

A HERMENEUTIC ANALYSIS OF FILM *THE LAST LETTER FROM YOUR LOVER*

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Abstract

The relationship between past and present is a compelling theme in film, particularly in *The Last Letter from Your Lover*, which explores love, time, and memory across two eras—the 1960s and the modern day. This study aims to interpret *The Last Letter from Your Lover* using a qualitative approach, grounded in Gadamer's hermeneutic theory, to uncover layered meanings that are not directly expressed within the film. The analysis draws on primary data from key film elements, including dialogue, character development, narration, and other cinematic techniques, to provide a nuanced interpretation. Secondary data from academic literature, journals, and articles on hermeneutics supplement the study, offering theoretical depth to the analysis. Findings reveal how themes of love, time, and memory manifest through Gadamer's concepts of historically effected consciousness, pre-understanding, fusion of horizons, and application. This research aims to contribute to film studies by enhancing understanding of implied meaning through hermeneutic analysis, enriching perspectives on temporal and emotional connections within film narratives.

Keywords: *literature; hermeneutic; gadamer; interpretation*

1. Introduction

Literary works are means of conveying ideas and concepts to society at large. Prijanto in (Fitriyah, 2021) stated that literary works are believed to have the ability to “humanize” people by helping them understand and appreciate human traits. Literature reflects life, describes the realities of the past, and predicts the portrait of the future. Of course, literature is a work that is honest and dares to explore the reality of human life from various perspectives. Literature, as an art form rich in interpretation, is often a mirror for human complexity, including how individuals understand, record, and interpret memories and time. Literature allows readers to see the world from multiple perspectives, including an understanding of the relationship between the past, present, and future.

In understanding and interpreting literary texts, various approaches to literary criticism have been developed. One of them is hermeneutics, an interpretive approach that emphasizes the importance of context, interpretation, and reinterpreting in the process of understanding texts. Interpretation is a crucial element in the comprehension

of any work, whether literary or non-literary. By interpreting, one can discern not only what is explicitly stated but also what is implicitly conveyed. As a result, interpretation plays an important role in revealing the hidden layers of meaning (Nursida, 2017).

Theories such as hermeneutics have long been an important tool in interpretative approaches to literary works, allowing readers to explore deeper layers of meaning through context, structure, and other elements that make up the text. Hermeneutics, with its focus on interpretation and understanding, allows us to see how texts dialogue with the cultural, historical, and individual contexts in which they are read or viewed. According to Gadamer, the object of hermeneutics is to analyze the content of any given written text, whether it be fiction or nonfiction, in a way that is faithful to its original meaning and intent (Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2014). Hermeneutics involves the process of communicating, explaining, and translating messages to readers to transform ignorance into understanding. Hermeneutics also includes the approach of interpreting symbols, such as texts, to reveal their meaning and significance (Simega, 2013).

In the context of movie, the relationship between the past and present is often an interesting subject of exploration. A movie is a work of art that consists of moving scenes and produces moving images, and a movie is the result of a literary work created through a process (Asmarani, 2021). Movie often incorporate non-linear narratives to create complex story structures, which allow viewers to reflect on how memories and experiences of the past can be used in the present.

"The Last Letter from Your Lover" is an interesting example of a movie that takes this approach, exploring the themes of love and memory through two different time periods: the 1960s and the modern era. The movie tells a love story that travels through time, combining the 1960s with the presents. The film employs a complex narrative and deep characterization to explore themes such as love, time, and memory, as well as the ways in which interpretations of the past influence our understanding.

So, based on the explanations, elaborations, and descriptions in this chapter, the researcher wants to interpret how love and memory play a role in the past and present lives of the characters, can be seen from a literary aspect, so the researchers are interested in analyzing and entitled A Hermeneutic Analysis of Film "The Last Letter from Your Lover".

2. Literature Review

In general, literature refers to written works that are considered to have artistic and aesthetic value. These include novels, short stories, poetry, theatre, film, essays, and so on that reflect various aspects of human life and emotional, social, cultural, and intellectual experiences. Literature is often also a reflection of the values and norms of a society and allows readers to contemplate and understand the world more deeply. According to Gorthe, literature is a very difficult world, so it must be understood and taken seriously (Darma, 2019).

Based on Badrun Literature is an art that used language and other signs as a tool and imaginative. Literature is a form of creative imagination used to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings of a poet in a beautiful specific way (Mulyati, 2021).

