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(Re)creating *Benjamim*: Authorship Marked by Intermediality

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Abstract: This article analyzes the role of intermediality in Monique Gardenberg's film adaptation, *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (2003), based on Chico Buarque's novel, *Benjamim* (1995). By employing the theoretical framework of intermediality (Clüver 2007, 2011 and Rajewsky 2005, 2010), this study examines the intricate intersection of media elements, such as image, music, and photography, within the film to explore the interplay between the novel-to-film adaptation and its source-text. Additionally, the article discusses the introduction of a new gendered dimension in the film and proposes that intermediality defines Gardenberg's authorship of a new product, emphasizing the repetition with variation—a notion central to the pleasure and appeal of adaptations (Hutcheon 2006).

Keywords: Intermediality; Adaptation; Media Intersection; *Benjamim*, Monique Gardenberg; Chico Buarque.

(Re)creating *Benjamim*: Authorship Marked by Intermediality

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The film *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor*¹ directed by Monique Gardenberg in 2003 is an adaptation of Chico Buarque's second novel titled *Benjamim* published in 1995. During the discussions between the director and the author regarding the acquisition of the rights for the novel-to-film adaptation of *Benjamim* (1995), Buarque asked the filmmaker: "Why *Benjamim*"? and she replied: "Porque Benjamim sou eu", emphasizing her personal connection to the protagonist of the novel. She further explained that she has always perceived Benjamim as a figure embodying romance, beauty, and lightness, despite all the tragedy. Gardenberg states that "E para mim aquele encontro com Benjamim é um encontro com a minha irmã até o final" (DVD bonus feature 2003). This statement is informed by the personal experience of Gardenberg, who suffered the loss of her sister, Sylvia Gardenberg, in the year 1998. The theme of loss of a loved one and the enduring absence caused by this loss permeate the novel and also remain a significant focus in Gardenberg's film adaptation. Nevertheless, the film intensifies the themes of love, romanticism and politics as perceived through Gardenberg's interpretation of *Benjamim* (Buarque 1995) in comparison to the text source.

Additionally, the film introduces a new gendered dimension by accentuating the female presences, both within the narrative and within the broader context of the film industry. In relation to the latter, Shelley Cobb highlights that "feminist film theorists have shown that industrially, economically, and culturally female filmmakers have been excluded from this elite masculine club" (Cobb 2012, 111). Alongside Gardenberg's other feature films such as *Jenipapo* (1996), *Ó pai, ó* (2007) and the most recent *Paraíso Perdido* (2018), her novel-to-film adaptation *benjamim* (2003) contributes to the advancement of women in the Brazilian film industry. Regarding the prominent female presence in *benjamim* (2003), as will come to be further discussed, the film diverges from the novel's portrayal. Consequently, under Gardenberg's direction, *Benjamim* (1995) undergoes a transformation, and it becomes a new product, now titled *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (2003).

This article values the notion of adaptation as a text, present in the concept of adaptation as a subset of intertextuality (Leitch 2012) and transtextuality (Stam 2005, Hutcheon 2006) which has yielded various productive scholarly works that explore the comparisons of adaptations to their source-texts, moving beyond archaic discussion centered on hierarchies and fidelity (Stam 2005). Nevertheless, the present study aims to delve further into the realm of intermediality, considering the resulting work as an outcome of the intersection of media attributed not solely to its classification as a novel-to-film adaptation, but also to the multi-media nature of cinematic productions. Thus, the adaptation as a new text conveys its messages as one entity (the film) while simultaneously employing individual media elements, such as image, music, photography, and other components within the film. This amalgamation of media elements provides a fertile ground for prolific dialogues between novel-to-film adaptations and their source-text, rooted in the theoretical framework of intermediality.

¹ In this article the title *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* is intentionally referenced in lowercase, mirroring its typographical presentation on the DVD cover and film poster. Further analysis and discussion on the significance of this title will be provided in subsequent sections.

Drawing upon the scholarly insights provided by Claus Clüver (2007, 2011) and Irina Rajewsky's (2005, 2010) subcategories of intermediality, this study examines the intricate intersection of media to elucidate how the intermedial dimension of the film serves as a catalyst for Gardenberg's originality in *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (2003). As a result, I propose that intermediality defines Gardenberg's authorship of a new product and, by doing so, her film meets what Linda Hutcheon considers part of the pleasure and appeals of adaptation: a repetition with variation (Hutcheon 2006).

The Novel: *Benjamim*

Chico Buarque's novel *Benjamim* (1995) is named after its protagonist, who is the catalyst for two temporal dimensions (past and present) and for two significant female figures (Castana Beatriz and Ariela Masé). The narrative unfolds through a circular structure, as it starts and ends with the protagonist being shot to death: "in that instant Benjamim witnessed what he had expected: his existence was projected from beginning to end, like a motion picture, on the blindfold of his eyes" (3). Benjamim's veiled eyes become the screen upon which a film unfolds, oscillating between the young and old versions of himself, haunted by profound guilt for his perceived responsibility in the premature death of his first love, Castana Beatriz, during their youth. Moreover, Castana Beatriz extends into the future (the present of old Benjamim) through the character of Ariela Masé, who Benjamim believes to be Castana's daughter, thus transforming Ariela into an extension of his lost love.

