poem as what it is: a re-writing of a male poetic genre which the poet tries and, I think, manages to subvert. But the poem goes beyond that: not only does it revise the male tradition, it also invites the male tradition to revise itself ("let him discover self"). T. S. Eliot famously suggested that each new author makes the preceding ones appear in a new light. Accordingly, the intertextual house must be pulled down and built again every time a new room is added. Women's room is one of those which remained locked for a long time as male-centred culture failed to appreciate woman's possibilities, both as character and author. Yet there is no reason why literature should be made to speak with *one* voice or as one *man*. As the previous three poems illustrate, women writers have appropriated well-established literary conventions in order to question, parody, or subvert the way in which femininity and gender relations have been constructed by them.

At a time in which the boundaries between centre and margins have begun to blur and when previously silenced voices can at last make themselves heard and declare to be, as in Clifton's poem, "somebody in a New Thing," this paper has only intended to be an invitation to rethink intertextuality in the light of a changing or, more accurately, an ever-changing tradition.

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FROM THE SCREEN TO THE PRINTED PAGE: ORSON SCOTT CARD'S NOVELIZATION OF JAMES CAMERON'S *THE ABYSS*

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The novels based on films can be divided into three types: new novels unrelated to the screenplay but based on characters created for a film, novelizations of original screenplays and novelizations of adapted screenplays. The novels based on the *Alien* trilogy and the two *Predator* films are a popular instance of the independent novel based on the characters rather than the original screenplay of a film. These novels are also an example of the strange ramifications of the publishing business, for they are jointly issued by the film studio 20th Century Fox and the comics publishing house Dark Horse, which also markets the comics based on the films. The novelizations of original screenplays have resulted in novels such as Graham Greene's *The Third Man*, based on his own script for Carol Reed's film, and Arthur C. Clarke's *2001*, based on the original screenplay that he wrote with Stanley Kubrick, but that was in fact remotely based on Clarke's own short story "The Sentinel".

The novelizations of adapted screenplays have resulted in products as singular as the tie-ins of Kenneth Branagh's *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* and Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram's Stoker's Dracula*. Cinema goers visiting the local book shop after the release of these two films were offered the choice of either buying Mary Shelley's and Bram Stoker's classic novels -in one of the several paperback editions already available or in an edition specially published to tie in with the film release- or the novelizations. Despite bearing the name of Shelley and Stoker in their very titles, these novelizations are the work of other writers -Leonore Fleischman and Fred Saberhagen, respectively. An uninformed book buyer may no doubt mistake one for the other, especially because both the novelizations and the novels' new editions are illustrated with stills from the films. A better informed book buyer may simply wonder who needs the novelization when the nineteenth-century literary original is still alive and available. From the point of view of the studios, the sales of the novelizations are more profitable than the sales of the original novel simply because studios can always participate in deals involving the former but not necessarily the latter. Yet, there are apparently other reasons to publish novelizations which have to do with the decreasing standards of functional literacy. Joy Chamberlain, editor of Voyager Books, a publishing house specialised in novelizations, argues that these solve the problems that a contemporary reader faces when reading the classics. "With the classic novels", Chamberlain notes, "there often seems to be a lack of syntax because it's from an older age" (Westbrook, 1996). According to her, the novelization "takes care" of the problem and turns the classic into

a reader-friendly book.

In the cases of *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, the films, other factors may account for the publication of the novelizations. These novels are venerated by many but they are not respectable classics in the same vein, as, for instance, Jane Austen's novels; in addition, they have been adapted so often and with so little respect that, paradoxically, not many people are aware of Shelley's and Stoker's existence. If somebody, a scholar or a fan, objected on their behalf, they could always be told that the novelization is not actually a re-writing of the original novel but of the screenplay of the adapted film. Quite a different situation arises when the original novelist is alive. The novelization can put the author of the original novel in a most embarrassing situation to judge from Philip K. Dick's predicament regarding the adaptation of his novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* as Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*. According to Gregg Rickman (1991) Dick, who initially loathed the screenplay by David Peoples and Hampton Fancher based on his novel, refused to grant permission for a novelization and planned, instead, to reissue his novel as the only way to show his disagreement with the yet unfilmed screenplay. To his surprise, the producers offered him another deal: writing himself a novelization based on People and Fancher's screenplay and on his own observations as a guest during the shooting of the film. Even though this would have grossed him about $400,000, Dick chose to write the novel that would be his last, *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*, for which he was only paid $7,500. When Scott's film was released, Dick's novel (which apparently Scott never read) was republished under the title of *Blade Runner* in a paperback edition still in print. This edition can be easily taken for a novelization: Dick's original title appears in much smaller type than the film's title on the cover and this is illustrated with artwork used for the film.