Wellek and warren (1962) defined literature is the expression of human consciousness and inspiration through the character in a concrete form. It points out that literature may also be defined as something humans create with the assistance of inspiration and awareness. The characters in the narrative then portray those, solidifying it as literature.

According to Patil (2015), literature is an art form that uses language and other signs imaginatively to express ideas, thoughts and feelings in a beautiful and specific way. Literature can also be defined as an expression of human consciousness and inspiration realized through characters in concrete form.

It can be concluded that, in general, literature includes written works that are considered to have artistic and aesthetic value, such as novels, short stories, poetry, theater, films, and essays that reflect various aspects of human life as well as emotional, social, cultural, and intellectual experiences. Literature is often a reflection of society's values and norms, allowing readers to reflect on and understand the world more deeply..

2.1 Hermeneutic Hans-George Gadamer

According to Heidegger in Nursida (2017), hermeneutics is the interpretation of Dasein. Dasein means human existence or human reality in the world. Dasein is interpreted by Heidegger as our daily reality. Our daily phenomena actually indicate the totality of human existence, including our frame of mind, our capacity as authentic individuals and our full engagement with the world and with others. Heidegger also said hermeneutics is a system of understanding so that hermeneutics does not exist as a general field of study but a plurality of several specialized hermeneutics (Palmer, 2022).

Gadamer's hermeneutics is a philosophical approach introduced by Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer's thought is rooted in the tradition of hermeneutics, which is the interpretation and understanding of classical texts, especially philosophical texts. Gadamer's main contribution lies in developing hermeneutics as a methodology that can be applied to various fields, including literature and culture. Following Heidegger, Gadamer mentions that he developed implicitly the implications of Heidegger's contribution to hermeneutics, Gadamer traced the development of hermeneutics in detail (Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2014).

Moreover, according to Gadamer, hermeneutics is more than just a method or technique for interpreting texts or works of art. In his famous work, "Truth and Method" (1960), Gadamer expanded the concept of hermeneutics into a philosophy that recognizes that the process of interpretation is never truly neutral or objective. For him, hermeneutics is not just about understanding the text precisely, but also about the understanding that is formed through the dialog between the interpreter and the text, as well as the experiences and historical horizons that shape the context of interpretation. Although Gadamer titled his book Truth and Method, it did not intend to make hermeneutics a method and was far from truth claims. For Gadamer, hermeneutics is not just a matter of interpretive methodology, but ontological interpretation, namely that understanding itself is the way of being of humans. So for Gadamer it is more of an effort to understand and interpret a text, both religious and other texts such as art and history (Sumaryano, 1993).

Gadamer emphasizes that interpretation is a dialogical process between subject and object, where the interpreter not only takes meaning from the text, but also brings their own experiences and horizons into the interpretation. Thus, the meaning of a text depends not only on the author's intention or intent, but is also shaped by the interaction between the interpreter and the text, as well as the cultural and historical context in which the interpretation takes place. In addition, Gadamer highlights the role of historical horizons in interpretation. According to him, interpretation cannot be separated from the cultural and historical context in which the text was created and

received. Therefore, in order to understand a text deeply, interpreters must understand its historical context, as well as recognize that their own perspectives can influence the way they understand the text.(Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2014). Gadamer developed these four elements into central points in his hermeneutic, namely:

1. Historically Effectuated Consciousness

According to this theory, an interpreter's understanding is influenced by the particular hermeneutic context around them, such as tradition, culture and life experience. Therefore, when interpreting a text, interpreters should be aware that their position can greatly affect their understanding of the text.

2. Pre-understanding

The influence of a particular hermeneutic situation forms what Gadamer calls *vorverstandnis* or "pre-understanding" in an interpreter towards the interpreted text. This pre-understanding is a definite starting position that must exist when the interpreter reads the text. This pre-understanding is necessary so that the interpreter can dialogue with the content of the interpreted text. Without pre-understanding, one will not succeed in understanding the text properly. The result of this correction to pre-understanding is what Gadamer calls *Vollkommenheit des Vorverstandnisses* (Perfection of Pre-understanding).