The novel proposes a retrospective exploration of Benjamim Zambraia's life, including his endless love for Castana. During their youthful years, Castana's father's disapproval of her romantic involvement with Benjamim, compelled her to live abroad. It is there that she fell in love with Professor Douglas Saavedra Ribajó, with whom Castana engaged in passionate discussions about the political landscape of Latin America. The backdrop of the narrative is set against the military dictatorship period in Brazil. Although not the primary focus of the book, the country's political context provides a contextual background for the narrative. Upon their return to Brazil, the "gray-green two-story house" serves as Castana and Douglas's clandestine meeting place, where "Castana Beatriz and her lover perhaps made love with greater fervor as they plotted to overthrow the government" (Buarque 1995, 148-149). Tragically, this house also becomes the site of Castana and Douglas's demise. Benjamim feels responsible for their death because, driven by jealousy, he followed Castana to find out more about her encounters. Unbeknownst to him, his inadvertent pursuit guided the police to Castana and Douglas's secret location, culminating in their tragic fate. Throughout the novel, the recurring depiction of the "gray-green two-story house" holds particular significance, as the narrator employs the same words to describe Benjamim's future place of death, wherein he follows Ariela (a continuation of Castana) and walks into his own demise.

Ambiguity is at the core of the novel *Benjamim* (Buarque 1995) exemplified by various uncertainties. For instance, the true identity of Ariela as Castana's daughter remains shrouded in ambiguity. The possibility that the locations where Castana and Benjamim met their respective fates might be the same introduces further layers of uncertainty. Furthermore, the veracity of the love story depicted in the novel, as experienced by Benjamim, is subject to conjecture. Rooted in Benjamim's memories during his final moments of life, the entire narrative unfolds as a tapestry of events that may have transpired in their entirety, partially, or even only, in Benjamim's

imagination. Such ambiguity is skillfully constructed and imparted to the reader through the voice of the extra-diegetic narrator, who explicitly establishes, from the outset, that the narrative at hand encapsulates the life of Benjamim. This narrative, akin to a cinematic experience, is projected onto the darkness of his covered eyes in Benjamim's last seconds of life. This cinematic metaphor fosters creative interpretation, adaptation, and divergence from the source-text, thus engendering a malleability within Gardenberg's later filmic narrative.

Intermediality and *benjamim*: *Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003)

Among the camphor tablets in the urinal are two cigarette butts, actually two stumps of filters, one with a speckled yellow mouthpiece and the other with a white mouthpiece stained with lipstick.

(Buarque 1995, 6)

The process of adapting *Benjamim* (Buarque 1995) into a cinematic form is an intermedial encounter from its inception. The idea started in an informal conversation between Monique Gardenberg, Caetano Veloso, and Paula Lavigne in a pizza shop. In this conversation, Veloso vividly recounts the pivotal bathroom scene introduced in the epigraph above, and according to Gardenberg, “Quando Caetano me descreveu, com todo o requinte de detalhes e a compreensão cinematográfica que ele tem, a cena de deslanche da história, que se passa num banheiro, fiquei na maior excitação, comprei o livro no dia seguinte e devorei a obra do Chico, que considero brilhante” (Estadão 2002).

The cinematographic quality attributed by Gardenberg to Veloso's narration underscores the inherent interconnectedness between words and images. Both serve as forms of media, constituting fundamental communicational devices aimed at conveying messages (Clüver 2011). Veloso's words, in this context, not only describe a defining scene from the novel but also assume the form of a visual cue, arriving at the receiver—Gardenberg—as an image, a mediatic component that would later be transposed onto the film. Both the book and the film derive from this scene, which sets in motion Benjamim's tireless quest for a woman intrinsically associated with Castana. Consequently, the bathroom scene acts as the catalyst for a series of events that intertwine different temporal dimensions and episodes in Benjamim's life.

However, while the novel situates Benjamim at the center of the narrative, with his search constituting the underlying theme that introduces readers to the various characters, including Ariela, the film diverges in its treatment of the scene. Here, the bathroom scene serves to foreground Ariela, symbolized by the image of a lipstick stain on a cigarette butt, while the camera's close-up shot of Ariela's lips exhaling smoke work as a prelude to her prominent presence throughout the film.

While examining the film adaptation of *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (2003) and juxtaposing it with its literary counterpart, it becomes apparent that most of the dialogues in the film are transposed from the source-text, with only a few additional scenes that were not part of the novel. However, it is imperative to recognize that *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (2003) is not a mere replication, but rather an innovative work that emerges as a result of a myriad of intermedial connections. This unique composition attests to Gardenberg's authorship and establishes her creative imprint on this distinct artistic creation.

