Remakes As Translation: Cultural Flow

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Introduction

A few months ago there were posters in the New York subway system advertising a movie called *The Eye*. A few months before that it was posters for *The Grudge 2*. If one only saw the posters or watched the movies then there was no way to know that both of these movies were remakes of foreign films. In the past decades Hollywood has remade a large number of foreign films. Simultaneously, the availability of subtitled and dubbed films has remained negligible in movie theaters and small in home video releases. Such a relationship between subtitling, dubbing and remaking, where one thrives while the others stagnate, is important because it points toward the theory that all three are related forms of translation. However, such a conclusion has not previously been made.

In the past two decades there have been a number of attempts to analyze Hollywood's remake practice. Primarily these analyses have attempted to understand why Hollywood remade films from France in the 1980s and 1990s. Some of the definitions of the remake that have emerged through these critical engagements are: "Films based on an earlier screenplay;"[1] "new versions of existing films;"[2] "films that to one degree or another *announce* to us that they embrace one or more previous movies;"[3] "A species of interpretation."[4] While interpretation and translation (the simultaneous interpreter and translator) are certainly related it is interesting that the term translation is never used as a defining term. The studies link the remake to adaptation and consider it through its textuality instead of its politics.

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[1] Lucy Mazdon. *Encore Hollywood: Remaking French Cinema*. London: bfi Publishing, 2000: p. 2.
[2] Laura Grindstaff. "Pretty Woman with a Gun." In Jennifer Forrest and Leonard R. Koos eds. *Dead Ringers: The Remake in Theory and Practice*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002: p. 274.
[3] Andrew Horton and Stuart Y. McDougal. "Introduction." In Andrew Horton and Stuart Y McDougal eds. *Play It Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998: p. 3.
[4] Leo Braudy. "Afterword: Rethinking Remakes." In Andrew Horton and Stuart Y McDougal eds. *Play It Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998: p. 327.

There are two reasons why the remake has not been connected with translation. The first is that the remake of foreign films is considered only one of a couple types of remake. Robert Eberwein lists 15 different types of remakes including silent films being remade as sound films, films with multiple remakes, films that change the race of the main characters, pornographic remakes, and films made in the United States and remade as foreign films (or vice versa).[5] Because these different types of remake have been grouped together the relationship between remake, subtitle and dub has been missed. The second reason relates to the negative position of translation in English during the modern period in general and in the 19th and 20th centuries in the United States in particular.

This paper seeks to understand the nature of remakes of foreign films. Within this main question there a few related sub questions: why Hollywood remade films from France in the 1980s and 90s, why Hollywood did not remake films from Japan in the 1980s, and why has Hollywood remade Japanese films from the mid 1990s to the present. Ultimately, my argument will claim that the remake of a foreign film is a type of translation. Its purpose is no different than subtitles, dubbing, lecturing or the multi language version. It enables the movement of a filmic[6] text from one culture to another where culture is either spatial or temporal. This is not a groundbreaking argument, but it is a somewhat unorthodox one due to the various cultural determinations including the original legal definitions of cinema and the remake, and the current understanding, intellectual and legal, of translation within the United States. The benefits of this redetermination of adaptation to translation are that the remake can be understood as a cultural form with implications that are textual, as the current definitions grant, but also political, which

[5] Robert Eberwein. "Remakes and Cultural Studies." In Andrew Horton and Stuart Y McDougal eds. *Play It Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998: pp. 28-30.

[6] While the discourse tends toward the word cinematic, I lean toward filmic throughout this paper to acknowledge the changing face of cinema from being theater based to being equally a home medium with the rise of videos, DVDs, home theaters and digital film.

they shy away from in their drive to recuperate the mode. Additionally, through developing an understanding of the different types of translation as possessing different qualities I aim to show that the current practice within the Hollywood community of remaking films, instead of subtitling or dubbing them, reproduces certain problematic aspects from the literary translation community.

Translation: Fidelity, Fertility, Localization and Power

In this initial section I will give an overview of Western translation theory by highlighting the concepts of fidelity, fertility and localization. All of these concepts will be used throughout the paper. Fidelity indicates the remake should be faithful to the original. Fertility leads from the idea that fidelity is impossible (for reasons I will discuss below) and that translation should instead work toward a maximum mixing to produce ideas of an Adamic or pure language. Localization is the concept of tailoring a translation so that it fits in with either source or target culture. Localization is inseparable from the intersections of power, domination and translation methodology, which will also be explored throughout this paper.

The essential conundrum of translation is quite simply the impossibility of a perfect translation. George Steiner writes:

> "A 'perfect' act of translation would be one of total synonymity. It would presume an interpretation so precisely exhaustive as to leave no single unite in the source-text – phonetic, grammatical, semantic, contextual – out of complete account, and yet so calibrated as to have added nothing in the way of paraphrase, explication or variant."[7]

A perfect translation would reproduce the exact meaning of an original utterance while both omitting and adding nothing. While such a drive toward perfect translation works in theory, the

[7] George Steiner. *After Babel: Aspects of Language & Translation*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998: p. 428.

tendency of natural languages to move toward polysemy means that perfect translation is impossible in practice.[8]

The impossibility of a perfect translation results in the translator being forced to side with either fidelity to the word or fidelity to the sense, which are necessarily considered mutually exclusive. Thus, the history of translation can be seen as the simple preference within societies for either one mode or the other. As a Roman translating Greek speeches, Cicero (106-43 BCE[9]) makes the case for free, or sense-for-sense, translation by arguing that speeches are made to "instruct, delight and move the minds of [an] audience" and as such need to be of the flavor of the local populace.[10] This is in opposition to the standard word-for-word of the bilingual Roman education where students translated between Greek and Latin in routine exercises.[11] Saint Jerome (~348-420 CE) follows the newly dominant trend of sense-for-sense translation, but also gives specific notice toward when word-for-word is necessary: "in translation from the Greek – except in the case of Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery – I render not word for word, but sense for sense."[12]

A second reaction within modern translation theory that comes from the impossibility of translation is the concept of fertility of language. Walter Benjamin's 1923 "The Task of the Translator" works from the basic assumption that translation is impossible: not only can the title, *Aufgabe*, be translated as the 'task,' but 'travail' and 'failure' of the translator as well.[13] Any translation that works to reproduce the essential meaning for the reader ends up being the

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[8] This is greatly simplified. In fact, the most basic of traits in translation is not the impossibility of perfect translation, but the impossibility of translation itself. On one side are those who believe translation is possible and on the other are those who believe it is impossibility. For simplicity's sake I have stepped over this aspect.
[9] Translator biographical information is from: Daniel Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinsson eds. *Translation – Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006; Lawrence Venuti ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2004.
[10] Weissbort and Eysteinsson, *Translation – Theory and Practice*, p. 21.
[11] Venuti, *The Translation Studies Reader*, p. 14.
[12] Venuti, *The Translation Studies Reader*, p. 23.
[13] Paul De Man. *The Resistance to Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986: p. 80.

"inaccurate transmission of an inessential content"[14] due to its position as a historically later production in a different language, or as Benjamin accounts, a position outside of a language forest aiming for spots on the inside where echoes reverberate into a foreign language.[15] For Benjamin the impossibility of translation does not result in the essential question of fidelity to an original author, culture or text versus license of the translator, which he argues is the basic crux of translation. Instead, Benjamin's concept of translation is based around the idea of leading toward pure language. Translation links two languages' foreignness and allows the reader to see that which does not exist in the original: a hint of the pre-Babelian, unified Adamic language in the product. Thus, the failure of translation is also its final benefit. Through an initial inability to communicate the basic information, translation is the promise of unification through reconciliation of the disparate languages and the people within them.

Jacques Derrida revels in the impossibility of translation. He highlights the puncepts and the polysemy at work in various languages in order to show the impossibility of translation. In "Des Tours de Babel" he elaborates on the impossibility with the example of names. He writes, "[t]ranslation then becomes necessary and impossible, like the effect of a struggle for the appropriation of the name, necessary and forbidden in the interval between two absolutely proper names."[16] Babel as a proper name designates the city of the ancients, the holy city, and confusion, but it also symbolizes the splitting of languages: it is an untranslatable word, and it represents the built-in failure of translation in language. However, Derrida also reasons that it is translation that allows for the sur-vivability, or afterlife, of a text: the original, as lacking (it

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[14] Walter Benjamin. "The Task of the Translator: An Introduction to the Translation of Baudelaire's *Tableaux Parisiens*." Harry Zohn trans. In Lawrence Venuti ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2004: p. 75.
[15] Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," pp. 79-80.
[16] Jacques Derrida. "Des Tours de Babel." In Joseph F. Graham. *Difference in Translation*. Cornell University Press, 1985: p. 170.

cannot be understood in the new culture), is translated and it is neither the original nor translation that matters, but the event, which allows the text to live on.