3. Fusion of Horizon

Gadamer argues that one's current view is actually the result of the merging of various views from the past that continue to rotate. Thus, one's current views cannot be formed without the inheritance of views from the past. Every time a person interacts with a particular tradition in the process of interpretation, there is an amalgamation of these views. It happens in a historical consciousness that inevitably includes two poles of the universe of meaning, namely the text being understood and the meaning of an interpreter that will shape his horizon. Horizons move as those who perceive them move. By "fusion" (*verschmelzung*), Gadamer means to refer to the process of narrating foreign or past objects to particular interpreters in their place or cultural environment. So, interpretation is easier and better understood as a process of translation.

4. Application

It states that the objective meaning of the text must be considered in the interpretation process. Once the objective meaning is understood, the interpreter of the text needs to apply the relevant message in daily life. The challenge is that there is a significant time difference between the appearance of the text and the interpreter's lifetime, which is certainly accompanied by changes in social, political and other conditions. According to Gadamer, in addition to understanding and interpreting the text, the interpreter must also "apply" (*anwendung*) the message or teaching of the text in the current context. In Gadamer's view, what must be applied is not the literal meaning of the text, but rather the meaning that is more meaningful and relevant to current conditions.

Gadamer also emphasized that hermeneutics applies not only to written texts, but also to all forms of human expression, including art, music, and even personal experience. As such, hermeneutics becomes a powerful tool for understanding meaning

in various contexts of human life, as well as recognizing complexity and subjectivity in the process of interpretation.(Nursida,2017).

Overall, hermeneutics according to Gadamer is a philosophy of interpretation that recognizes that the meaning of a text is never fixed or stable, but always open to be re-understood in different contexts. Hermeneutics emphasizes the importance of dialogue, experience, and historical context in the process of interpretation, and recognizes that interpretation is an activity that is always involved with human subjectivity and complexity (Gadamer, 2004).

3. Research Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with perspective hermeneutics to understand the interpretation of film "The Last Letter from Your Lover". In qualitative methods, a research focuses more on a deep understanding of the interaction between concepts that are being observed empirically (Emzir, 2009). Emzir explains that qualitative research focuses on narrative descriptions of activities carried out and their impact on life. Using a qualitative method allows the researcher to understand and describe the complexity of the film. A qualitative study also explores the meanings and personal experiences that individuals create within a specific context (Miles & A. Huberman, 1994, Ramsook, 2018). The research also uses a hermeneutic approach to analyze the film. Hermeneutic approach focuses on the unique lived experiences and interpretations of individuals (Farah, 2019; Oerther, 2021).

Hermeneutic research is a method for interpreting language or historical texts. The hermeneutic process is a series of steps used as a methodology for understanding a meaning (Baracco, 2017; Hamida & Nurhajati, 2022; Oerther, 2021). This method is realized through the interpretation of text or reality, with the aim of finding the essence of the object being studied, while taking into account the historical context, tradition, knowledge, and interpretive experience (pre-knowledge). In qualitative research, the researcher functions as the main instrument. Data collection is carried out through documentation methods that are in accordance with the research topic. Data are analyzed inductively, so that qualitative research emphasizes the meaning contained behind the data, using Gadamer's Hermeneutic analysis technique (Asmarani, 2021; Noland, 2019).

The primary data of this research are everything in this film that are relevant to the research topic, such as film scenes, text/dialogue, and characters. While the secondary data is from journals, books, etc. Data analysis is a series of activities of reviewing, grouping, interpreting, compiling and verifying data and information so that an event has social, scholastic and logical value. Data analysis is carried out after information is obtained through the selected instrument, which will then be used to answer research problems. The analysis used in this study is Gadamer's Hermeneutic analysis. The researchers will conduct the analysis with the following steps:

- First, the researchers watch the film "The Last Letter From Your Lover".
- Second, the researchers select and classify various aspects in the film "The Last Letter From Your Lover" that are relevant to the research topic, such as movie scenes, text or dialogue, and characters relevant to the theme of time and memory that may appear.

- Next, the researchers interpret and analyzes the dialogue scenes that contain meaning about love, time and memory using 4 main theories of Gadamer's hermeneutics. Through this process, researchers can deepen the understanding of the theoretical framework that will be used in analyzing primary data. Journals and books related to hermeneutics can provide additional insights into relevant ways of interpreting. After primary and secondary data are collected, the next step is to analyze the data with a hermeneutic approach. This approach allows researchers to understand and interpret the meanings implied in the film.
- Finally, after analysing the film using Gadamer's hermenutic, the researchers draw conclusions.