In order to comprehensively grasp the significance and function of intermediality we depart from the conception and recognition of the term intermediality proposed by Claus Clüver in “Intermediality and Interarts Studies” (2007). In this article he states that “adaptation of verbal texts to the cinema have induced an extensive discussion, which includes the question whether a film is indeed a multi-media and/or mixed-media text” (Clüver 2007, 33). More specifically, Clüver affirms that “a multimedia text comprises separable and individually coherent texts in different media, while the complex signs in different media contained in a mixed-media text would not be coherent or self-sufficient outside of that context” (2007, 25).

In my analysis, I acknowledge films as encompassing both multi-media and mixed-media characteristics. This recognition is particularly relevant as we now turn our attention to Rajewsky’s subcategories of intermediality, which serve as a framework for examining and categorizing the film’s utilization of diverse media forms (multi-media and mixed-media texts), highlighting the interplay and interdependencies between different media as essential components to recreate *Benjamim* (Buarque 1995).

In “Intermediality, Intertextuality and Remediation: A Literary Perspective on Intermediality”, Rajewsky proposes three subcategories as a narrower sense of intermediality. The first is *medial transposition*: “here the intermedial quality has to do with the way in which a media product comes into being, i.e., with the transformation of a given media product (a text, a film, etc.) or of its substratum into another medium. This category is a production-oriented, “genetic” conception of intermediality” (Rajewsky 2005, 51). The second subcategory is *media combination*, which combines “at least two conventionally distinct media or medial forms of articulation. These two media [...] are each present in their own materiality and contribute to the constitution and signification of the entire product in their own specific way” (Rajewsky 2005, 51). The third is *intermedial reference*: “for example references in a literary text to a film through, for instance, the evocation or imitation of certain filmic techniques such as zoom shots, fades, dissolves, and montage editing” (Rajewsky 2005, 52).

Gardenberg’s adaptation of *Benjamim* (1995) exemplifies the convergence of the three subcategories proposed by Rajewsky, providing insights into the intermedial nature of the film. Firstly, it can be characterized as a *medial transposition* since it involves the transformation of a literary work into a cinematic form. As an audiovisual reinterpretation of a preexisting textual source, the film embodies the process of transposing the narrative from one medium to another. Secondly, the film embodies a *media combination*, as it incorporates a multitude of media elements to construct its audiovisual composition. Films, irrespective of being adaptations or original creations, inherently rely on the integration of diverse media components, including visual imagery, auditory elements, written text, and more. The convergence of these media forms contributes to the film’s multi-layered and multi-sensory nature. Finally, *Benjamim* (Gardenberg 2003) exhibits *intermedial references*, engaging with and referencing other media forms throughout its narrative. The film consistently evokes and emulates various media platforms, such as television, magazines, theater, literature, live performances, and cinema itself. These intermedial references serve to enrich the film’s overall aesthetic and themes, drawing upon the intertextuality and interconnections inherent in the realm of media.

Medial Transposition in *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003)

As a media transposition in form of adaptation, the film is a repetition with variation (Hutcheon 2006, 4). According to Gardenberg, the screenplay underwent 11 revised drafts: “no início, era uma transcrição muito próxima do livro. Mas para fazer um bom cinema é preciso desrespeitar a obra literária. Não na essência, mas na forma” (Gardenberg 2004). This statement resonates with Shelley Cobb’s study “Film Authorship and Adaptation” in which the author defends that “the unfaithful moments make possible the auteur’s ability to be faithful to himself in the process of adaptation” (Cobb 2012, 112). In other words, the act of unfaithfulness to the adapted text is what makes the filmmaker faithful to herself, enabling the creation of a work imbued with her distinctive authorial imprints. From this perspective, the present study highlights four main points of divergence between Buarque’s novel and Gardenberg’s film adaptation. First, in the film, the female role assumes a more pronounced and central position within the narrative. Second, the information conveyed in the film is less ambiguous than its literary counterpart. Third, the temporal interweaving varies from a progression of the present visited by the past. Lastly, the film evokes a heightened sense of romance and political engagement compared to the novel. As explored below, these distinctions are notably accentuated and influenced by the significant role of intermediality within the film *benjamim* (Gardenberg 2003).

To contextualize the prominent role of the female characters in the film, it is pertinent to first examine the portrayal of characters in the novel. In Buarque’s *Benjamim* (1995), the central focus lies on the titular character, with his present being intertwined with haunting echoes of the past. While Ariela and Castana contribute significantly to the construction of the narrative, they do not attain the same level of protagonism as Benjamim. Their relevance, however, can be attributed to their importance in Benjamim’s life. In contrast, in the film adaptation, Ariela shares the spotlight with Benjamim, with their screen time and stardom being more evenly distributed. It is noteworthy that Ariela’s increased presence in the film is not the result of additional scenes; in fact, there are only a few scenes that were not part of the novel, such as Ariela and Jeovan’s wedding. The depth and quantity of the added scenes, including the aforementioned example, do not sufficiently justify Ariela’s prominence in the film. Therefore, her heightened presence in the audiovisual medium can be attributed to the selective process of adaptation, where certain materials are suppressed or omitted, shaping the narrative to tell a new story. Interestingly, in the case of *benjamim* (Gardenberg 2003) the film effectively transposes many scenes involving Ariela and Benjamim, while excluding others, such as Benjamim’s childhood and episodes involving other characters. Through this process of adaptation, Ariela emerges as a more prominent and striking character on par with Benjamim, increasing her role within the story.