A third aspect of translation theory is that of the tied notion of localization and power. In the mid 1800s Friedrich Schleiermacher abandoned the belief that translation was essentially the question of fidelity to the word or sense. Instead, he locates the essence of translation as the interaction between linguistic cultures. He claims there are only two real possibilities in translation: "either the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him."[17] Schleiermacher centers translation not in textual fidelity or fertility, but in the interaction between linguistic communities (countries). For Schleiermacher, the question was whether translation should make ancient Roman authors write like contemporary Germans or contemporary Germans should learn to read like ancient Roman citizens. In the case of Hollywood films, it is the question of whether Americans watch foreign films in the manner of French, Japanese and other filmic communities, or whether translations should be fit to the tastes of Americans.

In current translation discourse Schleiermacher's conceptualization of moving the reader to the author is called source-oriented, or foreignizing, translation. In foreignizing translation the text maintains aspects of the author's cultural and linguistic style, which means the reader must work to understand the other. Moving the author to the reader is called a target-oriented, or domesticating, translation. In domesticating translation the author is forced into the style of the local language and culture, minimizing the effort of the reader. For example, an original sentence 「女の子は畳部屋でアニメを見ながら団子をたべる」 can be translated in either a

[17] Friedrich Schleiermacher. "On the Different Methods of Translating." Susan Bernofsky trans. In Lawrence Venuti ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2004: p. 49.

foreignizing or domesticating manner. Both translations are slightly exaggerated for emphasis. A foreignizing translation would be: "A girl ate *dango* while watching *anime* in a room with *tatami* flooring." It highlights the specific foreign concepts of *dango* and *tatami* and the currently global phenomenon of *anime* by both using the Japanese words and italicizing them, however it does not go into specifics of what *dango* are or what a *tatami* room actually indicates. A domesticating translation would be: "A girl ate a snack while watching cartoons." It erases the foreign elements under universal or local concepts: dango becomes snack, anime becomes cartoons and the concept of a tatami room is simply erased.

While domestication is considered related to product localization (localizing a product well leads to greater sales; poor localization leads to a lack of sales), foreignization has no extension beyond the realm of translation theory. This is problematic due to the current reductive link between localization/domestication and positive business; it is something that should be problematized as domestication, while possibly good for business at present is not necessarily good for society, politics or a healthy ecology of media.

In fact, domesticating translation is most visible within empires such as Rome and France. St. Jerome claimed that he, like Hillary the Confessor, "did not attend to the drowsy letter nor content himself by translating the boorish style of rustics, but by right of victory carried the sense captive into his own language."[18] Friedrich Nietzche claims Rome's domesticating translation method allowed the culture to conquer through translation with no sense of thieving, only "the best conscience of the *imperium romanum*."[19] Thus, Rome's domesticating translation

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[18] Saint Jerome. "Letter to Pammachius." Kathleen Davis trans. In Lawrence Venuti ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2004: pp. 24-5. Heyvaert's translation of this quotation in Berman's *Experience of the Foreign* is somewhat more colorful and explicit. He writes, "led the meanings captive, as it were, into his own language with the right of a conqueror." Antoine Berman. *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*. S. Heyvaert trans. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992 [1984]: p. 47.

[19] Friedrich Nietzche. *The Gay Science*. Walter Kaufmann trans. New York: Vintage Books, 1976: p 138.

strategy aided its imperial drive toward conquering. Finally, Schleiermacher proposes Germany become a nation of foreignizing translation in order to oppose dominant, 18th century France's highly domesticating translation method. Just like Rome, France had a domesticating translation strategy that aided the development of empire.

Antoine Berman argues that the focus on domestication and foreignization between linguistic communities contributes to an ethics of translation. "Translation cannot be defined solely in terms of communication, of transmission of messages, or of extended *rewording*… To be sure, translation is writing and transmitting. But this writing and this transmission get their true sense only from the ethical aim by which they are governed."[20] Translation, then, is no longer neutral transmission, but ethically good or bad depending on "the systematic [acknowledgment or] negation of the strangeness of the foreign work."[21] Berman argues that Schleiermacher's oppositional foreignizing translation is positive compared to the dominant, domesticating translation within France. Just like Rome and France, the United States has a startlingly domesticating translation practice that needs to be problematized.

Translation theory is a combination of both methods that work toward ideas of textual fidelity and fertility, and methods that work toward an ethics of interaction between languages and communities. One of the key struggles of translation theory is developing an ethics that can interact with specific translation styles in specific cultures such as the need for foreignizing translations in domesticating cultures such as Rome, France and the United States.

Translation in the United States

[20] Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign*, p. 5.
[21] Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign*, p. 5.

Translation in popular and commercial English discourse is quite different than the theoretical interaction between translation, power and localization. Within the United States the combination of extremely domesticating style with an emphasis on passive, natural movement has resulted in the conceptualization of translation as a subsumed, hidden and derivative product.

In his geneology of Western translation Lawrence Venuti uses the term invisibility to refer to three things in the modern English discourse on translation. The first is a fluency of language that renders invisible the foreignness of the work that makes it seem like the translation being read is actually an original work in English:

> A fluent translation is written in English that is current ("modern") instead of archaeic, that is widely used instead of specialized ("jargonization"), and that is standard instead of colloquial ("slangy"). Foreign words ("pidgin") are avoided, as are Britishisms in American translations and Americanisms in British translations. Fluency depends on syntax that is not so "faithful" to the foreign text as to be "not quite idiomatic," that unfolds continuously and easily (not "doughy") to insure semantic "precision" with some rhythmic definition, a sense of closure (not a "dull thud"). A fluent translation is immediately recognizable and intelligible, "familiarized," domesticated, not "disconcerting[ly]" foreign, capable of giving the reader unobstructed "access to great thoughts," to what is "present in the original." Under the regime of fluent translating, the translator works to make his or her work "invisible," producing the illusory effect of transparency that simultaneously masks its status as an illusion: the translated text seems "natural," i.e., not translated.[22]

Venuti's first invisibility can be summarized as an extremely domesticating translation methodology.

The second invisibility is that of the translator's person. The translator is hidden behind the author. Venuti writes that "The translator… [is] subordinated to the author, who decisively controls the publication of the translation during the term of the copyright for the 'original' text,

[22] Lawrence Venuti. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. New York: Routledge, 1994: pp. 4-5.

currently the author's lifetime plus fifty years."[23] Thus, the translator is a shadowy figure behind the author who produces work not his/her own, but rather of a completely derivative status.

The third is the invisibility of the translator's act, which can be seen in popular cultural instances where translation is a passive, natural or technological transference instead of an individually agentival act. Two examples are *Star Trek*'s Universal Communicator and *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*'s Babel Fish. The Universal Communicator is a device that "operates by scanning brain-wave frequencies and using the results to create a basis for translation."[24] The Babel Fish is a parasitical creature that: "feeds on brainwave energy… then excretes into the mind of its carrier a telepathic matrix formed by combining the conscious thought frequencies with nerve signals picked up from the speech centres of the brain which has supplied them."[25] This discursive invisibility has marginalized translation, the translator, and the translator's act to a point where they are almost completely valueless within the United States.

Venuti attempts to combat the current translator's invisibility by "showing that the origins of fluent translating lie in various levels of cultural domination and exclusion."[26] For Venuti translation must always happen as a discursive strategy, and the specific strategy within dominant English at present is one of domestication that homogenizes otherness. Against such domestication he suggests an opposing foreignization:

> I want to suggest that in so far as foreignizing translation seeks to restrain the ethnocentric violence of translation, it is highly desirable today, a strategic intervention in the current state of world affairs, pitched against the hegemonic English-language nations and the unequal cultural exchanges in which they engage their global others.[27]

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[23] Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, pp. 8-9.
[24] "Technology: Universal Translator" StarTrek.Com Accessed: March 19, 2008. <http://www.startrek.com/startrek/view/library/technology/article/70299.html>.
[25] Douglas Adams. *The Ultimate Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Del Rey, 2002: p. 42.
[26] Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, p. 40.
[27] Lawrence Venuti. "Translation as Cultural Politics: Regimes of Domestication in English." *Textual Practice* 7/2 (Summer 1993): pp 208-223. Quoted in Weissbort and Eysteinsson, *Translation Theory and Practice*, pp 548-549.

Venuti argues that through following an ethics of translation that "straddle[s] the foreign and domestic cultures as well as domestic readerships, a translation practice cannot fail to produce a text that is a potential source of cultural change."[28] Ultimately, translation cannot be seen as neutral and/or passive transmission, which is exactly how translation of English is conceived of in popular and legal discourse. Such a vision/definition simply leads to the subsuming of very real systemic violence. Translation is a matter of the relationship of power between self and other, domestic and foreign, and media translations, including filmic translations, are no different.

While fidelity has often been used to negate the legitimacy of remakes (often within disparaging reviews), and aspects of fertility have been used to justify remakes (I will consider a number of these analyses in the following section), the concepts of localization and power have been largely unused. Localization strategies, power and ethics are all important topics within translation, but these three aspects have been missing from the analyses of the remake. All of these concepts are important for understanding the movement of texts through translation. In the following section I will summarize the current interactions with the remake both from popular and academic sources. After that I will provide a history of the remake over the 20th century.