4. Discussion

This research analyzes how the relationship between the past and the present of the character through hermeneutic theory and how to interpret the representation of love, time and memory using Gadamer's hermeneutic theory found in the film *The Last Letter from Your Lover*. Characters behavior, actions, norms, mimics, values, thoughts, conversations, cultural objects, historical objects, and so on; they are texts. Because all things related to humans are understood by humans, namely culture, religion, society, state, even the entire universe, everything is a text. Therefore, hermeneutics is needed to understand them.

4.1 Summary of the Film *The Last Letter from Your Lover*

The Last Letter from Your Lover (2021), directed by Augustine Frizzell, is a romantic drama based on Jojo Moyes' novel. It interweaves two timelines: 1965 and the present day. The 1965 story follows Jennifer Stirling, a wealthy woman in an unhappy marriage, who falls in love with journalist Anthony O'Hare. Their forbidden love is complicated by social constraints and misunderstandings. In the present, journalist Ellie Haworth finds their forgotten love letters and becomes inspired to uncover their story. Along the way, Ellie forms a connection with archivist Rory. Ultimately, Ellie tracks down the elderly Jennifer, who reveals she and Anthony were eventually reunited. The movie explores themes of love, loss, perseverance, and the power of letters, blending past and present stories into an emotionally moving narrative.

4.2 Analysis of Hermeneutic Gadamer of *The Last Letter from Your Lover*

4.2.1 Historically Effeced Consciousness

In the film *The Last Letter from Your Lover*, the concept of historically influenced consciousness is shown through the complex interactions between the characters and the historical context they inhabit. The awareness of historical influence, that is, that understanding is in fact influenced by the particular hermeneutical situation that surrounds it, such as tradition, culture, or life experience, is based on the theory of historically influenced consciousness. In this way, when interpreting a text, an interpreter must know that he or she is in a particular position that can greatly change the way he or she interprets the text being interpreted. This theory argues that when interpreting a text, an interpreter must be able to go beyond his or her subjectivity. The conditions can be seen in the scene.

The examples of scene are as follows:

Data 1



Figure 1. Ellie found first letter

“My dearest and only love, I know you’re frightened, but believe me when I say, I’ve known nothing like this before, and can assure you that I never will again, I know I will never be satisfied with just a part of you. And for that reason, I’m going to take the job in New York. I’ll be on platform two, Marylebone, Friday. 7:15 PM. Come with me, darling, Spare a life half-lived a marriage of convenience. More important is spare yourself, seize this thing that is true, and real, and infinite. Yes, it is scary. But I believe living a lie is worse. We could be happy, so happy, know that you hold my heart, my hopes in your hand.” - Your Boots

(The Last Letter from Your Love, 2021, 15.22-16.00)

Context:

In the scene, Ellie found first letter. This letter is an expression of deep feelings from someone who loves the recipient very much. The writer recognizes how deep his love is and how unique the feeling is, which he has never experienced before and is sure he will never feel again. The writer has decided to take a job in New York and invites the recipient to come along, showing the writer's readiness to take a big step towards their future together. In this letter, the author urges the recipient to leave behind an unfulfilling life and a marriage of convenience, emphasizing the importance of seeking true happiness. Although this decision is scary, the writer believes that living a lie is worse and wants them both to live in truth and honesty. The letter ends by reminding the recipient that their happiness together is very possible and that the recipient holds the writer's heart and hopes in her hands. The writer signs the letter with "Your Boots", a nickname that shows the closeness and intimacy between them. The letter is an emotional plea to choose true love and happiness, even if it means leaving familiar comforts behind.

Data 2

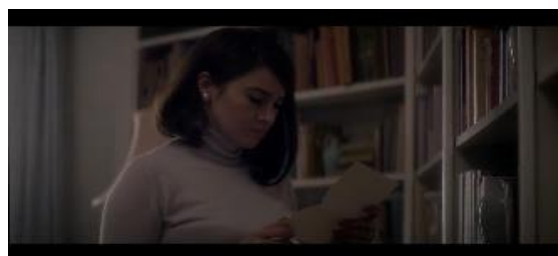


Figure 2. Jennifer read first letter she found

"Dearest J, I know what the situation costs you, darling Jenny. But I also know that you and I could no more not love each other than the Earth could stop circling the sun. You were upset the last time we parted, and I cursed myself for it. My frustration overwhelms me. There is never enough time, never enough of you. Let's meet tomorrow." – B
(*The Last Letter from Your Love*, 2021, 18.06-18.29)