Additionally, the significance of the feminine role in the film is also evident in the interplay between image and written word on the film poster, which is replicated on the DVD cover. Mariana Mendes Arruda, in her article “Em cartaz, Chico Buarque: a adaptação de Benjamim para o cinema” (2007), explores this aspect. According to Arruda, the photo featured on the poster captures a romantic moment between Benjamim and his love. She argues that the composition of the photo emphasizes the woman’s face, which covers a significant portion of Benjamim, leaving only a glimpse of his face and hair visible. Below the photograph, the film’s title is displayed. Notably, despite being the protagonist’s first name, the title, *benjamim*, is written in lowercase letters, indicating a shift in attention from the character of Benjamim to Ariela, who is emphasized both on the cover and in the narrative itself (Arruda 86-87). This deliberate choice in the visual

representation of the film highlights the central role and increased prominence of the female character, Ariela, in the adaptation.

Furthermore, the filmic version adds the subtitle “Ninguém Esconde o Amor”, and it appears in upper-case in contrast with Benjamim’s name in lowercase. This deliberate typographic choice suggests that Benjamim’s character is also not as central as the overwhelming power of love depicted in the film. But, first and foremost, considering that the poster deviates from conventional norms by using Benjamim’s name as a common noun rather than a proper noun, the film challenges and subverts norms and structures. This typographic manipulation challenges traditional male protagonism, which not only disrupts prevailing patriarchal systems but also introduces a new gendered dynamic to the film, prompting viewers to reevaluate conventional norms and expectations.

The multimedia nature of cinema also serves as a pivotal mechanism for mitigating ambiguity in the film. As an adaptation, the film *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003) employs a combination of media to create scenes that consolidate chapters from the book. Buarque’s written narrative is enigmatic, and the film seeks to convey the same sense of chronological misalignment through the use of flashbacks. However, the film’s narrative is less ambiguous and less murky than that of the book. When analyzing the narrative tools used in the film that contribute to this substantial difference from the novel, it is crucial to consider that cinema is an audiovisual medium, unlike literature, which is primarily verbal (Gaudreault and Jost 2005, 79). This characteristic grants images and sound in cinema an essential role in conveying information. In Gardenberg’s adaptation, the use of images reduces the ambiguity found in the book. For example, while the novel suggests that the story takes place in Rio de Janeiro through references to beaches, a vibrant downtown, and the visible contrast between the city’s north and south areas, these traits could describe numerous big cities. In contrast, the film presents explicit images of iconic Rio de Janeiro landmarks, such as Pão de Açúcar, eliminating any doubt about the film’s setting.

However, one of the greatest uncertainties present in the novel revolves around whether Ariela is Castana’s daughter or simply a figment of Benjamim’s imagination. In the early pages of the book, the protagonist recognizes Ariela’s face as familiar but is unable to pinpoint its origin. Upon comparing his old photos with his memory of the young woman’s face, he concludes that she must be Castana’s daughter. The narrator states, “há sete dias Benjamim só faz perguntar pela filha de Castana Beatriz, o que é tarefa bastante abstrata, por lhe faltar seu nome” (Buarque 1995, 35). At this point, Benjamim is convinced that Ariela is Castana’s daughter. However, the narrator later asserts, “Que Castana Beatriz engravidou é certo, mas ele nunca ouviu falar que ela tivesse parido uma menina. Quem sabe perdeu a criança, pois não devia ser benéfico para uma gestante viver aos sobressaltos, a reboque de um ativista político” (Buarque 1995, 132). Such ambiguity permeates the novel as the heterodiegetic narrator exposes the protagonist’s doubts and uncertainties. However, this ambiguity does not carry over to the film because the connection between Ariela and Castana is made in the first flashback scene as both characters are portrayed by the same actress, Cleo Pires. By visually presenting the same face for both women, the film reduces the doubts planted by the novel’s narrator. This visual cue prompts the viewer to accept the possibility that Ariela is either Castana’s daughter or, at the very least, a continuation of Castana. Furthermore, as the film reduces this uncertainty, it not only clarifies the narrative but also allows for a more robust development of the female character. In essence, *benjamim* (Gardenberg 2003) reveals that Ariela’s role transcends her mere association with Benjamim or his perception of her in relation to

Castana. Instead, the film highlights her own intricate narrative trajectory, one defined by her individual experiences, anguish, and personal struggles.

