

Which Multiverse are We in: a Contemporary Film Adaptations Criticism towards Marvel Film Adaptations

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Abstract

This paper discusses how Marvel constructs the “multiverse” as a means of establishing an ever expanding diegesis, storytelling strategy, and gaining economic benefits. In doing so, the issues are approached via contemporary film adaptation criticism. While leaving aside fidelity criticism, the approach focuses on in studying intertextuality and modifications as adaptive effects (e.g., authorial perspective and economic gains) yielded by transposing or re-writing works of Marvel Comics into their film adaptation (i.e. MCU, Sony-Marvel Adaptation, Marvel Entertainment films). We propose that, via Multiverse narration Marvel rationalizes as well as establishes intertextual relation between pre-existing Marvel Comics film adaptations with the recent MCU films. This seems to revitalize the economy of earlier Marvel Comics film adaptations by reintroducing them as versions of MCU. These versions engender the differences or the modifications as justifiable, hence strengthening the position of authorial perspective of adaptors (i.e., filmmakers and entertainment companies). Finally, we reflect on the extent to which Marvel film adaptations are voicing diversity ideology in their narration, by taking into consideration the profits yielded by the films as commodities.

Keywords: *Multiverse, Marvel film adaptations, intertextuality, transfictionality and transmedial storytelling, film as commodity*

Introduction

In this paper, we are interested in studying what has been dubbed *Multiverse* in Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) using the contemporary film adaptation framework. We question the ways in which MCU, which is a Marvel Studio film adaptation project, constructs the idea of Multiverse. The question implies an assumption that the idea has underlying functions that serve productive and creative activities practiced by Marvel Studio. Needlessly, the creative writing process in Marvel Comics brings about the idea of multiverse into Marvel storyworld or diegesis. Diegesis is essentially a part of the merchandise that Marvel Comics has put into market. The same applies to Marvel film adaptations, regardless what studios presented them (e.g., Sony, 20th Century Fox, New Line Cinema, Marvel Studio, etc). Therefore, it is plausible to assume that the idea that is brought by the process of film adaptation would have taken two respects into consideration, they are the economic productivity and the creative endeavor. In this case, they are of Marvel Studio which is currently a major film production company.

We propose that a few problems are addressed by studying economic and creative endeavor

as contingent with the way Marvel film adaptations construct the idea of Multiverse. Firstly, critics to film adaptation have been typically aiming to evaluate source text fidelity. In this paper, we demonstrate the capacity of what we call the contemporary film adaptation framework in spelling out significant insights about the practice of film adaptation that is neglected by such criticism. Therefore, this study is expected to hopefully serve a better theoretical understanding about film adaptation. Secondly, this study offers a critical outlook where one can appreciate the underlying economic and creative potentials in film adaptation such as that has been practiced by a well-established film production company, Marvel Studio. This implies that in general comparative evaluation between source text and adaptation text is practically leading to nowhere except one can look into the underpinning rationale that allows modification in certain film adaptations.

The objective of our study is to discuss theoretical implications of MCU Multiverse using the approach of the contemporary film adaptation. Noted earlier, the implications tap into economic and creative considerations that are arguably more crucial in understanding as well as appreciating work of adaptation. We are also aiming to lay out a critical evaluation to MCU Multiverse that is proposed as a narrative strategy in re-writing the source text (i.e., comics) as to transpose it into the screen (i.e., film and series). Potentially, this paper may inform not only what and how is the criticism to scholarly readers, but also practical reference for those who are interested in attempting the project of film adaptations.