Context:

In this scene, Jennifer read first letter she found. This letter reveals the deep feelings of love and emotional complexity between the writer (B) and the recipient (J, also called Jenny). The writer recognizes the suffering Jenny is experiencing due to their situation, but also asserts that their love is inevitable, just as the Earth cannot stop circling the Sun. The writer regrets having upset Jenny during their last meeting and feels frustrated by the limited time they have together. Therefore, the author proposes to meet again the next day. This letter is not just an expression of love, but also a deep dialog between two individuals trying to understand and overcome difficulties together. It reveals the complexity of human feelings and the importance of communication in maintaining a strong relationship.

Interpretation:

Jennifer Stirling, living in the 1965 characterized by strict social norms, is shaped by patriarchal expectations that limit her freedom in seeking personal happiness. In contrast, Ellie Haworth, as a modern-day journalist, initially faces Jennifer's letters with a skeptical pre-understanding of idealistic love, influenced by her bitter experience in a previous relationship. However, through her reading of the letters, Ellie undergoes a profound transformation, understanding the emotional depth and complexity of the relationship embodied in Jennifer's narrative.

As such, the film illustrates how history not only shapes external social norms, but also influences the personal experiences of its characters, making them more complex and connected to universal themes of love, freedom, and identity in a changing context. In line with this, Sari and Pratiwi (2023) said that people are social beings. Consequently, humans want a sense of connection, affection, and social contact. Human beings also want their need for security has been satisfied and completed. This desire comes naturally. The need to communicate with others is a part of this need. Psychologically speaking, humans are social creatures, so they cannot survive alone.

Generally speaking, the historicity of meaning is likely to be shaped by the historical moment. It is important to take into account historical differences and to acknowledge one's own historical moment and the moment of the text. By doing so, one can avoid anachronistic falsehoods. Time understands change; there are always differences but, at the same time, these differences are shaped by a shared ontology—we each have a world, and it is this sense of belonging that determines historical differences.

4.2.2 Pre-Understanding

Pre-understanding, as an initial framework of assumptions, knowledge, and experiences brought by the interpreter, influences the way Ellie Haworth interprets the

love letters from the 1960s that she finds. As a young journalist with personal experiences of failed relationships, Ellie's pre-understanding initially made her skeptical of the romanticism of love in Jennifer Stirling's letters. However, as she delves into the content of the letters, her preconceptions turn into tools to connect Jennifer's experiences with her own.

The examples can be seen in the following scene.

Data 3



Figure 3. A Letter from the Edge

"Its 4 AM I can't sleep. It's like The Road to Madness, but I lie here imagining him next to you, his licence to touch you, to hold you, and I would do anything to make that freedom mine. For as long as I can't have you, I'll conjure you here instead. Your scent, you hair, that slow sideways smile when something I say amuses you. Darling J, I've never wished harder for the dawn." - Your Boot
(*The Last Letter from Your Love*, 2021, 36.02-36.32)

Context:

In this scene, Ellie found a letter from the edge. This letter expresses the restless and desperate feelings of the writer who could not sleep at 4 am. The writer feels like she is on "The Road to Madness," imagining another person who has the freedom to be with her loved one (J), including touching and hugging her. The author feels a deep desire to have such freedom and expresses that, as long as she cannot have J, she will imagine his presence as a substitute. The author misses J's distinctive scent, hair, and smile that appears when something said by the author comforts her. The writer also expresses that she has never looked forward to the dawn so much, showing how hard the night will be without J. This letter reflects the intensity of the writer's longing, jealousy, and emotional need for J. Other data can be found in other scenes.