Regarding the temporal dimension, both the novel and the film delve into a hybrid concept of time, emphasizing the interconnectedness of the present and the past. However, it is important to note that the depiction of the present differs between the two mediums. In the novel, Benjamin's present is portrayed as the moment of his death, as evident from the opening lines:

The execution squad was lined up; the order to fire was forceful and the shots produced a single report. But to Benjamin Zambraia they sounded like a drum roll, and he might even be able to tell the order in which the dozen weapons in front of him had discharged [...] and in that instant Benjamin witnessed what he had expected: his existence was projected from beginning to end, like a motion picture, on the blindfold of his eyes. Faster than a bullet, the film could be projected again on the inside of his eyelids, in reverse, when the succession of events might prove more acceptable.

(Buarque 1995, 3)

As we can see, the novel effectively portrays Benjamin's present (his last seconds of life) as a space where the past intersects with his current reality (succession of past events portrayed as a film). As the narrative unfolds, readers are taken on a journey that encompasses both a more recent past and a more distant one. The focus on the more recent past revolves around the relationship between Benjamin and Ariela, while the exploration of the more distant past delves into the connection between Benjamin and Castana. The reader is seamlessly immersed in intertwined timelines and is only reminded that the present is actually the moment of Benjamin's death at the end of the book. Consequently, although the narrative primarily revolves around Benjamin's recent past, this recent past effectively assumes the role of his present for the reader.

The film adaptation, in contrast to the novel, establishes a different starting point by introducing the character of young Benjamin, portrayed by Dalton Melo. The opening scene depicts him approaching a gray-green two-story house. Once inside, he is abruptly confronted by an execution squad who enters the house and aims their weapons at him. This tense moment is followed by a close-up shot of the present-day Benjamin, played by Paulo José, waking up from a distressing dream. From this moment on, Benjamin's present daily life unfolds as the central focus, intertwining with reminiscences of his past. Remarkably, the viewer is drawn into the protagonist's journey as he establishes a possible connection between Ariela and Castana, leading to a series of flashback scenes. Additionally, the character of Gâmbolo, an old friend and collaborator from Benjamin's modeling days, resurfaces in the narrative. Gâmbolo, now involved in directing TV commercials and publicity campaigns, repeatedly hires Benjamin for his projects, and is frequently met with disappointment due to Benjamin's declining acting skills. If this longtime friend/work relationship is, on the one hand, another example that Benjamin is anchored in the past², on the other hand, it highlights the fact that Benjamin is not the same man that, in the past, was successfully featured in magazines and on billboards. As demonstrated, the present

² The most relevant sign of Benjamin's immobility is the presence of a rock outside his apartment windows. This rock assumes a notable role in the novel, as it is capitalized and can be interpreted as a character intricately linked to Benjamin. Also, Buarque employs the adjective "empedernido" (Buarque 1995, 158) to describe Benjamin's gaze, implying a certain interchangeability between Benjamin and the rock. This linguistic choice further emphasizes the notion that Benjamin's physical and emotional state mirrors the static nature of the rock.

depicted in the film is not the moment of Benjamim's death, but rather the unfolding of events in the life of an older man who struggles to transcend his past. By examining the relationship between past and present in both narratives, it becomes evident that the present in the film corresponds to the recent past presented in the novel.

With regards to the film's accentuated interplay of romance and political engagement, it is important to note that, according to the filmmaker, "*benjamim* é um grito de amor, um grito de amor pela pessoa amada e que a gente perdeu, e foi assim que eu fiz e o tempo inteiro eu quis que o filme, acima de tudo, fosse uma linda história de amor" (Gardenberg, DVD bonus feature 2003). This underlying purpose is reflected in the subtitle "Ninguém Esconde o Amor", which is exclusively present in the film adaptation. The filmic version of the character Benjamim distinguishes itself from his literary counterpart by embracing a more romantic and idealized portrayal. This divergence arises from the selection of scenes as well as the addition of others.

A notable example of this romanticized approach can be seen in a scene where young Benjamim is playing volleyball on the beach. When he sees Castana, he immediately rushes towards the ocean to observe her from a distance, hoping to be noticed by her in return. Soon, Castana joins Benjamim, and the couple share their first kiss. This romantic scene is absent from the novel. It not only signifies the inception of the couple's romantic relationship but also portrays Benjamim as a shy young man who manages to captivate the woman he loves.

If the film *benjamim* (Gardenberg 2003) incorporates a heightened romantic tone, this is offset by a greater expression of the political tension prevalent in mid-1960's Brazil. The release of the film marks 40 years since the 1964 Brazilian Coup d'état, and the film presents a more explicit depiction of this historical theme compared to the book. In fact, in an interview conducted by Antônio Augusto, Buarque states the following:

Não quero cair na denúncia social nos livros. Quero que o público compreenda que o cidadão não tem nada a ver com o compositor nem com o escritor. Há referências no livro à violência, mas o policial que está entrevado por causa de uma bala não aparece sendo baleado. Não me sinto compromissado com bandeira nenhuma por causa da minha biografia de participação política.