Literature Review

By contemporary film adaptation framework we mean an approach with specific few characteristics. Firstly, a framework that is knowing that a work of adaptation is intertextually related with its counterpart, namely the source text. Assuming superiority to the latter as well as a milestone of experience in evaluating the former is a major mislead, if not entirely fruitless. Therefore, the framework acknowledges work of adaptation is autonomous and different, if not new, from the source text. Secondly, the creative writing process of the source text and the adaptation text has different specificity. Supposing the former is a comic from Marvel, the text consists of juxtaposed pictorial and linguistic elements which are experienced in reading activity of readers. Whereas in the latter, the text is experienced by spectators whose comprehension is resulted from the activity of reading which involves perceiving and interpreting filmic elements (e.g., motion pictures, sounds, dialogues, etc). Thirdly, authority in film adaptation does not necessarily remain in the hand of the source text author. In the adaptation process, the role of source text author may be reduced to a certain degree, or even to nothing, as otherwise be fully involved. Changes and modifications, and even fidelity to source text, in certain adaptation texts are the outcomes of adaptation process that is likely to follow film-making business orientation or the take on perspective of adaptation text author(s).

This proposed framework is not entirely novel as it has been urged by scholars of literary studies and criticism as well as film studies within the last two decades (Cartmell and Whelehan; Leitch). It has been developed further into discussing the implementation of technology and new media in the creative process of contemporary film adaptations (Constandinides), the emergence of new film genre (i.e., comic book adaptation) and subgenre (i.e., superhero movies) as well as their function that film adaptation entails since the early 2000s (Burke). Further theorization has also been postulated to serve better explanation and framework in studying film adaptation (Grossman, Lind, and Krebs). Common to these theoretical views is the prompt to retract from fidelity criticism (though partially in some theorists) and the attempt to redefine the position of film adaptation study

as autonomous though related with literary criticism and film studies.

Similar movement seems to have been attempted by Indonesian scholars from the humanities discipline, particularly cultural studies and literary studies. The movement has put forth the notion of *ekranisasi* or ecranization as the theoretical framework for film adaptation study (Damono). Damono aims to generally theorize transmedial alteration or transposition of arts from one medium to another which causes certain changes. Following Damono's theorization are the scholarly works that apply ecranization in studying transposition of text into film (*See, e.g.*, Fakhrurozi and Fakhrian, 2021; Martin, 2017; Oktafiyani, Suseno, and Nuryatin, 2017; Prahawati and Romadhon, 2017; Armiami, 2018). However, the examples of ecranization theoretical application seems to fall short as they are commonly focusing on merely the reduction of the narrative as a by-product of adaptation. If ecranization only leads to comparative analysis to the source text and the adaptation text, thereby discussing the changes (e.g., expanding or reducing the narrative) in the latter, then in our view the theory is pretty much the same as fidelity criticism. At this point, we argue ecranization will not be able to bring insights as much as it only fiddles with differences in adaptation text against the source text.

It is argued that comic book adaptation draws the audience because it has ritual functions that can be classified into nostalgia, escapism, and satisfying the desire to see enactment of the characters (Burke). This argument is supported with audience interviews and responses to questionnaires that are spread to comic book fandom who went into cinema to watch the comic book adaptations (e.g., *X-Men*, *Spiderman*). Nevertheless, MCU films are also comic book adaptations. Although we are not studying what function the films may serve the audience, we argue that Marvel Studio is aware that the potential market segment from producing adaptations comes primarily from its comic fans. We provide a discussion about the latter in the next section. But, the case in point here is that the approach of contemporary film adaptation can delve into the economic motive that otherwise cannot be achieved by fidelity criticism or ecranization.

Film adaptation serves as a straightforward example for the notion of elastextity (Grossman). By that notion Grossman characterizes text as flexible that it is able to move further from itself, and be combined with other texts that are pre-existing as well as the ones produced in the future. With this characteristic, one can attempt to give an in-depth criticism on certain works of adaptation, thus setting aside the supposition from the knowledge about the source text, and wondering how the changes or modifications in adaptation text are justified with creative vision of the adaptor. In this paper, we adopt the view that text has flexibility such as that characterized by Grossman in studying MCU Multiverse.