Another example is as follows:

Data 4

My dearest J, there is no sound sweeter than your knock on the door. It's like there's always a part of me waiting for it. I struggled to focus at work because my thoughts veer irrevocably back to you. What do global warfare and politics matter to me now? If this carries on, they'll put me in the gardening pages. - Boot
(*The Last Letter from Your Love*, 2021, 53.52-54.11)

Context:

This letter can be understood as an expression of the writer's deep personal feelings and subjective experiences towards the recipient of her letter, called J. The author intimately

conveys that there is no sweeter sound than J's knock at the door. This illustrates how J's arrival is always anticipated by the writer, so there is a part of her that always looks forward to that moment. The writer expresses difficulty concentrating at work because her thoughts always return to J. This shows that J's presence has a very strong and disruptive influence on the writer's life and thoughts. The writer reflects that issues such as global wars and politics are no longer so important to her in the context of her feelings and thoughts being focused on J. With the phrase "*If this carries on, they'll put me on the gardening pages,*" the writer expresses that if her feelings continue like this, her previously serious and important work or interests could be replaced by more simple and intimate things like the garden pages. This shows the transformation of the writer's priorities and focus that was influenced by J's presence in her life.

Interpretation:

This letter emphasizes subjective experience and dialogical interpretation between the writer and the reader. The writer not only conveys her feelings and thoughts directly to J, but also tries to express the profound influence of J's presence in her life and thoughts. This process shows how Ellie's pre-understanding not only reflects her perspective on the complexities of modern relationships, but also changes dynamically through interaction with different time narratives, allowing her to reinterpret and explore the deeper meanings of love and memory.

As such, this analysis emphasizes the importance of recognizing preconceptions in interpreting personal and historical narratives within the broader context of culture and human experience. Influence by a particular hermeneutic situation forms what Gadamer calls "pre-understanding" of an interpreter towards the text being interpreted, this aims to enable an interpreter to dialogue with the content of the text being interpreted.

Apart from that, pre-understanding according to Gadamer must be ready and open to be criticized, restored, and corrected by the interpreter himself, when he is aware or knows that his understanding is not in accordance with what is meant by the text being interpreted. The result of rehabilitation or correction of the pre-understanding is called *vollkommenheit des vorverständnisses* (perfection of pre-understanding).

4.2.3 Fusion of Horizon

Fusion of Horizons is a concept in Gadamer's hermeneutics that describes the process by which the interpreter's current horizon interacts and fuses with the horizon of the text or phenomenon being interpreted, creating a more profound and inclusive understanding of the meanings involved in the interpretation.

The examples are as follows:

Data 5.



Figure 5.

Dearest J, I know what the situation costs you, darling Jenny. But I also know that you and I could no more not love each other than the Earth could stop circling the sun. You were upset the last time we parted, and I cursed myself for it. My frustration overwhelms me. There is never enough time, never enough of you. Let's meet tomorrow.

- B

(The Last Letter from Your Love, 2021, 11.04-12.06)

Context:

In this film, Ellie Haworth, as the main interpreter, explores the love letters of Jennifer Stirling written in the 1960s.

Interpretation:

Ellie brings with her pre-understandings influenced by her personal experiences as well as modern understandings of love, relationships, and the complexity of human emotions. On the other hand, Jennifer's letters reflect a past horizon colored by the different social norms and values of her time. Communication of meaning is the core of the hermeneutical process. When two individuals meet and communicate with each other about something, there are always two perspectives on the world but the two world images are rather close to each other. Gadamer said that in spoken language dialogue, in the process of question and answer, giving and receiving, speaking at opposite ends and seeing each other's points, communication is carried out. That is, in relation to the written tradition, it is the task of hermeneutics (Gadamer, 2004).

Through the process of horizon fusion, Ellie not only seeks to understand the historical context in which the letters were written, but also to connect the experiences and feelings revealed in the letters with her own personal experiences. This process allows Ellie to integrate elements from both horizons, creating a more complex and profound understanding of love across generations.

The Fusion of Horizons also reflects a transformation in Ellie's understanding of the concepts of love and loss as she becomes increasingly engaged with the narrative of Jennifer's letters. This process not only expanded her interpretive horizons, but also stimulated her personal growth and deep reflection on the values and emotions associated with the human experience in various historical and cultural contexts.

By applying the concept of Fusion of Horizons in Gadamer's hermeneutics, this analysis reveals how important the dynamic interaction between the interpreter's subjective experience and the historical context of the interpreted text is to achieve a more holistic and detailed understanding of the representation of the complexities of love in visual literary works such as this film. Hermeneutical reading of a text means interacting directly with the text. According to Gadamer, to get the closest meaning to the text, a dialogue is needed between the author's horizon, the text's horizon, and the interpreter's horizon. The author's horizon includes the author's life background, experiences, and personal history. This is because the author, in his creative process, cannot be separated from his life history when forming the structure of the world in his work (Gadamer, 2004).