(Buarque 1995)

Buarque's statement finds resonance in the novel's subtle allusions to the dictatorial period in Brazil, which are made through embedded narratives that offer glimpses of the political context of the time. In contrast, the film takes a more direct approach in addressing this subject matter. A notable example of this is depicted in a poignant scene where the armed squad unexpectedly enters the house, targeting Castana and Professor Douglas, both sought by the police. The audience witnesses the couples' expression of surprise and fear, while the babysitter endeavors to shield their daughter from harm as the sound of gunshots echoes in the background. This emotionally charged moment is depicted by the camera's focus on the frightened child and her babysitter during the fatal encounter of the parents. Significantly, the presence of the child in the two-story house is exclusive to the film adaptation and not present in the novel. This added scene serves a twofold purpose: it intensifies the impact of the couple's killing and simultaneously serves as a visual cue for the viewer to establish a connection between the child and Ariela, unequivocally establishing that Ariela is indeed Castana's daughter.

Therefore, in contrast to the novel's more subtle approach to political undertones, Gardenberg's film adaptation intentionally embraces a political dimension. According to the filmmaker, "procurei trazer a política para mais dentro das cenas, criando um pano de fundo mais tenso e levando para a tela momentos que presenciamos nos anos de chumbo" (Gardenberg 2004). She sought to infuse the film with a more palpable sense of politics by introducing new scenes that depict instances of police violence against the youth in the streets. Therefore, through choices in scene selection and the inclusion of politically charged sequences, Gardenberg's adaptation of *Benjamim* deliberately emphasizes the political dimension of the story.

Medial Combination in *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003)

A film is, by default, a medial combination as it reflects an articulation of audiovisual resources that can take various shapes and forms. The visual component of a film, for instance, is achieved through the seamless succession of individual frames, known as photograms, which together create the illusion of motion. In other words, the mechanics of making the visual part of a film (moving pictures) is built upon the foundation of another media, namely still pictures, which are rapidly presented to generate the impression of movement. In addition to visual elements, sound is an integral part of the filmic experience. Sound effects, dialogue, music, and ambient sounds contribute to the overall atmosphere and emotional impact of a film. The combination of moving pictures and synchronized sound forms a unified entity, blending different media into a cohesive audiovisual narrative. Moreover, a film narrative can incorporate additional forms of media, expanding beyond the boundaries of visuals and sound. Elements such as letters, paintings, photographs, and music can be interwoven within the storyline. These diverse media can serve different purposes within the film, whether as props used during filming or as elements introduced during the editing process. By integrating various media types, filmmakers enhance the richness and depth of the cinematic experience, elevating the storytelling and engaging the audience on multiple levels.

The combination of media in *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003) is not different, particularly in the integration of songs, photographs and other films. The use of music, as Marcel Martins argues, is a significant contribution of sound to film, capturing the viewers' attention and enhancing the meaning of scenes (Martins 2005, 152). Additionally, according to Leila Cristina Barros, the soundtrack in Gardenberg's film often works as a commentary on the plot (Barros 2008). As such, songs (music and lyrics)³ in *benjamim* not only holds spectators' attention, but it is also crucial to transmit and intensify meaning to the scenes. For instance, Benjamim desperately searches through old photos, newspaper clippings, and magazine covers in an attempt to find a picture of Cassandra. This emotional moment is accompanied by the song "Ne me quitte pas" by Jacques Brel. The title of the song translates to "Don't leave me", and the raw emotion conveyed by the singer's voice, repeatedly pleading "don't leave me" in the chorus effectively communicates Benjamim's desire to never have lost Castana. Another instance is the song "O amor está no ar" by Agostinho dos Santos, which declares that "Ninguém esconde o amor; Ninguém proíbe o amor"⁴ (No one can hide from love; no one can

³ It is important to mention that songs are formed by two types of media, the music and the lyrics, as they both can convey messages.

⁴ It is noteworthy that the DVD cover and film poster of *benjamim* feature the subtitle "Ninguém Esconde o Amor," while the film trailer displays the subtitle "Ninguém Proíbe o Amor."

forbid love). This song accompanies a flashback scene in which Benjamim first sees Castana, and the lyrics perfectly capture the essence of Benjamim's love at first sight. The song's message aligns with Benjamim's personal experience, highlighting the power and inevitability of love.

Likewise, the song "Alegria" by Arnaldo Antunes serves multiple purposes. Not only does it create a joyful atmosphere that matches Benjamim's happiness at his encounter with Ariela, but its intertextual relation to a circus also contributes to the portrayal of Benjamim as a dreamer:

Hoje tem goiabada
Hoje tem marmelada
Hoje tem palhaçada
O circo chegou

Hoje tem batucada
Hoje tem gargalhada
Riso e risada
Do meu amor

(Antunes, *Alegria*, 1995)

These words dialogue with the clown scene in a circus and, in Gardenberg's film, is played as Benjamim dances in the street and gives his acting costumes and garments to the homeless. His movements and expressions exude a theatrical quality, conveying the notion of an older man transported to a childlike realm as a result of his encounter with Ariela. In these three instances, the songs serve as signifiers, carrying their own distinct messages. These messages, when combined with other forms of media such as images, contribute to the overarching film's message that Benjamim is a fantasizer, that he fell in love with Castana at a young age and that he longs for Castana's continued existence.