The contemporary film adaptation approach has been partially used as exemplified by a recent publication that critically discusses *Enola Holmes* film adaptation (Gooniyah, Army, and Muwaffaq, 2021). The criticism suggests that the adaptation, which source text is an expansion of Conan Doyle classic *Sherlock Holmes*, is a postmodern pastiche. That is to say it is created by recycling and reusing the narrative materials from the source text. Further, they argue the creative process also involves the act of translation that allows the author of *Enola Holmes*, both in the novel and the film adaptation, to recode a different meaning that may have cultural representational implication. The process pertains to what they call invasive because it deconstructs the grand narrative of Sherlock Holmes, and reconstructs that in order to conceive Enola Holmes in the same diegesis or storyworld. As to the representational implication, they argue the adaptation of *Enola Holmes* allows the author to embody a feministic detective. However, their criticism does not get into the economic implication that

contemporary film adaptation assumes as underlying the process of adaptation. In this paper, we attempt to use the approach at full-length in studying MCU Multiverse. Consequently, the economic and the creative visions will be addressed as part of the criticism.

Methodology

This paper offers a criticism towards the Marvel Studio film adaptation, as particularly directed to the idea of MCU Multiverse. In doing so, we drew qualitative data from literature (e.g., review articles, official articles, and journalism articles). The articles were published online on multiple websites as revealed in the bibliography. Semi-systematic literature search was carried out in order to find specific information about the business activities of Marvel Studio that are related with MCU film adaptations. We also reflected the narrative of MCU film adaptations, particularly in terms of their function in linking one film to the other so as to establish a sense of continuity throughout MCU phases. The analysis was carried out by connecting information from the collected literature. The source texts were also regarded as it informs us the intertextual relation that the process of adaptation establishes. We looked at the similarity and the difference between the source text and the adaptation to discuss the possible ideological representation in the films.

Findings and Discussion

1. MCY Establishment

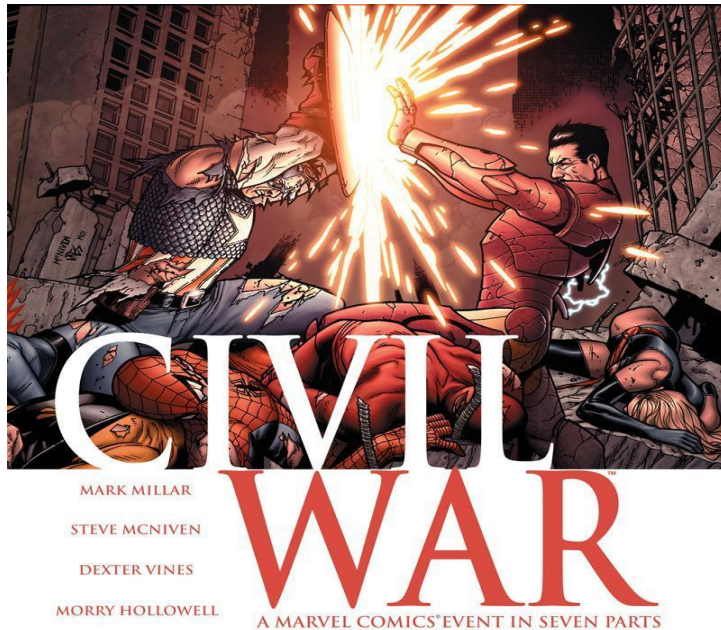
In 2008, Marvel Studios blew the box office with the release of Iron Man (2008) movie while also becoming the mark of the launch of their soon to be the largest film franchise in the world. While across the river, DC, the everlasting competitor also came up with the release of their sequel of the Batman film adaptation The Dark Knight (2008), which was brilliantly delivered by Christopher Nolan to claim the third position in the IMDb Top 250 Movies. However, in spite of all this, it is also might be fair to say that the same year would may be the dawn of Marvel's dominance in the superhero film pantheon over DC and other ranks, despite the fact of their bankruptcy a decade before. When the comic book industry went to collapse in the '90s, Ron Perellman the CEO of Marvel Comics at the time took a questionable management decision by raising the comic book prices, after the general decline in sales in the comic book industry forced Marvel to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy ("reorganization" bankruptcy) In 1996. It took a couple of years after for Marvel to come back on its feet and reorganize its strategy, with Avi Arad appointed as the new creative officer in order to motion the revelation of the Marvel film industry under the banner of Marvel Studios, Avi then courted bankers and sermonize the virtues of Marvel Comic characters, He ends up licensing several film rights of Marvel's most prized characters in an auction concluding Sony acquired Spider-Man, Paramount acquired the Hulk, and 21st Century Fox acquired the rights to Daredevil, the X-Men, and the Fantastic Four. While the acquiring companies made huge amounts of revenue from live-action movie adaptations based on their comics, Marvel claim that it was still a good strategy for promoting their sales in toys and merchandise. Then, New-Line Cinema distributed Blade in 1998 it grossed around \$131.000.000 putting it up as the first Marvel's box office success, but ironically, Marvel only get \$250.000 from the movie, or X-Men by 21st Century Fox in 2000 made around \$296.000.000 Marvel only get \$26.000.000, and the highest grossing superhero film and the first film to reach \$100.000.000 in a single weekend, the Sam Raimi's Spider-Man (2002) distributed by Sony was a massive hit who made highly around \$821.000.000 revenue, yet once again Marvel only got \$10.000.000 plus 5% cut from the box office. Until they decide to put their own hands in the movie-making, took them to loan of \$525.000.000 to a finance giant Merrill Lynch and put the rights to ten