Responses to the Remake

In this section I will summarize the recent engagements with the remake. Over the 20th century there have been reviews in popular magazines and newspapers, attacks against remaking on the grounds of cultural and media imperialism, and more recent interactions that include theoretical analyses of the remake as textual and/or material form. Many of the early writings worked to

[28] Lawrence Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*. New York: Routledge, 1998, p. 87.

deny the legitimacy of the remake as a form of cultural production, and much of the later work has sought to either justify or recuperate the form. Here I will elaborate on the general negative status regarding remakes and then go over a few analyses that have attempted to recuperate the form.

The reviews in magazines, newspapers and on Internet sites almost all reduce the situation to one of good original and bad remake. Two relatively recent examples from *Rolling Stone* are the reviews of *Point of No Return* and *The Ring*. The former calls the Hollywood remake "unnecessary" and claims the film "just works better with a French accent."[29] The review of *The Ring* indicates the movie "creeps you out in high style, even if Nakata [the original director] did it better."[30] They both indicate an inherent superiority of the original film even if they might like the remade version.[31] In her analysis of the 1980s deluge of Hollywood remakes of French films Ginette Vincendieu wrote that "reviewers usually… content themselves with pointing out that [remakes] are inferior to the originals."[32] While Vincendieu is directly commenting upon reviews of the 1980s remakes, she also refers to critical work from the 1950s that had a similar stance equating good to original and bad to remake. Although reductive, the reviews demonstrate that the concepts of originality and creativity have become tied to good films. Simultaneously, they indicate that derivative films (including remakes) are considered of less worth and necessarily more commercial.[33] Such a reductive, popular stance has not changed

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[29] "Review: Point of No Return." Rolling Stone. Written: Apr 4, 1993. Posted: Dec 8, 2000. Accessed: Dec 10, 2007 <http://www.rollingstone.com/reviews/movie/5948967/review/5948968/point_of_no_return>.
[30] "Review: The Ring." Rolling Stone. Written and Posted: Oct 18, 2002. Accessed: Dec 10, 2007 <http://www.rollingstone.com/reviews/movie/5949383/review/5949384/the_ring>.
[31] Durham notes how this odd schizophrenia of both liking and not liking the different versions comes out in the reviews that compare *La Femme Nikita* and *Point of No Return.* The reviews argue that one or the other is/is not art/trash. Carolyn A. Durham. *Double Takes: Culture and Gender in French Films and Their American Remakes*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1998: pp. 179-80.
[32] Ginette Vincendieu. "Hijacked." *Sight and Sound* 3, July 1993, p. 23.
[33] An astute analysis of this situation by Greg Urban claims that the current postmodern culture is a metaculture of newness where we crave "the new." Under the current metaculture we crave "inventive," "new" movies, opposed to

much between the 1950s and the present. The 1989 edited volume by Michel Serceau and Daniel Protopopoff and published by *Cinémaction* is, according to Lucy Mazdon, "highly simplistic" and reduces remakes to a "one-way, vertical trajectory from the high art of the French 'original' to the popular commercialism of the American 'copy.'"[34] Finally, a recent MSN film writer, Kim Morgan, answers the question of why Hollywood keeps making "bad movie remakes" with two negative answers that are related: "lack of creativity" and "seeming comfort for audiences who don't want surprises."[35] In general, it is this reductive conclusion, that the first film is original, good and creative, and the remake is derivative, bad and imitative that many of the later analyses work against.

Over the past two decades various academic books and essays have reengaged with the remake seeking to recuperate the form from these popular, negative reactions. The most common strand of academic analysis groups the different types of remake together in order to claim a material and textual repetition within cinema. Such material (films are formed in sections with editing and splicing and they are watched diachronically) and textual (films are made from a screenplay, quote other films, have films within films and, in general, are never 'original') repetition leads to an idea of filmic intertextuality. Basing their understanding of the remake within filmic intertextuality these theorists aim to move away from the reductive formulation of good original/bad remake. However, while the concept of intertextuality helps theorists explain many aspects of the remake, it does not explain what some theorists note as specific problems with Hollywood's practice of remaking foreign films. The theorists of the remake see the

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a metaculture of tradition where the display of previous films would be considered better. Urban claims that history is the competing tides of newness and tradition. The discourse full of negative statements toward a lack of originality in the remake is just one indicator of the current dominance of the metaculture of newness. See: Greg Urban. *Metaculture: How Culture Moves through the World*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

[34] Mazdon, *Encore Hollywood*, p. 5.

[35] Kim Morgan. "Worst Hollywood Remakes." MSN.com. Accessed: Aug 13, 2007

problematic aspects as specific to the cultural context of the Hollywood industry remaking foreign films, rather than as inherent to the remake of foreign films in general.

In his often-cited essay about *À bout de souffle* (1960), *Breathless* (1983) and cinematic citationality, David Wills argues that due to the inherent intertextuality of films the question of original or remake is void from a cinematic standpoint. Wills argues two different points. The first is that both films are in fact versions of a story that cross back and forth between places and he, like many others, saw *Breathless* before *À bout de souffle.* The films are equal in their status as versions or interpretations of a singular concept, negating the primacy of one or the other. The second point is that while the remake's intention is to "neutralize… the otherness of the foreign film… [Hollywood] is unaware that it is working within the structure of supplement and adding to, rather than subtracting from, the play of differences."[36] While Wills notes in passing that Hollywood remakes in order to neutralize the foreign with local images and themes, he focuses on the concept of a Derridean difference. This point comes from Derrida's conceptualization of translation as the sur-vival of language through translation: translation allows the text to live on, to have an afterlife, to sur-vive, and it is not the original that matters, but the produced difference in the result: translation fertilizes a text with difference that allows both the text and language to live on, to sur-vive. To Wills this difference shows that remakes act as a melding force for different, local film cultures producing a sur-viving, intertextually layered product with no original and no ultimate. However, while Wills notes that the remake results in a continued difference it is important to remember that he also indicates Hollywood's intent is to neutralize foreign influence by replacing foreign images and words with local images and words. I believe both the intent and the result are important.

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[36] David Wills. "The French Remark: Breathless and Cinematic Citationality." In Andrew Horton and Stuart Y McDougal eds. *Play It Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998: p. 150.

Lucy Mazdon takes a similar path to work against the popular condemnation of remaking. She argues not only that remakes are intertextual, but that "all films can be seen as diffuse, hybrid, signifying systems [so] surely all films can be seen as 'remakes,' or as equally 'original.'"[37] This leads her to conclude that the remake links directly to a postmodern, Baudrillardian simulacrum (as there is no 'real' within our postmodern society there is correspondingly no 'original' film).[38] Mazdon notes that there are differences between the original and remade films, but "that perhaps the problems are not really about *the films* at all,"[39] but the interaction between France and the United States at those particular moments in history. The difference between remake as cinematic form and remake in social context is an important distinction, but Mazdon only points in that direction as her main goal is to bring the form back from dismissal due to the reductive binary of good original/bad copy. Thus, Mazdon warns, but does not stress, that the current variety of remakes are representative of "a cinematic culture in which the international distribution and exhibition of non-Hollywood products is extremely limited. As such it can be seen as a 'fluent' rewriting which effaces the presence of other cinemas and other cultures."[40] Unfortunately, her and Wills' warnings of Hollywood's practice and intent are both lost in the following analyses.

At issue for Wills and Mazdon is the recuperation of the remake as a legitimate form of study from its 1980s determination as commercially produced, socially unimportant material below the level of academic and intellectual interaction. In explanation for the reengagement with remakes as a textual form, Mazdon writes:

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[37] Mazdon, *Encore Hollywood*, p. 151.
[38] Lucy Mazdon (ed.) (2004) "Editor's Introduction." Special Issue: Film Remakes. *Journal of Romance Studies*, 4, (1): p. 9.
[39] Mazdon, *Encore Hollywood*, p. 148.
[40] This 'fluency' is from Lawrence Venuti's *The Translator's Invisibility*, a point that is crucial to my argument Venuti's. Mazdon, *Encore Hollywood*, p 151.

> The impact of cultural studies and the ensuing move away from the cinematic 'canon' to forms traditionally deemed below the academic parapet, coupled with a growing interest in the myriad relations between filmic texts and industrial, political and cultural contexts have repositioned the remake as a subject suitable of study.[41]

Wills' and Mazdon's studies of the remake had two goals. One was to recuperate the remake as a legitimate field of study and form of cultural production. The second was to work against the overwhelmingly negative views of the remake that were being published in popular reviews. Thus, their arguments tended to de-emphasize the problematic points such as Hollywood's practice of blocking the release of foreign films that were scheduled for remaking and the intent of neutralizing foreign cultures through remaking. Blocking and neutralizing the foreign other can be considered forms of systemic violence. Unfortunatley, these specific problems, forms of violence enacted by Hollywood's system of remaking films, go unanswered as later writers simply begin with the concept of global/postmodern intertextuality and ignore the blocking of releases and neutralization.

