, it still there is fewer differences, increasing significantly deviation from the spirit of the source work. It invites us to think about the film's reading of the novel, analyzing its key moments and ultimately trying to understand its reconstructed meaning.

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