After Dick's death one of his short stories, "We will Remember It for you Wholesale", was filmed as *Total Recall* by Paul Verhoeven; the film was novelised by Piers Anthony, himself a popular science-fiction writer. Interestingly enough, a notice on the first page of the novelization indicates that it is based on the screenplay by Ronald Sushett, Dan O'Bannon and Gary Oldman, but Philip K. Dick and his short story are not even mentioned. Short stories are obviously too short to be issued as books to tie-in with the screen adaptation, which explains why the novelization of the film is preferred by the studios - and even by some original authors. Thus, cyberpunk cult writer William Gibson authorised Terry Bisson to novelise *Johnny Mmemonic*, the film based on Gibson's eponymous short story and directed by Robert Longo. A caption on the cover of Bisson's novelization announces that the book is based on Gibson's short story and Gibson's own screenplay for the film. So, why didn't Gibson himself complete the circle and novelize the screenplay based on his own short story? The answer is that writing the screenplay paid Gibson well, but there was no advantage in writing a novelization: it would force him to rewrite his own work and it would pay less than simply selling his rights over the story. Hence his delegating the job.

Novelizations are a very singular brand of writing. They are actually adaptations to the printed page not of the film but of its screenplay and quite often, novelisers write them without having seen the final version of the film. Novelizations are commissioned by the film studio as part of the advertising campaign of the film in question and are issued before its release to whet the appetite of prospective cinema-goers. Since they are based on the screenplay rather than the film, novelizations are usually perfunctory exercises in padding out what the screenplay's bare dialogue and directions suggest. As they are not expected to stand on their own as novels, novelisers rarely invest much effort in writing them; they are generally seen by writers as a piece of easy writing alien to their own artistic interests. Reputed novelists only accept writing novelizations because they are very well paid, though the money they are paid also covers the use of their popular names with a view to getting higher sales. However, the popular novelist commissioned to write the novelization may exceptionally transform it into much more than a mere retelling of the screenplay. One of these exceptions to the general rule is Orson Scott Card's remarkable novelization of James Cameron's *The Abyss* .

Cameron, himself the author of the screenplay for *The Abyss*, chose Orson Scott Card to novelise his work, first because he was deeply dissatisfied with the novelizations of his previous films, and second, because he thought that Card's interest in the human side of the characters, rather than in the hardware typical of most science-fiction novels, could help produce an artistically valuable novel instead of a mere novelization. For Cameron (1989: 351) "the book illuminates the film and vice versa, symbiotic partners in a single, multi-faceted dramatic work." Indeed, symbiosis is an accurate term to define the unusual method that Card followed to write his version of *The Abyss*. Instead of working from the screenplay, Card worked from the videotapes of the film as editing progressed, so that the updating of the manuscript was often necessary depending on Cameron's alterations of his own screenplay. Even more unusual is the fact that Card wrote the first three chapters, dealing with the childhood of the three main characters - Bud, Lindsey and Coffey - before filming began. The actors were asked to base their performances on the childhood background that Card had devised for their characters. Card's work was exceptional as novelizations go and Cameron was the first to praise it. So impressed was he by Card's novel, and seemingly so concerned that his film would not stand up to the book, that in his "Afterword" to the paperback edition he insists again and again on presenting the film as a collaboration between him and Card; in fact, Cameron's warm invitation to see the film seems to connote a thinly disguised preoccupation that his work may finally become an illustration for Card's *The Abyss*.

