

Reading the Novel and Film Adaptation of John Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

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Abstract

Fiction has been a productive site for postmodern narrative experiment. Writers like John Fowles render their works as metafiction, i.e., the foregrounding of the fictionality of fiction. This paper will attempt to analyse how films made from postmodern novels are prone to the “referential complexities” of parody, with reference to Fowles’ *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*. It will also study how changes in adaptation may occur when a novel written in a particular historical period is adapted in contemporary times. In the novel, we see an explicit declaration of the artificiality of the events being narrated. This paper will examine how the elements of space and time are coordinated in the structure of the film to produce a final unified aesthetic vision. The success of the film adaptation of Fowles’ novel is an accomplishment as it was a brave attempt to film what Linda Hutcheon calls an example of a historiographic metafiction.

Keywords : historiographic metafiction, parallel narratives, film adaptation