In his 2006 book Constantine Verevis attempts to move beyond what he considers limitations, such as taxonomies that lead to limiting examples, by encapsulating remakes, genres, series and numerous other forms into the same fold.[42] He follows through with the intertextual approach and claims, "all films – originals and/as remakes – invest in the repetition effects that characterize all films, all of cinema itself."[43] Essentially, by ignoring "limiting taxonomies" such as the differences between remakes and simply lumping them all together he ends up making a teleological justification for the current brand of Hollywood cinema, which both Wills and Mazdon problematize. According to Verevis the interaction of Dashiell Hammet's 1929 novel *Red Harvest*, which was adapted into Akira Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* (1961), which was

[41] Mazdon, "Editor's Introduction," p. 4.
[42] Constantine Verevis. *Film Remakes*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006: p. 2.
[43] Verevis, *Film Remakes*, p. 177.

remade/adapted into Sergio Leone's *Per un pugno di dollari* (*For A Fistful of Dollars*) (1964/1967) and again remade/adapted for *Last Man Standing* (1996) is the exact same movement as Pierre Boulle's 1963 novel *Monkey Planet* (renamed *Planet of the Apes* to match the film), which was turned into *Planet of the Apes* (1968) and remade as *Planet of the Apes* (2001). Despite the play of cultures, countries and languages in the first example the two paths are simply cinematic intertextuality to Verevis, and both lead to Quentin Tarantino, Austin Powers and New Hollywood's brand of cinematic citationality.[44] Verevis' conclusion indicates that the remake in its current form is simply a combination of the global cinematic culture and postmodern intertextuality. One author/director makes a film, and a second author/director uses the first film and other sources to make a second film. As Suzuki Seijin said to Jim Jarmusch about a sequence in *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai* (1999), "I see you've taken some things from me, and when I make my next film I'm going to take some things from you."[45] The problem is that Verevis' argument limits the possibility of seeing the neutralization of the foreign elements and "harsh economic realities" of remaking precisely because it emphasizes laissez-faire economics and global cinematic modernity instead of the individual specific examples of texts themselves.

A separate group of academic analyses seeks to understand the remake's repetition as related to genre. Thomas Leitch focuses on the relationship of disavowal between an original text and a remake in his analysis of "archival remakes."[46] In doing so he draws interesting conclusions about the establishment of genres by linking it to a process of disavowal. Leitch first breaks down the archival remake into four types: readaptation, update, homage and true remake.

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[44] Verevis, *Film Remakes*, pp. 86-96.
[45] Quoted in Verevis, *Film Remakes*, p. 164.
[46] Thomas Leitch. "Twice-Told Tales: Disavowal and the Rhetoric of the Remake." In Jennifer Forrest and Leonard R. Koos eds. *Dead Ringers: The Remake in Theory and Practice*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002. Originally published in *Literature/Film Quarterly* 18 (1990-91): p. 38.

The readaptation ignores its remade predecessor (an earlier remake of a text) and demonstrates fidelity to the initial text (the novel or short story). The update brings the original to a new context, for instance bringing Shakespearean era drama to a modern context. The homage brings attention to a previous cinematic text that is being forgotten. True remakes are just like the original, but better: "the producers of the remake wish not only to accommodate the original story to a new discourse and a new audience but to annihilate the model they are honoring – to eliminate any need or desire to see the film they seek to replace."[47] The four types are differentiated by their relationship of disavowal to their original texts:

> Readaptations deal with the resulting contradictions by distinguishing between two source-texts, one of which is acknowledged and the other repudiated. Updates distinguish between the valuable story of the earlier text and its flawed discourse, which is in need of redaction. Homages subordinate their own textual claims to those of their originals.[48]

Finally, "true remakes depend on a triangular notion of intertextuality, since their rhetorical strategy depends on ascribing their value to a classic earlier text and protecting that value by invoking a second earlier text as betraying it."[49] All four of these types of disavowal work to include and exclude certain ideas, themes, and elements within the films, ultimately producing genres. Leitch concludes by linking remakes, repetition and genre through disavowal to the remaking of foreign films and the production of empire:

> Remakes simply provide an unusually clear example of the operations of every genre, showing in particular the way films in every genre inevitably compete with earlier films by valorizing some aspects of their presentation… as timeless and imputing others… to earlier films marked by a dated discourse. This ritual disavowal of discursive features is, in fact, the characteristic move in the establishment of any genre – or any empire.[50]

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[47] Leitch, "Twice-Told Tales," p. 50.
[48] Leitch, "Twice-Told Tales," p. 53.
[49] Leitch, "Twice-Told Tales," p. 54.
[50] Leitch, "Twice-Told Tales," p. 58.

The determination of generic boundaries is, according to Leitch, the same process as the establishment of empire. In this sense, the remaking of French films by Hollywood and the specific decisions made while remaking are related not only to the establishment of genre, but to the establishment of empire as well. What themes to keep and what themes to change: which parts of the culture are to be seen as positive and supported, and which parts are to be understood as negative and censored.[51] It is important to note that while Leitch's work was written in 1991, one of the earliest I've considered here, it is undercited in the surrounding work on remakes, perhaps because the final direction he takes points back to empire and the earlier, reductive condemnation instead of away from it. However, I feel that his interaction with empire and power are important for understanding the success of remakes in the United States precisely because of the parallel with translation and the production of power.

Bliss Cua Lim looks at the remake of Asian horror films as an extension of the generic through international cinema. Similar to Wills, Mazdon and Verevis, Lim groups "remake, sequel, allusion… ripoff, steal and copy [as] intertextuality and generic exchange."[52] Any form of repetition leads to an idea of generic exchange that crosses global boundaries, which leads to an idea of global film culture. For Lim it is not the differences between the texts that matter, but the similarities that then go on to become the backbone of the budding genre. Thus, Lim posits that the emergence of repeated generic elements within the remade horror films, such as "girls with long hair hiding their malevolent faces, dotty old ladies, [and] child zombies caked in white,"[53] mark both generic repetition and the beginning of cross-cultural textuality. Lim also notes "the remake, construed as an avoidance of subtitles, might be an attempt to circumvent

[51] Leitch, "Twice-Told Tales," pp. 56-7.
[52] Bliss Cua Lim. "Generic Ghosts: Remaking the New 'Asian Horror Film.'" In Gina Marchetti and Tan See Kam eds. *Hong Kong Film, Hollywood and New Global Cinema: No Film is an Island*. London: Routledge, 2006: p. 109.
[53] Lim, "Generic Ghosts," p. 115.

both the idiomaticity of the precursor text as well as the sign of the work of cultural translation."[54] Unlike translation, which necessitates an interaction between two sides, the one translated from and the one translated into, Lim sees the remake as the formation of a universal language that avoids translation. However, by looking at the generic similarities Lim misses the elements that are erased from the remakes as they are pushed into the generic category. She ignores those elements that are *not* repeated in the Hollywood remakes and are therefore pushed out of the genre. As Leitch claims, the establishment of genre is related to the establishment of empire and the film community that has established the Asian horror genre is not Hong Kong, Japanese or Thai, but Hollywood. The elements that are present in the originals, but pushed out of the remakes, are important as they can be seen as essential markers of difference and resistance to the Hollywood determined generic borders.

Carolyn Durham attempts to go beyond the reductive grounds of good original/bad remake seen in the previously mentioned popular discourse and reviews of the 1980s and 90s Hollywood remakes of French films by focusing on culture instead of film.[55] Instead of considering cinematic textuality, like Mazdon and Wills, she understands the texts within the socio-political context of France and the United States in the 1980s: "Cultural differences – ones both visible and worth seeing – separate Hollywood's remakes from the French films on which they are based."[56] In her analysis of *La Femme Nikita* (1990) and *Point of No Return* (1993), Durham notes that the "parent/child subtext that underlies the reeducation of the heroine in both films" is altered.[57] The French relationship between heroine and reeducators is structured along the "what the French call *éducation*, a word closer in meaning to the English *upbringing*…

[54] Lim, "Generic Ghosts," pp. 115-6.
[55] Durham, *Double Takes*, p. 12.
[56] Durham, *Double Takes*, p. 24.
[57] Durham, *Double Takes*, p. 176.

[referring to] parental right."[58] In contrast, the Hollywood version is highly sexualized and the parental aspect is largely removed. Because the French film's central theme of *éducation* and parental right would not be acceptable in an American context, the Hollywood film is altered to target-oriented cultural contexts of gender politics and the gaze, which are seen as more acceptable to an American audience.[59] The culturally specific elements that would resist transmission are changed to avoid difficulties of understanding, tolerance and, ultimately, sales. This indicates that remaking is seen as a strategy that allows for a more easily transferred product into a target system. Such a concept of adaptation to fit a target culture is the same as ideas of domestication, or target-orientation, within translation studies, where a text is altered to fit to the local audience instead of forcing the audience to understand the foreign specifics. Additionally, the active changing of points of cultural difference leads back toward Wills' opposition between Hollywood's intent to erase the foreign other and what he claims is a remaining Derridian difference within the remade film.