of its biggest characters, including Ant-Man, Black Panther, Doctor Strange, Captain America, and the Avengers as the collateral. And begin to decide which one of their characters to kickstart the MCU under Kevin Feige's observation as the president of Marvel Studios and main producer of MCU, according to screenrant.com *"Marvel brought together groups of children, showed them pictures of superheroes, and described their abilities and weapons. Then they asked the kids which ones they would most like to play with as a toy. The overwhelming answer, to the surprise of many at Marvel, was Iron Man."* the choice fell on Iron Man, yet they still got to wait in patience as the rights for Iron Man were in the hand of New Line Cinema who want to make a movie out of it, having Marvel almost lost its rights to New Line if only had New Line got the production moving just a few months quicker, the 2008 *Iron Man* wouldn't have happened. Yet Marvel saw its chance, to retrieve the rights from New Line Cinema and appoint Jon Favreau as the director. though, and the road to the Marvel Cinematic Universe was under construction.

The birth of the Marvel Cinematic Universe through *Iron Man* (2008) was a game changer for Marvel Comics after the near-death experiences in 1996-1998, the savior took the attention of a giant conglomerate Walt Disney who bought the company a year later. Through MCU, Marvel creates a live-action adaptation story world that uses a transmedial storytelling concept consisting of crossing over common plot elements, settings, cast, and various characters from Marvel Comics as its source texts, unlike their previous adaptation films which each of them own by different companies, MCU characters were fully owned by Marvel Comics, a perfect condition to utilize the transmedial storytelling for Marvel owned rights characters to cross over amongst MCU movie without concerning any rights violation. This strategy found a new excitement for the comic fans and later become a vogue between superhero genre films which was followed by DC Extended Universe that set launched in 2013 through Zack Snyder's *Man of Steel*, while in the local film industry, there is Bumilangit Cinematic Universe with *Gundala* (2019) movie as the initial jumpstart. Transmedial storytelling turned movies into some kind of serial television on a larger scale, delivering the audiences the urge to watch the next film production in order to get the full storyline even if the next film was released in a whole different text that at some point may seem it doesn't have any correlation to the previous movie and may baffle audiences who are uncommon to MCU. By having a parallel storyline Marvel Cinematic Universe also found a new way to tease their fans by putting credit scenes/post-credit scenes on their films to give a glimpse of the narrative story of their upcoming movie to the audiences, in 2017 *Vanityfair* said that Samuel L. Jackson's brief appearance in *Iron Man* movie as Nick Fury, was initially meant as an Easter egg, "We put it at the end so it wouldn't be distracting," Feige said about the teasing post-credits scene that launched a decade-long trend. But after he saw how audiences—not just devoted comics fans—responded to Fury's appearance, Feige knew the idea of cross-pollinating characters and movies had legs. The 15 seconds easter egg became a golden egg that turns out to be an effective promoting strategy that keeps audiences stay sit for another 5-10 minutes patiently just to watch a 15 seconds spill, this may give an indication that the MCU storyline succeeds to mesmerize their audiences with them choose to sit and savor the 30 seconds by compensating their 10 minutes of black and white text rolling screen.