4.2.4 Application

Application in Gadamer's hermeneutics refers to the process by which interpreters apply their understanding of the interpreted text or phenomenon to the wider

context or their personal experience. This involves the use of pre-understanding and integration with the text itself to achieve a deeper understanding.

In the context of "The Last Letter from Your Lover", Ellie Haworth, as the main character, explores the love letters of Jennifer Stirling written in the 1960s. Ellie brings with her pre-understandings influenced by her personal experiences as well as contemporary views on love, relationships, and the complexity of human emotions. Jennifer's letters, on the other hand, reflect a past horizon colored by the different social norms and values of her time.

Through the application process, Ellie not only sought to understand the historical context in which the letters were written, but also to connect the experiences and feelings revealed in the letters with her own personal experiences. This process allows Ellie to integrate elements from both horizons, creating a richer and more contextualized understanding of the representation of time and memory in the context of a love story that crosses time.

The application of Gadamer's Hermeneutics theory in this analysis demonstrates how the dynamic interplay between the interpreter's subjective experience and the historical context of the text being interpreted can result in a more in-depth and detailed interpretation of the representation of the complexities of time and memory in visual literary works such as this film. By recognizing the important role of pre-understanding and integration in the process of interpretation, this analysis highlights how relevant Gadamer's hermeneutic theory is in understanding complex and multifaceted narratives in different cultural and historical contexts.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that in film "The Last Letter from Your Lover", the concept of *historically influenced consciousness* is explored through the characters' interactions and their respective historical contexts. Jennifer Stirling, constrained by patriarchal norms in 1965, faces limitations on her personal freedom, while modern journalist Ellie Haworth, shaped by past romantic disappointments, initially views Jennifer's letters with scepticism. As Ellie immerses herself in the letters, she experiences a transformation, gaining a deeper understanding of Jennifer's emotional journey. The film illustrates how historical contexts shape social norms and individual identities, linking universal themes of love, freedom, and the human need for connection and meaning.

Pre-understanding, as the initial set of assumptions and experiences an interpreter brings, shapes how Ellie Haworth interprets the 1960s love letters she discovers. These letters reflect a subjective dialogue between writer and reader, revealing deep emotions and the influence of J's presence on the writer's life. As Ellie engages with these narratives, her modern views on love and relationships evolve, prompting a reinterpretation of love and memory. This analysis highlights the importance of recognizing and revising preconceptions when interpreting personal and historical narratives. Gadamer's idea of "pre-understanding" emphasizes that interpretations must remain open to critique, allowing for a reflective process that refines and perfects one's understanding.

Gadamer's concept of *Fusion of Horizons* describes how an interpreter's current perspective merges with the horizon of the text or phenomenon being interpreted to achieve a deeper understanding. In *The Last Letter from Your Lover*, Ellie's modern views and personal experiences interact with the historical context of Jennifer's letters,

which reflect past social norms. Through this fusion, Ellie not only seeks to grasp the historical context but also connects it with her own experiences, enriching her understanding of love across different generations. This process transforms Ellie's views on love and loss, enhancing her interpretive perspective and personal growth. Gadamer's theory emphasizes that dialogue between the author's, the text's, and the interpreter's horizons is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of complex themes like love, as the author's background significantly influences the text.

In Gadamer's hermeneutics, *application* involves using one's pre-understandings to connect a text or phenomenon with broader contexts or personal experiences, leading to deeper insights. In *The Last Letter from Your Lover*, Ellie Haworth engages with Jennifer Stirling's 1960s love letters, bringing her modern views and personal experiences into the interpretive process. Jennifer's letters, shaped by past social norms, contrast with Ellie's contemporary perspectives. Through this process of application, Ellie not only seeks to understand the historical context but also relates it to her own life, creating a richer, more nuanced understanding of time, memory, and love. This approach highlights how combining an interpreter's personal experiences with the text's historical context can yield a more profound interpretation, demonstrating Gadamer's theory's relevance in analysing complex narratives across different cultural and historical settings.

In this film shows how Gadamer's hermeneutics can not just used as a theoretical framework, but a dynamic process of understanding, connecting and changing our perspectives through encounters with different times and experiences. By using a hermeneutic approach, the other researchers can understand and interpret the meanings implied in the film, thus hopefully, making a significant contribution to film studies.

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