Using the same Hollywood remakes of French films, Laura Grindstaff looks at the relationship between translation and the remake.[60] While she recognizes both the intertextuality of cinema and the difficulty of determining remake from original, she finds a conceptualization of fidelity to an original unhelpful as it inevitably results in the reduction to good original/bad remake. Understood through fidelity a remake will invariably be considered less than the original: if the remake is unfaithful it is considered bad because of its infidelity; if the remake follows too closely it is imitative and similarly not as good as the original. Grindstaff moves away from the double bind of fidelity by concentrating on fertility between an original and

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[58] Durham, *Double Takes*, p. 176.
[59] Both *Leon*, *The Professional* (1994) and *Mon pere, cé héros*, remade as *My Father The Hero* (1991, 1994) have similarly altered or excised elements in their American localizations.
[60] Grindstaff, "Pretty Woman with a Gun," pp. 276-84.

remake. Grindstaff analyzes *La Femme Nikita*, its Hollywood remake and the American television show remake. She looks at the points of difference between the films and television show in an attempt to identify what Philip Lewis calls the abuses of translation. She claims that the points of difference between the films are the points of translation abuse between French and English and therefore cover up what she understands, through Jane Gallop, as Lacanian self/other mirror relationships. According to Grindstaff, seeing the relationship of original to derivative, French to English, *La Femme Nikita* to *Point of No Return* as one-way is reductive. Therefore, she looks at the differences between versions, as multi-way othering between the various sides. The altered femininity of the main character from femme fatale (French version) to cultured woman (US version) to tomboy leaning toward queer readings (US television series), and the change from unsure ending (French version) to happy ending (Hollywood remake) to non-ending (US television series) represent alternate cultural specificities, but the relationship of differences goes back to a two-way relationship with distinct othering on both sides between original and remake, France and the United States, other and self, which distances itself from the simple one-way route where the US appropriates, remakes and dominates. The points of difference in the films, which Wills (through Derrida) understands as fertilizing difference and sur-vival of the text, are seen by both Durham and Grindstaff as points of friction between competing cultures. Through ignoring these points of friction Verevis is able to indicate the inevitability of the remake. I believe, like Durham and Grindstaff who specifically look toward these points of difference, that the friction is key to understanding the nature of the remake. Like Durham, I believe that understanding the interaction between the cultures between which films are remade is important. Like Grindstaff, I believe that translation is the key to understanding the

remake, but not through either fertility or fidelity, but the previously mentioned aspects of localization and power.

In the following section I will give a brief history of the remake over the 20th century. I will begin by focusing on its legal definition and conclude by noting the lack of temporally continuity between Hollywood remakes of different countries. I argue that this separate clumping of remakes of French films and remakes of Japanese films is a key point in understanding the remake's purpose.

Remake In History

Despite reviews that claim Hollywood remakes films due to the industry's *current* lack of originality, the remake, in one form or another, has been a part of cinema since its beginnings in the late 19th century. Originally, cinematic film was quite similar to photographic film in both reception and produced texts.[61] The first films were moving images of static subjects and common themes that were reproduced to display the mechanical apparatus itself and not the subjects/stories. The Lumière Brothers' *La Sortie des Usines Lumière* (1895), which depicts the workers leaving the Lumière factory, and *L'Arrivée d'un train á La Ciotat* (1896), which shows the train arriving at the station and people beginning to get off, are good examples in both the limited structure and lack of narrative.[62] As there were no complicated plots or multiple scenes it was believed at the turn of the 19th century that cinema, like photography, was merely the

[61] I move away from the term motion pictures or movies because it is precisely the determination of the form as primarily a visual medium that has removed the aspect of language and replaced it with an idea of universality.
[62] While both of these films by the Lumière brothers were remade by both Edison and Biograph (Edison's *Clark's Thread Mill*; Biograph's *Empire State Express* (1896) and Edison's *The Black Diamond Express* (1996)) it should also be mentioned that the Lumière brothers' own film was remade at one point as the negative became too worn. See: Jennifer Forrest "The 'Personal' Touch: The Original, the Remake, and the Dupe in Early Cinema," In Jennifer Forrest and Leonard R. Koos eds. *Dead Ringers: The Remake in Theory and Practice*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002: pp. 89-90.

"reproduc[tion of] external reality."[63] As cinema itself was a reproduction, recreation or representation of scenes in nature (the same as photography, but multiplied out to hundreds of individual frames/pictures), it did not deserve copyright protection along the lines of visual and textual artistic production such as books, sculptures or paintings. Unlike such crafted art, photography and films were considered mere reproduction, and were not granted the same level of copyright protection.

It was the initial confrontation of cinema with remake that determined the legal definitions of both. Throughout the 1890s and into the 1900s simplistic films were created largely to display techniques of the heavily copyright protected machinery, and not as art or property to be protected. The cameramen separated themselves from the pack by creating new techniques; they thought of new ways to show the machines' capabilities, and the stories, best considered byproducts, were often the same. Because of the importance of machine and technique the method of copying was an issue instead of the fact of copying. There were two methods of copying: the copy and the dupe. The copy was the "scene-by-scene recreation" of a film. It was the manual recreation of the original shots and scenes. A cameraman understood the techniques in the original film and could reproduce them, thereby creating a copy of the original. It mimicked the abilities, but did so manually. The dupe was the creation of a "negative of a positive print."[64] The dupe was the mechanically reproduced copy of an original. However, because of the nature of the films being recreated (simple representations of technology and nature) the two processes resulted in almost the same thing. The primary differences were that the dupe was both easier and less expensive than the copy, but both were less expensive than an

[63] Lawrence W. Levine. Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1988. Referenced in Forrest, "The 'Personal' Touch," p. 102.
[64] Forrest, "The 'Personal' Touch," p. 111.

original production.[65] Essentially, the difference is between manual and mechanic reproduction, but such a legal differentiation did not take place until 1905.

The two forms of copying were only legally differentiated in the 1905 *American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. v. Edison Mgf. Co* (1905) copyright infringement case on the nature of Edison's *How a French Nobleman Got a Wife Through the New York Herald Personal Columns* (1904), a remake of Biograph's film, *Personal* (1904). Biograph claimed that Edison broke the copyright on *Personal* by copying the film. Because the law considered cinema to be like photographs, Edison's defense was that there were no duplicates of any individual photographs of *Personal* within its remake: Edison claimed that the film was a copy (manual remake), but not a dupe.[66] The judge absolved Edison, legally differentiating the illegal dupe from legal copy, and justifying manual copying over mechanical copying. Further, the ruling cemented the conception of cinema as reproduction of reality instead of artistic production. Such a legal determination once again indicated that there was no need to include cinema with artistic copyright protection laws.[67] This is the point when the official legal standing saw cinematic films as photographs (both were considered mechanical methods of reproduction, not artistic), and the remake was considered a unique variation of universally available common property material, not an illegal duplication.

When films became complex both in narrative and artistry the matter of copyright was again fought over through lawsuits. At the 1911 appeal of *Harper Bros. et al. v. Kalem Co. et al.* (1909) the judge ruled that the Kalem Company's film, *Ben Hur* (1907), was not a "copy" of the book, but an individual adaptation just as a theatrical presentation of *Ben Hur* is an artistic adaptation. This meant that film had moved out of the mechanical realm of the 1905 ruling

[65] Forrest, "The 'Personal' Touch," p. 92.
[66] Forrest, "The 'Personal' Touch," p. 93.
[67] Forrest, "The 'Personal' Touch," p. 103.

where cinema was a mimic of nature and complex stories were beyond the medium's capabilities. However, the ruling also noted "authors have the exclusive right to dramatize any of their work,"[68] giving the original copyright protected story legal priority. Such a ruling privileges an original novel, which is legitimate in some instances, but because a film necessarily comes from a text, whether that text is a screenplay, novel or play, cinema was thrown into the realm of adaptation instead of creation and the remake definitively considered a second degree adaptation (text to film to remake).[69] Thus, both remakes and films were seen as derivative, mechanical modes of reproduction and distanced from the realm and benefits of art. However, it is crucial to note that while both the remake and translation were considered derivative forms of production within the legal discourse of turn of the 20th century America, the remake was quickly considered adaptation and distanced from translation.