Additionally, songs play a significant role in contextualizing the viewer within the narrative's temporal framework in *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003). Specifically, the use of different soundtracks distinguishes scenes set in the past from those set in the present. The inclusion of songs by artists such as Elvis Presley, Chet Baker, The Platters, Jacques Brel, Eumir Deodato, Gerry Mulligan and Astor Piazzolla when depicting the past, creates a sense of nostalgia and evokes the cultural atmosphere of that specific time period. Conversely, scenes set in the present utilize electronic music or the previously mentioned song "Alegria." This deliberate choice of contemporary music not only contrasts with the older tracks but also reflects the current cultural landscape and provides a sonic backdrop that resonates with the film's contemporary setting.

Moreover, the incorporation and utilization of photographs serve as another example of medial forms within the film. Benjamim is a frequent client in an unnamed restaurant that displays black and white photos of celebrities, such as the famous Brazilian actor Tarcísio Meira. These photographs imply a potential connection between Benjamim and the world of fame and recognition. Serving as a background element, they evoke a dual interpretation: on the one hand, they suggest that Benjamim, as a public figure himself, might be perceived as belonging to this esteemed group of celebrities. On the other hand, the film presents a contrasting viewpoint, as Benjamim's talents and professional success are repeatedly questioned throughout the storyline. Consequently, an alternative interpretation arises, suggesting that the photographs in the

background subtly remind viewers that Benjamim's abilities do not match those of the individuals in the pictures, thereby underscoring his absence from the esteemed wall of celebrities.

When examining the presence of photographs in the film, it is noteworthy to emphasize that young Benjamim and Castana actively engage with this medium. Their initial encounter takes place during a photoshoot, and throughout the film, they participate in various scenes where they pose for pictures. Their photographs also serve as advertisements for products featured in magazines and billboards. These instances highlight the significance of photography as a central element in their lives. Moreover, the flashback scenes in the film exude charm and elegance, and are often introduced through the sudden use of frozen images. These images, resembling photographs that capture and freeze specific moments, precede the depiction of the past. According to Marcel Martin, "a *paragem na imagem* (não precedida de uma desaceleração), tornou-se de uso corrente, principalmente no fim dos filmes para significar precisamente a paragem no desenrolar da narrativa" (Martin 2005, 265). In *benjamim* (Gardenberg 2003), there are multiple frozen images throughout the film that propose a pause in the narrative. In this case, the frozen images mark the transition of time in the film as it pauses the present to display the past.

Furthermore, in *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003), photographs serve as significant plot devices. Two particular instances highlight the impact of photographs on the narrative trajectory: Firstly, photographs featured in magazines play a pivotal role in Castana's story. In the film, her father discovers a magazine photo of her in a bathing suit, which prompts him to send her to Europe out of disapproval. This decision has far-reaching consequences, as Castana's time abroad leads her to meet Professor Douglas. Their relationship becomes a spark for various narrative developments, including the birth of their daughter (who might be Ariela), clandestine meetings in the gray-green two-story house, and their eventual death. This relationship was also the reason for Benjamim's jealousy regarding Castana and, eventually, his obsession with Ariela. Secondly, photographs play a crucial role in Benjamim's quest to unravel the truth about Ariela's parentage. Benjamim becomes suspicious of Ariela's connection to Castana and begins comparing a photograph from the past with the young woman he has recently encountered. This visual comparison serves as definitive confirmation for Benjamim, solidifying his belief that Ariela is, indeed, Castana's daughter. Thus, for Benjamim, the photograph becomes a key piece of evidence, bridging the gap between past and present, and reinforcing the connections and relationships that existed only in his mind.

Another form of combination of media in *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003) is the film *Um homem, uma mulher* (*Un homme et une femme*) directed by Claude Lelouch in 1996. This example of a film within a film intensifies the romantic tone of Gardenberg's creation as it pictures Benjamim and Castana's first date in the movie theater, whereas in the novel he goes to the movies by himself. As pointed out by Mariana Mendes Arruda, *Um homem, uma mulher* is an intertextual relation that works as a temporal and thematic reference (Arruda 2007). Temporal because it is yet another indication that the plot (from the past) takes place in the 1960s, thematic because *Um homem, uma mulher* is a love story in which a pair of young widowers accidentally meet. The plot of Lelouch's film revolves around this couple's difficulty in overcoming the loss of a loved one while allowing themselves to experience a new love story. This thematic resonance creates a direct dialogue with Benjamim's own experiences and this connection to the theme of loss and new beginnings strengthens the intertextual relationship between *Um homem, uma mulher* and *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor*.

Intermedial References in *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003)

The film *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003), as well as its source-text *Benjamim* (Buarque 1995), exhibit a deliberate interplay of various forms of media, such as magazines, TV, music, and films. These intermedial references contribute to the richness and complexity of the narrative by incorporating elements from different media platforms. As previously discussed, there is a constant mention and the tangible presence of magazines throughout the film. These either appear in the flashback scenes when both photographic models, Benjamim and Castana, pose for advertisements that will be featured in magazines or during revisitations of the past in the present context of the film, exemplified by the scenes wherein Benjamim searches for Castana's photos in old magazine clippings. In both cases, the magazine intertwines the character's past while also illustrates the broader social-cultural significance of the media at the time.

