

Marcus Nicholls | University of West London, UK

STUDENT PROFILE



Marcus Nicholls

Course

PhD in Media

Year completed

2018

Title of thesis

Examining Adaptation Studies in and through the Decadent aesthetics of J.-K. Huysmans' À Rebours

Marcus' thesis examined ideas from Decadent and Adaptation Studies within the arena of Huysmans' novel *À Rebours* as an extended case study. Examining this for its relevance to notions of adaptation, the research explored contested areas of contemporary Adaptation Studies, using this as an alternate approach to examining specific types of intertextuality (the resonances between different texts and media) within this quintessential Decadent text. In finding conceptual inherencies between Decadent themes such as artifice, decay, and curation and aspects of adaptation, whilst considering Huysmans' own preoccupations through the framework of his oeuvre and biography, an argument was proposed which considered the contested adaptations in *À Rebours* as a way in which we can narrativise the author's immersion in, and then rejection of, the aesthetic philosophies of the Decadent movement.

À Rebours is posited as both being, containing, and allegorising adaptation(s) which are defined by and a part of Decadent aesthetics. Ideas such as artifice, ornamentation, decay, curation, the *mise-en-scène*, the memory palace, entropy, and embodiment all contribute to exploring what adaptation means for the Decadent figures of author and character in *À Rebours*. The adaptations proposed attempted to diversify and add to the repository of potential forms of adaptation, as well as providing new conceptual models for particular versions and aspects of adaptation. The work examined adaptation practice prior to its critical formulation, and did so within a specific aesthetic and authorial context. It tested current and new methodologies for the study of adaptation, whilst expanding the terminology for how Adaptation Studies theorise adaptation, adaptations, their reception, and their significance for adapters.



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Supervisors:

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