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Spectrality and its Translatability: Filmic Adaptation and the narrative of the Leftover Space

Translating a verbal text into a filmic one may serve the purpose to highlight and foreground the conditions in the original text by bringing to it more substantial experiences through spatial and temporal articulations. In this paper, the relationship between an original and its translation is explored as to demonstrate that the translation is a fusion of the ambiguous resemblance and the unstable dissemblance of the original through interconnecting forces operating behind the construction of images, manifesting, what Walter Benjamin terms, coextensivity between the image and the script, the visual and the verbal. This is particularly viable when applying on filmic translations of horror stories, especially ghost narratives, as the audience is seeing the not seen which is, borrowing from Sontag, “not a ghost, but a ‘ghost.’” The discussion also focuses on the connection between the Hong Kong as a city in the text and the visualized spaces of spectrality in the adaptation.