To summarize, the legal determination of the remake involves paying for a copyright protected property followed by the ability to adapt, interpret or change that textual original in any way the desired. The director or screenwriter of a remake therefore creates a legally independent product regardless of what is done to the original. As Thomas Leitch summarizes, "[e]very film adaptation is defined by its legally sanctioned use of material from an earlier model, whose adaptation rights the producers have customarily purchased."[70] This determination of the remake as a unique product (with dues paid for, but otherwise its own production) was a huge boon for the burgeoning, commercial film industry. Studios took advantage of the legalities of film by remaking their own and others' properties often. If a studio remade its own property the creation

[68] Forrest, "The 'Personal' Touch," p. 108.
[69] McLuhan claims that all new media is simply the remediation of older media. Thus, the computer simply remediates the typewriter when it displays pages, and notes within a word processor programs. However, it is interesting to note the legal privileging of older forms that are contained in the new text (film to its original text, which is below speech, which is below thought).
[70] Leitch, "Twice-Told Tales," pp. 138-49.

costs were greatly diminished; if a studio remade somebody else's property they had to purchase the adaptation rights, but such price was still significantly less than the creation of an original film. Thus, remakes saved studios both time and money.[71] Hollywood was able to create a standing library/canon through the adaptation of older literary texts. Had remakes been determined as translations (and given the same status as literary translations) it is unlikely that cinema would have become the massive, commercial industry that it is today. Unlike remakes, translations benefit the publisher and original author. The translator is paid for the act, but not the product.[72] This is the exact opposite effect of the remake where the studios remaking films prosper and the original's creator benefits from the purchase of adaptation rights but not from the remade film. I will return to this point later as I believe the determination of the remake as adaptation is actually a misidentification that stems from the early 1900s understanding of film as a universal language.

The 1920s through 40s were replete with remakes based on novels such as *Ben Hur* and stories like Robin Hood.[73] It is important to note that there was no stigma against remaking at the time as directors such as Hitchcock remade their own films, and studios revisited old properties endlessly, such as *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), which was the third remake after *The Maltese Falcon* (1931) and *Satan Met a Lady* (1936).[74] This constant repetition was economically

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[71] Remaking properties kept some studios solvent during the depression years. The use of remakes during times of economic trouble as opposed to social and cultural trouble is also interesting. Jennifer Forrest and Leonard R. Koos, "Reviewing Remakes: An Introduction." In Jennifer Forrest and Leonard R. Koos eds. *Dead Ringers: The Remake in Theory and Practice*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002: p. 4.

[72] This situation also recalls Marx's alienation of the worker from his means of production under the capitalist mode of production.

[73] For an index of these early, archival remakes see: Michael Druxman. *Make it Again, Sam: A Survey of Movie Remakes*. Cranbury: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1975.

[74] Chris Wehner. "Hollywood Remakes Again and Again…" Screenwriter's Utopia. Writen and Posted: June 9, 2004. Accessed: Feb 5, 2008. <http://www.screenwritersutopia.com/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=2693>; Stuart Y. McDougal. "The Director Who Knew Too Much: Hitchcock Remakes Himself." In Andrew Horton and Stuart Y McDougal eds. *Play It Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998; Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 3; Druxman, *Make it Again, Sam*, pp. 114-119.

beneficial for the studios, but they were not the sole beneficiaries. The studios simply provided what the viewers desired: to see similar themes over and over again.[75] Such repetition, which led to the development of genres, was not entirely unique to cinema, but it is this connection between repetition, genre and the remake that has been the focus of most theorists' attention.[76] Jennifer Forrest and Leonard Koos question whether *Flying Tigers* (1943) is the remake of *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939) or whether they are "the first of many actualizations of the combat film subgenre."[77] Leo Braudy, who claims "the remake resides at the intersection of the genetic and generic codes," goes so far as to "wonder if remake might with more clarity and cogency be distinguished from adaptation and then treated as a subcategory of genre."[78] I will return to the interaction of genre and remake in my discussion of Hollywood remakes of Japanese films and the way genre determination and formation allows a naturalized globalism as opposed to fractured nationalisms or culturalisms.

While the 1930-50s were replete with remakes as well as the proliferation of genre pictures, remakes are suspiciously missing in large quantities during the 1960s and 70s. One answer to this is found in the emergence of a new understanding of cinema as art, which André Bazin links within France to the popular French *ciné-clubs* and the development of a cinematic canon of older works.[79] By showing older films the *ciné-clubs* were able to create an identified canon, and the idea of canonicity weakened the desire to remake those same older films to match

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[75] The pleasure in repetition relates to both the negative reviews of remakes, which claim people want to be comforted by a lack of surprises, and also to the idea of re-watching movies in home video culture. See: Morgan, "Worst Hollywood Remakes;" Barbara Klinger. *Beyond the Multiplex: Cinema, New Technologies and the Home*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006

[76] The generic elements of literature and music were not quite as pronounced at the time. However, they have come a long way in the past century.

[77] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 5.

[78] Braudy, "Afterword," p. 331.

[79] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 18. References André Bazin. "A propos de reprises." *Cahiers du cinema* 1.5 (September), 1951: pp. 52-56; André Bazin. "Remade in USA." *Cahiers du cinema* 2.11 (April), 1952: pp. 54-59.

the times. According to Forrest and Koos, Bazin believed that Hollywood's remaking practice would stop due to the creation of an artistic canon. They claim Bazin's prediction was partially accurate as the 1960s and 70s did see a drop in remakes.[80]

However, instead of remaking the 1960s and 70s saw the re-release of "classics" such as *Gone with the Wind* (1939; 1967-68) and *The Sound of Music* (1965; 1973), and an increase in commercially successful sequels such as the James Bond series (1962-2006), *Godfather* and its sequels (1972, 1974, 1990), which led to the legion of horror films such as *Friday the 13th* (1980-2003) and *Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984-2003). Forrest and Koos tentatively propose that what Bazin's prediction did not take into consideration are the changes within Hollywood during this period of time. During the change from old to new Hollywood, the cinema underwent major production and marketing changes. Additionally, the new needs of a postwar, American audience unsatisfied with older films including remakes. That which satisfied the new audience was French New Wave auteur cinema's innovations that Hollywood, the "imitative industry" was unprepared to develop, but was able to imitate over the last quarter of the 20th century.[81] Thus, while the Bazin's theory that art cinema precluded remaking was partially correct,[82] it was certainly not fully true.

While re-releasing/reissuing, creating sequels to previously popular films and continuing to develop genres worked in the 1960s and 70s, Hollywood returned to remaking en masse in the 1980s. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s Hollywood remade approximately 40 French films, averaging two films a year and peaking at four films in both 1994 and 1996 before dropping

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[80] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 22.
[81] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 22-3.
[82] Bazin is right in claiming a certain uniqueness in canonical art films. The speed of, method of and reaction to remaking art films are quite unique compared to other remakes. A good example is the immense reaction to *Psycho* (1998), the remake of Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1969). Unlike the two previous sequels and loose remake, all of which were considered commercial, made close to the previous film and were mostly ignored were unproblematic. However, the method of shot by shot remake for the 1998 film and the claim to art status were both problematic for the much later film.

back to one a year or less. These films span a number of genres including action, drama and comedy.[83] It is to this grouping of remakes that the majority of the academic attention has been directed. Additionally, beginning in the late 1990s and continuing to the present there have been a number of Japanese films remade starting with one or no films a year, but increasing to three in 2006 and four planned between 2008 and 2009.[84] One issue that I will return to in my own analysis of these remake phenomena is the contention by most theorizations that the remake as intertextual is an integral part of global cinema. Because they see remakes as a textual and not culturally related form they do not separate the remake of foreign films from the archival remake, nor do they consider remakes of French films as meaningfully different from remakes of Japanese films. Essentially, the analyses contend that films have been remade unabated since the

[83] While the following list continues past the years listed above, my intention is to emphasize the high number of films a year remade in the 1980s compared to the small number a year remade recently. The following list combines titles from Mazdon's appendix (*Encore Hollywood*, pp. 152-6) and the Internet Movie Database (imdb.com): *36* (2008), *Happy Hearts* (2007), *Taxi* (2004/I), *Wicker Park* (2004), *Unfaithful* (2002), *Original Sin* (2001), *Just Visiting* (2001), *Eye of the Beholder* (1999), *Return to Paradise* (1998), *Fathers' Day* (1997), *Jungle 2 Jungle* (1997), *The Mirror Has Two Faces* (1996), *The Associate* (1996), *Diabolique* (1996), *The Birdcage* (1996), *Twelve Monkeys* (1995), *Two Much* (1995), *Nine Months* (1995), *Mixed Nuts* (1994), *True Lies* (1994), *My Father the Hero* (1994), *Intersection* (1994), *The Assassin* (*Point of No Return*) (1993), *Sommersby* (1993), *Paradise* (1991), *Pure Luck* (1991), *Oscar* (1991), *Men Don't Leave* (1990), *Quick Change* (1990), *Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills* (1989), *Cousins* (1989), *Three Fugitives* (1989), *And God Created Woman* (1988), *3 Men and a Baby* (1987), *Happy New Year* (1987), *Down and Out in Beverly Hills* (1986), *The Man with One Red Shoe* (1985), *The Woman in Red* (1984), *Blame It on Rio* (1984), *The Man Who Loved Women* (1983), *Breathless* (1983), *The Toy* (1982), *Buddy Buddy* (1981), *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1981), *Willie and Phil* (1980), *The Sorcerer* (*Wages of Fear*) (1977), *Calliope* (1971), *Paris When it Sizzles* (1964), *Fanny* (1960), *Violent Road* (1958), *Human Desire* (1954), *Taxi* (1953), *The Blue Veil* (1951), *The 13th Letter* (1951), *The Man on the Eiffel Tower* (1949), *Casbah* (1948), *The Long Night* (1947), *Lured* (1947), *Heartbeat* (1946), *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946), *Scarlet Street* (1945), *Lydia* (1941), *I Was an Adventuress* (1940), *Forty Little Mothers* (1940), *Lucky Partners* (1940), *The Lady in Question* (1940), *Algiers* (1938), *Port of Seven Seas* (1938), *The Soldier and the Lady* (1937), *The Woman I Love* (1937), *One Rainy Afternoon* (1936), *Prisons Without Bars* (1938), *The Road to Glory* (1936), and *The Bad Boy and the Gardener* (1896).