Card, who had so far refused to write any novelization, accepted the commission because he was interested in Cameron's films. He was cautious about the novelization, as in his opinion, screenplays offer enough material for a novelette but not for a full-length novel; also because he had misgivings about the freedom he would be allowed by the studio. However, the idea of collaboration strongly appealed to him and he finally took the challenge when Cameron agreed to let him have access to his research

and to the film stage, and ultimately because, in his own words, "I wanted to see if a novelization could be as valid a work of art as the film itself" (Card, 1989: 355). But if contact with Cameron, the producer Gail Anne Hurd and Van Ling (Cameron's researcher) was scant yet useful, contact with the actors seems to have been definitive, which adds another layer to the concept of artistic collaboration. "Every one of the actors", Card notes, "brought details of attitude and interpretation that opened up their characters to me, allowing me to make them more real in the novel than they would ever have been from the script alone" (ibid.: 359) So satisfactory was the collaboration with Cameron and his cast - despite the constant confrontations between director and actors - that Card even compared their work to that of Arthur C. Clarke and Stanley Kubrick for *2001,* to conclude that his novel is "not a novelization as the term is usually understood, but a novel that stands on its own and yet complements, illuminates and fulfils the movie" (ibid.: 361).

What neither Cameron nor Card discuss is the material that Card transferred from his own novels to the novelization. All the scenes of the film are in the book, but if the angelic alien monsters of the film are much richer characters in Card's version this is because they bear a striking resemblance to his own alien monsters in *Ender's Game*, his most popular novel. The aliens of *The Abyss*, who call themselves 'builders of memory' and are capable of sharing collectively their memories because they have no sense of individuality are almost the same ones that are unwittingly wiped out by the hero Ender in Card's novel and who later redeem him. Both Card's *The Abyss* and *Ender's Game* end with the aliens' promise - already fulfilled in the former, to be fulfilled in the latter - to teach humankind how to share our memories and thus put an end to our isolating individualism. The film and the novel of *The Abyss* are no doubt symbiotic especially as regards the visualisation of the monsters, since the film shows the very beautiful angelic aliens in a display of special effects that the novel cannot match; yet the novel makes sense of who they are and, indeed, of the whole plot. It might well be that Cameron and Card had found their work so congenial because they were working on the same mythical material or, alternatively, that an unacknowledged influence was what led Cameron to choose Card as his noveliser. In any case, Card's *The Abyss* is a more complete narrative than either Cameron's *The Abyss* or his own *Ender's Game.* Novel and film form a symbiotic continuum that cannot be easily dissected and which is actually completed with Steve Johnson's successful design for the alien monsters. This is an essential element in the film and hence in the visualisation of the novelization but, oddly enough, neither Cameron nor Card mention Johnson's work in their comments on the novelization.

The difference between an exceptional novelization like Card's and an average novelization can be best appreciated if we turn to Alan Dean Foster's novelization of another of James Cameron's films, *Aliens*. Foster's novelization is a correct yet uninspired retelling of the film just like his own novelizations of Ridley Scott's *Alien* and of David Fincher's *Alien*[3]. The paperback edition of Card's *The Abyss* runs to 349 pages and takes considerably longer to read than it takes to see the film, itself an

unusually long film, which means that by roughly the same price of the cinema ticket, the pleasure of enjoying the film's plot from a new angle can be prolonged for quite a long time. Foster's version of *Aliens*, which has only 240 pages even though *Aliens* is also a very long film, is far less well written and, since it adds little or nothing in depth of characterization nor in strategies of visualisation to the film, it can be read very quickly, especially if the reader is already familiar with the film. Naturally, if the reader is not familiar with *Aliens*, Foster's novelization serves well the same purpose of the film trailer, namely, anticipating the pleasure of seeing what both can only suggest. The novelization is necessarily more limited than the film as far as the actual visualisation of the scenes is concerned; much more so, if the film in question is a fantasy film such as *Aliens* or *The Abyss* in which special effects play such an important role. This is why the novelization is actually, like the trailer, an announcement of what the film will make you see. If read after seeing the film, Foster's novelization or any average novelization only serves the purpose of refreshing the film-goer's memory of the film, helping to fix the screen's flitting image.

In contrast, Card's novelization of *The Abyss* not only fixes the memory of Cameron's images but also adds layers of meaning to the original film. After reading Card's novel it is simply impossible to distinguish the characters of the film from the characters of the novel - they become a new type of fictional construction stranded between two media. And if the reader and film-goer is also familiar with Card's own novels this intermedia intertextuality is further enriched. Because it is exceptional, Card's and Cameron's *The Abyss* challenges us to enter into our critical vocabularies a new concept to complement original authorship, namely, intermedia symbiotic collaboration.

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