



University of Tehran press

Research in Contemporary World Literature

<http://jor.ut.ac.ir>, Email: pajuhesh@ut.ac.ir

p-ISSN : 2588-4131 e-ISSN: 2588-7092

The Metamorphosis of Women in Najib Mahfouz's Midaq Alley and Its Cinematic Adaptation Cafe Setareh

Ebrahim Mohammadi ¹ 0000-0003-180139-5713 Sayed Mahdi Rahimi ² 0000-0003-3404-4215
Effat Qafoori Hasanabad ³ 0000-0001-6385-5178

1. Department of Persian Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, University of Birjand, Birjand, Iran.. E-mail: emohammadi@birjand.ac.ir

2. Department of Persian Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, University of Birjand, Birjand, Iran.. E-mail: smrahimi@birjand.ac.ir

3. Department of Persian Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, University of Birjand, Birjand, Iran.. E-mail: effat.ghafoori@birjand.ac.ir

Article Info	Extended Abstract
<p>Article type: Research Article</p> <p>Article history: Received: 11 July 2022 Received in revised form: 25 September 2022 Accepted: 31 October 2022 Published online: Summer 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Adaptation, Cafe Setareh, feminine narrative, feminism, interdisciplinary studies, metamorphosis, Midaq Alley.</p>	<p>Cinema has borrowed from literature since its birth. This interconnectedness between the two has enriched cinema by harnessing the abundant wealth of literary content. The most obvious connection between literature and cinema can be seen in cinematic adaptation. In <i>A Theory of Adaptation</i> (2006), Linda Hutcheon asserts that adaptation in cinema or intermedia is different based on the extent of adaptation and its differences from and similarities with the original text. Adaptation is usually compared to translation. Just as there is no such thing as a literal translation, there can be no literal adaptation. Transposition to another medium always means change, which requires a reformatting into the language of the new media. In other words, adaptation involves a very specific translation from one sign system to another, which in this case means from words to images (Hutcheon 16). The study of the cinematic adaptation from the novel has provided a suitable ground for the interaction between cinema and literature due to its close connection with the realities of life. Therefore, filmmakers turn to literary texts, especially novels, in order to create monumental works. As the relatively loose adaptation of Najib Mahfouz's <i>Midaq Alley</i> (1947), Saman Moqadam's first adaptation movie <i>Cafe Setareh</i> (2006) is an example of the interaction as well as the connection between literature and cinema. This movie echoes the specific political and economic situation of the eighties and its effect on the life of the oppressed class, especially women. It is worth mentioning that Moqadam creatively recontextualizes an Arabic text and highlights women in the film. He coordinates the place, the character's names, and their customs with the new context. The current paper studies the narrative structure of <i>Cafe Setareh</i> and <i>Midaq Alley</i> based on the patterns of the feminine narrative in order to determine the difference between the narratives in the source and destination texts. An analysis of the novel and its cinematic adaptation reveals that both portray the status of women as "the second sex". A number of components can be distinguished in both, which include symbolism, a narrow spatial setting, meticulous attention to detail, and misandry. However, the outstanding contention between the oppressed and the dominant classes has made the film's narrative more feminine. The film's narration has been changed creatively: the narrative of <i>Cafe Setareh</i> is feminized by the prominent presence of female characters, a sympathetic exhibition of women's situation, the multiplicity of narrators, a romantic portrayal of love, and dreamlike characterization.</p>

Cite this article: Mohammadi, Ebrahim; Rahimi, Sayed Mahdi; & ghafoori, effat. "Woman from Kuche Medaq to Cafe Stareh The Transformation of Women in Kuche Medaq in Its Cinematic Narrative (Cafe Stareh)". *Research in Contemporary World Literature*, 2024, 29 (1), 71-97. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.22059/jor.2022.342972.2305>

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Publisher: University of Tehran Press.

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.22059/jor.2022.342972.2305>