2. Constructing The Multiverse

Before the multiverse concept was adapted in MCU's narrative, their transmedial storytelling



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formula in their first three steps so-called "The Infinity Saga" phase one (2008-2012), phase two (2013-2015), and phase 3 (2016-2019) are already proven to create new excitement for the comic fans and audience in general, as they were presented a live-action hero characters like the brainiac-flamboyant Iron Man and the gamma-radiation monster Hulk in 2008, the nordic thunderbolt Thor and the strict code-living Captain America in 2011, leading to Marvel's Avengers (2012) the first crossover superhero movie in 21st century, where all MCU's characters are set in the same space and time. Interestingly the tension between Iron Man and Captain America was already started in Marvel's Avengers (2012), which some of devoted fans may already foresee that a clash between them may lead to striking a civil war between two groups of superheroes based on the Millar and McNiven's Civil War (2006) comic as the source of their presumption, long before the release of the actual MCU's Civil War under the title of Captain America: Civil War (2016), that took 4 years and another 6

movie release to build up the climax. Based on their own comic adaptation, Marvel Studio's MCU definitely won't just throw away the fidelity of their origins, the intertextuality between both MCU and Comic book stories was explicitly exposed usually through its grand narrative, say like, Civil War where in the text the UN government was upset by the collateral damage caused by The Avengers, coercing the independent collective of enhanced humanoid to bound under the new regulations which in comics called as the "Super Human Registration Act" while in MCU the modified onto "The Sokovia Accords" referring to the aftermath catastrophe from The Battle of Sokovia in the Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015). Regardless of what is it called, the regulations were splitting the group into two, Captain America who strenuously objected to the government started an insurgency against his former brother in arms Iron Man and those who pros against the registration bringing a Civil War inside the supergroup of earth's mightiest heroes.

Another distinct similarity between Millar and McNiven's Civil War with the MCU's Civil War was the MCU's Iron Man vs Captain America fighting scene was pretty much resembling the cover book of Civil War (2006) #7 comic where Iron Man repulsor blasts the shield of Captain America, although of course there is a contrast between them, such as the nuances and set of the battle took

place, the comic book cover depicted a greater war loss with high collateral damage with demolished buildings in the background and the fallen heroes' casualties in the horizon. layered with a thin red filtered image that may intensify the feeling of the heat of the battle. While the MCU felt darker with a blueish filter, the abandoned bunker in the tundra landscape where the battle took place might be the reason.

After the Captain America: Civil War incident, the Avengers, MCU began to continue to build



their "Infinity Saga" master plan of Thanos's inevitable strike by producing a stand-alone movie for characters like Ant-Man, Black Panther, and Doctor Strange the master of mystic arts who later become the turntabling character to evade Thanos "snap" that perish 50% of the population throughout the universe that he thinks its the only way in order to have a perfect balance universe, the idea that gained him the title The Mad Titan. Yet, to think Thanos was absolutely deranged for his perfect balance idea would become considerable thought if compared to the comic version "The Infinity Gauntlet (1991)", in the comic, the backstory of Thanos's lunatic masterplan of wiping out 50% of life through the 6 infinity stones are even ludicrously insane, for all of that he does only for presenting his undying love to Mistress Death, the living embodiment of death in the Marvel Universe. MCU modified the part and takes Thanos's insanity level to a more acceptable rational approach, however the information about Mistress Death in MCU is yet still uncovered, even after Thanos's death in the Avengers: Endgame (2019).

We now begin to witness the inception of the "Multiverse Saga" (Phase Four, Phase Five, and Phase Six), although the ignition commencing was already started in the second movie of Phase Three Doctor Strange (2016).