[84] A partial list from the Internet Movie Database includes 21 films that have been remade or are going to be remade by 2009. However, this does not include films such as *A Bug's Life* (1998), which repeats the story of *Seven Samurai* and *Magnificent Seven*, but does not give credit anywhere other than the cherry tree that blooms near the end, which may or may not allude to Japan (an insight from Sharon J. Kahn). The list also ignores *The Lion King* (1994), which is, according to many a plagiarism of Osamu Tezuka's *Kimba the White Lion* (*Jyanguru Taitei*). Finally, within the list are both live action to live action remakes and animated film to live action film movements (*Guyver, Fist of the North Star*). The list is: *Godzilla, King of the Monsters!* (1956), *The Magnificent Seven* (1960), *Per un pugno di dollari/For a Few Dollars More* (1964/1967), *The Outrage* (1964), *The Warrior and the Sorceress* (1984), *Blind Fury* (1989), *Guyver* (1991), *Fist of the North Star* (1995), *Last Man Standing* (1996), *Godzilla* (1998), *The Ring Virus* (1999), *The Ring* (2002), *Shall We Dance?* (2004), *The Grudge* (2004), *Dark Water* (2005), *Eight Below* (2006), *Pulse* (2006), *The Grudge 2* (2006), *One Missed Call* (2008), *Ikiru* (2008), *Battle Royale* (2008), *Seven Samurai* (2009), and *Be With You* (2009).

1920s with a small stutter in the 1960 to 70s. I want to highlight what most have not considered: there is a distinct temporal bunching-up of the remakes from specific locations/countries that only minimally overlap. The Hollywood remakes of French films were created at a different moment than the Hollywood remakes of Japanese films and both occur at specific times in relation to the interaction between America and the respective foreign other. It is undeniable that there is a textual repetition in cinema that is exemplified in the remake, but limiting the analysis to cinema's textuality has led the remake analyses to not fully consider the real world consequences of the medium. Through understanding the remake as a form of translation it is possible to look at the specific interaction of remakes between France, Japan and the United States. In the following sections I will redefine the remake a form of translation, and then, using concepts of localization and power from translation theory, I will reconsider Hollywood's remakes of both French and Japanese films.

Reconsidering Filmic Translation

In this section I will problematize the historical moment of the remake's legal definition and link to adaptation, described in the previous section. Then I will connect the remake to a more formal understanding of the different levels of linguistic signs within films. Finally, I will claim that the remake, like subtitling and dubbing, is just one type of media translation among many.

The legal understanding of the remake is linked to the purchase of rights and the ability to adapt the purchased property. This was determined in lawsuits between 1905 and 1911 when cinema was considered to be a form of universal language. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam argue that such cinematic universality is false. They claim, "thanks to the 'visual esperanto' of silent film, which includes many cross-cultural codes, spectators not only read the intertitles in their

own language but also imagined dialogue in their own language."[85] However, this belief in universality was shattered when audiences confronted the interaction of sound and cinema in the late 1920s when talkies were first created. Shohat and Stam claim that when audiences had to confront subtitling, dubbing and the multi-language version "cinema was retroactively perceived as foreign and colonialist."[86] However, such a retroactive understanding of the false universality of film did not produce a corresponding retroactive change in the legal understanding of the remake.

It is essential to understand that Edison's *How a French Nobleman Got a Wife Through the New York Herald Personal Columns*, Biograph's *Personal*, and Kalem Company's *Ben Hur*, the films that were crucial for the determination of the remake as adaptation, were all created numerous years before sound necessitated the interaction of translation and film. When the remake was legally and discursively determined to be adaptation there was no translation in cinema. Translation of intertitles was considered completely separate from the visual cinema itself.[87] It was decades before late 20th century cinema studies led to the understanding that all cinematic elements, visual, audio, material and textual, were related to language.

There are two important conclusions to this reconsideration of history. The first is that the remake was determined to be adaptation before language/translation entered cinema. It is my claim that had the remake been encountered after language and translation retroactively rendered cinema nationally (linguistically) based it would have been linked to subtitling, dubbing and the multi-language version. The second important conclusion is the idea that language in film is not

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[85] Ella Shohat and Robert Stam. "The Cinema after Babel: Language, Difference, Power." *Screen* 26.3-4, 1985: p. 46. Also see: Miriam Hansen. *Babel & Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991.
[86] Shohat and Stam, "The Cinema after Babel," p. 46.
[87] Abe Mark Nornes. *Cinema Babel: Translating Global Cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007: pp. 91-108.

just the dialogue, but extends throughout the whole semiotic register of culturally determined signs. This second conclusion also determines that translation must extend beyond the dialogue.

One of the first attempts to formally analyze the translational layer of film and media is Dirk Delabastita's 1990 essay "Translation and the Mass Media." While Delabastita focuses on subtitles and dubbing in television, the elements he identifies allow the conceptualization of remake as translation. In order to understand mass media translation as something other than the reductive battle of 'audience preference' for either subtitling or dubbing, he breaks down the semiotic nature of the media sign into the visual and acoustic sides. He then identifies four elements that need to be brought over into any foreign context: "verbal signs transmitted acoustically (dialogue), non-verbal signs transmitted acoustically (background noise, music), verbal signs transmitted visually (credits, letters, documents shown on the screen), non-verbal signs transmitted visually."[88] Delabastita further aligns the axis of signs (verbal and non-verbal, visual and acoustic) with five "categories of classical rhetoric: *repetitio*, *adiectio*, *detractio*, *substitutio* and *transmutatio*."[89] I understand these to be roughly equivalent to repetition, addition, detraction, substitution and transmutation. Subtitling, then, is "*adiectio* of visual/verbal signs" and dubbing is "*substitutio* of acoustic/verbal signs."[90] Additionally, *detractio* happens with deleted cuts between editions and *repetitio* happens when the film is shown with no translation whatsoever. However, one can readily notice that of his first four semiotic signs only one type, "verbal signs transmitted acoustically," are translated into a new context in both subtitling and dubbing. The other three sign types are ignored.

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[88] Dirk Delabastita. "Translation and the Mass Media." In Susan Bassnet and Andre Lefevere eds. *Translation, History and Culture*. London: Pinter Publishers, 1990: pp. 101-102.
[89] Delabastita, "Translation and the Mass Media," p. 102. It should be noted that while he lists *transmutatio*, he gives no examples of how it relates to, or is used in, media translation.
[90] Delabastita, "Translation and the Mass Media," p. 102.

Both subtitling and dubbing translate the singular sign system of dialogue, but ignore the background noises, music, credits, letters and documents shown on the screen, and visual metaphors. The dominant film translation discourse that supports either subtitling or dubbing does not admit the need to translate beyond the dialogue because there are vestiges of visual universality within film. As Stam and Shohat note, even camera angles and visual positioning above or below a subject, as related respectively to dominance and submission, are culturally determined metaphors within Western discourse and hardly cross-cultural, let alone universal.[91] Where such ideas of verticality and power are either opposite or non-existent, such a filmic tendency would fail in its universality, and it would fail in its intelligibility. Both subtitling and dubbing can be seen as failed methods of media translation because they do not successfully translate the entire array of signs. Successful methods of media translation must interact with all of Delabastita's elements.

Understood through Delabastita's framework the remake is a complete media translation. While dubbing only replaces the original dialogue track with a local domesticating one, the remake goes beyond the single sign level of dubbing to replace all four basic layers of signs. The remake replaces visually and acoustically transmitted verbal and non-verbal signs, with local sign layers: it is a full filmic translation method based in *substitutio*.

I have redefined the remake as a translation method based in *substitutio* similar to film dubbing. Having defined the remake as a domesticating translation method that subsumes the foreign other by replacing it with a local visual, acoustic, verbal and non-verbal signs I will now look at the implications of such a method within the current United States. In the next sections I

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[91] Shohat and Stam, "The Cinema After Babel," p. 38. An opposing, non-Western example, is Ozu Yasujiro's camera positioning. He filmed at the height of about 3 feet, which is approximately head level while sitting *seiza*. By positioning the camera at level with the "average" sitting Japanese person he presents a very particular subjectivity between post war Japan and Westernization/Americanization. See: Donald Ritchie. Ozu. University of California Press, 1974.

will look at the Hollywood remakes of French films, which have been engaged with by most of the previously mentioned analyses of remakes, and after that I will consider the Hollywood remakes of Japanese films, which have yet to be analyzed as an individual phenomenon.