The constant presence of a camera is, likewise, noteworthy. In the novel, the protagonist experiences the sensation of being observed or filmed by an invisible camera. In the film adaptation, this invisible camera is replaced by an actual camera during the TV advertisement campaign. These sequences afford the audience a unique perspective as they are virtually transported into the studio set, positioned behind the cameraman, and granted insight into the filmmaking process. As a result, the viewers not only witness Benjamim's actions and expressions but also observe him through the lens of the camera being used on the set. This *mise-en-abyme* technique creates a visual and conceptual recursion, where the audience is exposed to the representation of representation itself. As the audience is afforded access to the behind-the-scenes view of Benjamim's performance, they are exposed to his frequent acting mistakes and the ensuing criticism from the commercial director, to which Benjamim replies: "I'm not an actor" (Gardenberg 2003). This scene not only serves to emphasize the inherent artifice in filmmaking but also highlights the vulnerability, complexities, and authenticity of this character portrayal on the stage that can be transferred to his personal life. This moment of vulnerability defies conventional expectations of his performative identity, and by doing so, the film once again, challenges the role of male protagonism.

Additionally, television plays a crucial role in situating the viewer within the social-political context of the time. This is evident in a significant scene where Castana, while in a Parisian hotel with Benjamim, interrupts a romantic moment to engage with the television news reporting an explosion during a protest in the streets. The deliberate inclusion of this scene in the film, absent in the novel, serves as a powerful narrative tool to underscore Castana's deep interest and engagement in social-political actions. This scene contributes significantly to the film's heightened political tone compared to the source-text. This portrayal adds depth and relevance to the film, rendering it more than a mere love story but a compelling exploration of personal relationships within the context of a politically charged era.

Furthermore, one notable example of music that conveys its own message within the film is the *Showmício* scene. The term "Showmício" in Brazilian Portuguese combines the words "show" and "comício," representing a political rally-concert that features renowned artists to attract a larger audience for political candidates' speeches. In the film, the character Aliandro Esgarate is a politician whose *Showmício* features the celebrated Brazilian samba and pagode singer Zeca Pagodinho, who is widely known for his music, his simplicity and for his connection to the people, and more specifically the working class. As such, Zeca Pagodinho can be considered a representative of the base of Brazilian society due to his appeal and relatability to the broader

population. After his show, Aliandro states that “Zeca está com Aliandro. Significa que Aliandro está com o povo” (Gardenberg 2003). This emphasizes the connection between Zeca Pagodinho’s presence and Aliandro’s political campaign. More concretely, this relationship provides a social commentary on the recurrent behavior of politicians coopting the popularity of artists to amplify their message, to broaden their appeal base and to target specific segments of the populace. In this case, the blending of politics and music in the *Showmício* scene serves the purpose of illustrating the power that one specific media has to align with political campaigns and attract voters from a specific class in Brazil. Altogether, these examples of intermedial references deftly orchestrate to enrich the cinematographic narrative. By leveraging a variety of media, *benjamim* (Gardenberg 2003) builds a multilayered product that encompasses social-political themes and character development while offering viewers a thought-provoking and culturally resonant experience.

In conclusion, Monique Gardenberg’s film adaptation, *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003), foregrounds intermediality in its recreation of Chico Buarque’s novel, *Benjamim* (Buarque 1995). While the novel and the film share the same central motifs and preserve most of the dialogues, Gardenberg’s adaptation intensifies the themes of love, romanticism, and political dimensions, adding her personal touch to the narrative. Particularly noteworthy is the film’s introduction of a new gendered dimension, wherein Ariela assumes a central role of equal, if not greater, significance as Benjamim. This transformation transcends the novel’s portrayal of Ariela as merely associated with Benjamim, rendering her a multifaceted character who shares the film’s protagonism. This significant deviation emphasizes Gardenberg’s transformative approach, allowing *Benjamim* (Buarque 1995) to metamorphose into *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003), and thereby declaring her distinctive authorship. This is particularly relevant given that the film not only enhances the female presence within the narrative through the character of Ariela, but also in the Brazilian film industry with a female filmmaker at the helm. By featuring a strong and complex female character and being directed by a woman, the film deviates from traditional gender norms prevalent in both storytelling and film production.

The film seamlessly weaves together various media elements, including imagery, music, photography, television, and others, to showcase the vital role of intermediality in this cinematic production. Through medial transposition, media combination, and intermedial references (Rajewsky 2005, 2010), Gardenberg skillfully leverages these diverse media forms, revitalizing the narrative and imbuing it with her creative vision, resulting in a captivating cinematic experience that deeply resonates with audiences. As a result, *benjamim: Ninguém Esconde o Amor* (Gardenberg 2003) sheds light on the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of adaptation, providing fresh insights into the interplay between different media forms and their profound impact on storytelling.

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