*"Who are you in this vast **Multiverse?**"* asked the Ancient One to Doctor Stephen Strange, a world-renowned neurosurgeon who came to visit her sanctum in desperate need of medication, only just to be desperate once more after his western super intellectual ego was refuted only by the power of faith and supernaturals. Shortly after a sip of a cup filled with Psilocybin and LSD (at least so he thought it was), The Ancient One pulled him out of his astral body and took him for a nightmarish spiritual ride to exhibit the arrogant neurosurgeon a concise presentation of the existence of several Multiversal dimensions inside the MCU, she then narrated a condensed description that lays the

foundation of the MCU's multiverse,

*"You think you know how the world works? You think that this material universe is all there is? What is real? What mysteries lie beyond the reach of your senses? At the root of existence, mind and matter meet. Thoughts shape reality. This universe is only one of an infinite number. Worlds without end. Some benevolent and life giving. Others filled with malice and hunger. Dark places where powers older than time lie ravenous... and waiting. Who are you in this vast **multiverse**, Mr. Strange?"*

The quote was primary indicates the presence of the dark dimension, a world without time, where the lord of darkness Dormammu has waited eternities to possess Earth which Strange must come to bargain with as the denouement of Doctor Strange (2016), it was also the first line with the term Multiverse was mentioned in MCU narrative long before being issued by He Who Remains in the Loki (2021) TV series which interestingly lives in the world without end, one that may the Ancient One refer to.

With the MCU's transmedial DNA, Doctor Strange (2016) became the cornerstone for the Multiverse construction with multiple easter eggs contain piece explanations of the Multiverse existence in MCU, then it pass gradually to further productions with motions to build the logical sense of multiple realities inside one storyworld, one even just consist of space with the absence of time, and another even more unique with the absence of both time and space, like the Quantum Realm, a place with no space and time first explained through Ant-Man films, saying that if we went into subatomic particles we would enter a state where the laws of gravity and time are cease to apply, which later became the fundamental theory for Avengers: Endgame back to the future plot that may broke the multiverse branch, that mentioned by Mordo's warning words in Doctor Strange (2016) *"Temporal manipulations can create branches in time. Unstable dimensional openings. Spatial paradoxes! Time loops!"* in short, it against the nature order that may emerged a catastrophical event, in coherent with He Who Remains explanations in Loki (2021), who claimed for any given moment in time has the power to create a nexus (a branching of timeline caused by modified events in the Primary/Sacred Timeline) which he claimed if it was not under his great supervision, the alternate branches may grow out in rampant where the collides between two or more universe became unavoidable and start to annihilated the whole universe which later in the Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness (2022) we know that this type of incident is so-called the incursion. Here is where He Who Remains comes up with the idea to create the Sacred Timeline under the supervision Time Variance Authority (TVA) after he won the Multiversal War against his own variances throughout the Multiverse, the idea was to destroy any branches that may be possible to create an incursion or the next Multiversal War, but what became an enigma was the He Who Remains willingly chose to be dead in the hand of Sylvie, one of the Loki variances who bound her life to take down the TVA. The death of He Who Remains unleashed chaos into the Sacred Timeline. Bridging away to the release of the first animated MCU TV series What If...? (2021), a various alternate timelines across the Multiverse following the consequence Sylvie does in Loki (2021). While in December SONY release all three of their Spider-Man characters for film adaptation under the title of Spider-Man: No Way Home (2021), The term Multiverse began to trend the websearch as seen through Google Trends, and it hit the peak on May, 2022 due to Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness film released. Indicates another Marvel's successive trend-setter, although in 2018 Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse was released consisting of an actual Multiverse as its main plot to reason the cross over various kinds of Spiderman into one set of narrative, while the movie is not set in the MCU franchise it may give a positive effect on audiences to embrace the Multiverse concept as the focal of the

transmedial storytelling. The multiversal jump Spider-Man from SONY universe to MCU succeed to bring their previous Spider-Man film productions to breath once more, as quoting from the-numbers.com, the first highest grossing superhero films Sam Raimi's Spider-Man (2002) gained the 6th rank of Netflix Daily Charts on October 2, 2021, and stayed in top ten October 6, 2021. The digital footprints show an indication that audiences were trying to gain their knowledge of the previous movie in order to fully understands the plot of the upcoming film, and the Transmedial Storytelling phenomenon of "one world, many texts" may become a great hook to opiate the audience to watch every single released production even if they didn't like, say a character or an ideology inside the plot.

