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"Like Oil and Water": Adaptation Intertextuality, and Metatextuality in *Lady Snowblood* (Fujita, 1973)

[Matthew Bolton, Gonzaga University](#)

Keywords

adaptation, manga, Lady Snowblood, jidaigeki, metatextuality,

Abstract

Toshiya Fujita's 1973 film adaptation of Kazuo Koike and Kazuo Koike's manga series *Lady Snowblood* is a case study in the challenges inherent in adapting a graphic narrative to film. A sprawling episodic story of assassination, the original manga text offers challenges to any adapter in terms of narrative construction, and media affordances, challenges that Fujita and Osada gamely take up in their film. In their attempts to adapt the manga, Fujita and Osada rely on three adaptation strategies—textuality, intertextuality, and metatextuality—that reveal both their nimble thinking about the adaptation process, but that also demonstrates the limitations of these strategies in assimilating the capacious source material upon which the film is based. Fujita's film is a fascinating text that both reworks and revises the source material, also allowing it to remain a legible contesting presence within

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