MCU already told complex nature of how the multiverse works in their narrative, but we are not yet to be told how exactly it was created, with just a few descriptive moments of Celestials in MCU's Eternals (2021) we may only get the information based on the the Marvel Comics itself of which very likely are the source texts for MCU's Multiverse, however, by the reasons of limited time to conduct independent research, we quote through [marvel.fandom.com](https://marvel.fandom.com/wiki/Multiverse) to gather the data of Multiverse in the Marvel Comics, of which they said: In the beginning, there was only one universe (cosmos) called the First Firmament, the First Firmament then creates two types of entities called the Celestials, and the Aspirants of which later both of them started a war that shattered the First Firmament into countless universe hence forming the Second Cosmos and First Multiverse. As these new universes coalesced, a new, collective being was formed. Each iteration of the Multiverse has gone through a different instance of renewal, which constitutes the destruction and re-creation of everything there is starting from zero, with each renewal prompting the Multiverse to evolve further. The Third Cosmos was the first Multiverse born from this cycle and set the template for it through the battle between the cosmic entities Lifebringer One and Anti-All.

At this point, the epic story of Avengers: Endgame looks like just another tiny, momentary speck within an indifferent universe. Even though after ten years of narrative constructions of The Infinity Saga (Phase One, Phase Two, Phase Three), The death of The Mad Titan in the Avengers: Endgame (2019) forged a world record hit as the highest opening-weekend gross worldwide with \$357,115,007 in the first week it was released, and with just a couple of months later to become the highest grossing movie of all time, earning a total of \$2,8 billion at the box office.

After a long expedition of fortune, Marvel has found the tools to extract their abundant gold deposits, without question, the finale of MCU's Earth Mightiest Heroes won't arrive in the near future. According to [marvel.fandom.com](https://marvel.fandom.com/wiki/Multiverse), there are more than 70,000 characters (including all mutants and other side-characters) in the Marvel Multiverse, hypothetically the numerous number presents a huge amount of potential storylines to develop, one foreseeable obstacle is how to extract the gold as effective as possible without ruining down the mountain. In February 2018 Quartz published their analysis based on Box Office Mojo data "To get an idea for how much Marvel is poised to monopolize the movies". Quartz's data scientist used Marvel-based movies from 2000 to 2019 as analyzed data for their forecast "On current trends, there will be one Marvel movie a week in 2036" the works on realizing it perfectly are undeniably enigmatic but pretty much possible, and putting the Multiverse concept into the MCU narrative has raised the odds to maximize MCU narrative potential.

Concluding Remarks

Our paper takes up the question of how MCU film adaptations establish the idea of Multiverse. We approach the question using contemporary film adaptation framework. The framework assumes adaptation text and source text coexist, has no implied superiority to the source text, and adaptation

text is autonomous. The framework also assumes adaptation is a result of creative realization of the adaptor, and that it is likely to be oriented by the attempt of attaining profit. By applying this framework, we manage to offer an in-depth criticism that is neglected by scholars who remain in the position of applying fidelity criticism to study film adaptation. As to the answer of our question, Multiverse seems to play a fundamental role that allows Marvel Studio to expand their MCU film projects, thus enabling the studio to continue adapting comic books it produces. It also justifies narrative modifications in the adaptation as well as integrate prior versions of Marvel Comic adaptation as part of MCU diegesis. In other words, Multiverse seems to be a narrative strategy that applies transmedial storytelling and transfictionality. Importantly, MCU seems to be a part of Marvel Studio business development as the films have been regarded as highly profitable. In terms of economic motive, Multiverse strikes us an impression of a key to keep on exploring the business potential in the practice of film adaptation.

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