A Second Look at the French Connection

By identifying the remake as a form of domesticating translation it is possible to understand the United States' remake culture as an extension of its translational culture. In this section I will look at the relationship between France and the United States and how the remaking of French films by Hollywood signals a parallel struggle to that of 20th century trade negotiations between the two countries.

It is unsurprising that after the early legal battles between dupe and copy the re-emergence of problems with the remake was not with archival remakes such as *Robin Hood*, *The Maltese Falcon* or Hitchcock's constant retoolings of his own work, which happened through the 10s, 20s and into the 30s, but with the French film *Pépé le Moko* (1936) being remade by Hollywood as *Algiers* (1938). The remakes that cause contention are those that particularly interact with differing ideals of spatial (between countries/places) and hierarchical (between high cultural art and low cultural trash, or commerce) culture. It is these two aspects of the word culture (linguistic communities/countries and high/low taste distinctions) that are the main point of contention between France and the United States with films and trade.

While cinema was initially commercial, the idea of art cinema emerged to challenge that dominance in the 20th century. In France, *ciné-clubs*, which were founded in 1924 and grew considerably until 1950 were, according to French film critic André Bazin, the major reason people came to understand that "film was no longer a disposable consumer object, but rather a

temporally resistant cultural product comparable to the other arts."[92] The existence of art house cinemas within the United States indicates that a similar process happened sometime within the 20th century in America. Accompanying the identification of film as art was the emergence of a "critically sophisticated and realistically minded audience"[93] to appreciate it (and enshrine it as untouchable). Bazin reasons that if there is an audience to appreciate a classic, or art, film there should be no legitimate reason to remake that film other than "economic terrorism," which is what he labels the remake of *Pépé le Moko* into *Algiers*.[94] Through such an argument that links France to art and Hollywood to commerce Bazin understands "Classical Hollywood as a political apparatus."[95] However, it is important to note that both art film and commercial film are strategic taxonomies as "every national cinema is both a business and a producer of art."[96] To call one film high and the other low is simply a reductive strategy of opposition just like calling one national cinema art and one commercial. However, such a reduction matches the reductive trade relations that opposes France as classic, high art, old European tradition and needing protection against the United States, which is modern, popular, new modernity and viciously aggressive.

The reductive opposition of resistant French art film and dominant commercial Hollywood film is mirrored in both the increasing spread of global modernity with its accompanied trade agreements and the 20th century's cultural imperialism thesis.

Jack Valenti, former president of the Motion Picture Association of America, rejected Bazin's conjecture of Hollywood as a political apparatus and the cultural imperialism thesis by insisting, and continuing to insist, on the universal appeal of Hollywood films and the

[92] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 18.
[93] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 19.
[94] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 8.
[95] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 12.
[96] Forrest and Koos, "Reviewing Remakes," p. 29.

customer/citizen's choice as the reason Hollywood films spread.[97] However, Valenti's actions, such as threatening the President of Mexico for creating a levy on film tickets in 2003, indicate otherwise.[98] Toby Miller et al. affirm the claim that Hollywood is political when they write "Hollywood's success has been a coordinated, if sometimes complicated and chaotic, attempt by capital and the state to establish and maintain a position of market and ideological dominance, in ways that find US governments every bit as crucial as audiences and films."[99]

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was set up to promote equal trade through "non-discrimination; codified regulations policed outside the terrain of individual sovereign-states; and multilateralism."[100] The GATT was revised several times between the 1940s and 1990s at heated conferences where the sides supported free trade on the grounds of global spread of information and commerce or rejected it on the grounds that it wiped out local production. The main issue was the way dominant powers seemed to use the GATT for their advantage and other countries' disadvantage.

The GATT support of free trade, while protected by dominant powers in the economic and political sectors such as the United States, found an opponent in the cultural imperialism thesis in the 1950s to 80s, the 1960s-70s UNESCO formulation of the MacBride Commission, the Third World support of a New International Information Order (NIIO) or New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), and finally the 1980s and 90s French opposition to American media expansion.[101] The 1995 creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which includes a General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) that overrides the

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[97] Toby Miller, Nitin Govil, John McMurrin, Richard Maxwell and Ting Wang eds. *Global Hollywood 2*. London: British Film Institute Publishing, 2005: pp. 40, 316-7.
[98] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, p. 110.
[99] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, p. 111.
[100] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, p. 85.
[101] Ulla Carlsson. "The Rise and Fall of NWICO – and Then?: From a Vision of International Regulation to a Reality of Multilevel Governance." *Information Society: Visions and Governance*. EURICOM Colloquium in Venice, May 5-7, 2003.

GATT, has led toward "free trade totalisations" that the GATT at least partially protected against.[102] Miller et al. underline the danger in the situation by writing, "The US has been like a child with a toy in the WTO, proud that it has filed more complaints than any other country and has prevailed so often."[103] Films are a complicated issue as they have been considered alternately culture, art, national and commercial depending on the context. However, Andrew Higson simplifies the matter by explaining, "The discourses of 'art', 'culture' and 'quality', and of 'national identity' and 'nationhood', have historically been mobilized against Hollywood's mass entertainment film, and used to justify various nationally specific economic systems of support and protection."[104] Thus, the American defense of pushing films largely maintains that they are simply commercial productions, and the French protectionism contends that they are an aspect of culture that must be protected from extinction. While the GATT partially protected against cultural production, the WTO has largely kept to the commercial determination and has let films cross borders in the same way as any other form of trade.

One example of the anti cultural imperialism writings is the early work of Armand Mattelart and Ariel Dorfman who claimed that the United States (as well as other dominant powers/countries) influenced other countries through cultural as well as economic domination. In *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* Dorfman and Mattelart analyze Donald Duck and Disney comics as American imperialist devices.[105] They argue that characters like Donald Duck and Uncle Scrooge and places such as Inca Blinca and Unsteadystan serve as a means for American ideology to enter, influence, and ultimately (re)educate other countries, specifically Chile and other third world locales. Their reading is

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[102] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, p. 87.
[103] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, p. 89.
[104] Andrew Higson. "The Concept of National Cinema." *Screen* 30, 4, 1989: p. 41.
[105] Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart. *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic*. Translated by David Kunzle. New York: International General, 1984 [1971].

Marxist and polemic, and the book was banned and burned in Chile and banned in the United States. One major problem with their argument is that ultimately it is impossible to prove or disprove that the texts influenced the native Chileans in the way Dorfman and Mattelart indicate.[106] However, it is enough to simply understand the general critique of cultural imperialism as tied to a fear of America's rising political and economic power, which was perceived to be connected to the dominance of Hollywood films. The 1938 account by P. A. Harlé about how the release of *Algiers* ruined *Pépé le Moko*'s run abroad,[107] and Williams and Mork's more recent claim that when "Disney remade the 1986 French film *Les Fugitifs* in 1989 and put the original on the shelf, [it] effectively kill[ed] its chances for a U.S. market"[108] are quite legitimate points. However, the reaction of strong French protectionism is no better than Hollywood's aggressive expansion. Neither reaction leads to mutually beneficial interaction.

Later, Mattelart identifies cultural imperialism as "the subordination of certain peoples and cultures" caused by the process of modernization and the uneven spread of technology.[109] This is a slightly more even analysis, but perhaps the best summary comes from John Tomlinson, who argues that cultural imperialism is not an identifiable process, but a discourse encapsulating four areas: media imperialism, nationality, critique of global capitalism and critique of modernity. He ultimately concludes, "the various critiques of cultural imperialism could be thought of as (in some cases inchoate) protests against the spread of (capitalist) modernity."[110] Part of the spread of (Western) modernity is the melding of other cultures through the spread of technology, culture and texts such as movies. A part of the remake is simply this cultural mixing

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[106] John Tomlinson. *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction*. London: Pinter Publishers, 1991: pp. 41-45.
[107] Vincendieu, "Hijacked," p. 24.
[108] Michael Williams and Christian Mort. Remake Stakes Are Up: H[olly]wood Hastens Pursuit of French Pic[ture] Properties." *Daily Variety* 19, April 1993: p. 8. Cited in Grindstaff, "Pretty Woman with a Gun," p. 281.
[109] Armand Mattelart. *Networking the World, 1794-2000*. Liz Carey-Libbrect and James A Cohen trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000 [1996]: p. 91.
[110] Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism*, p. 173.

in the process (alternately seen as negative or positive) of globalization, and the negative reactions to it as well as the creation of an opposition between art and commercial film is a method of protectionism against the spread of globalization. This encapsulation is the same "cultural domination and exclusion" that Venuti notes is an integral aspect of translation.[111] Both the issues of the 1930s-50s critiqued by Bazin and the reemergence of problems with the remake in the 1980s that accompany the latest round of trade arrangements, protectionist quotas and percentages work back to the question of what culture should be transmitted globally, be it French, American, or whatever other country is able to vie for dominance.[112]

Gross National Cool

I began this essay with two sub-questions: Why is Hollywood remaking Japanese films and why did Hollywood not remake Japanese films in the 1980s and early 1990s when it was remaking French films? Through redefining the remake as a form of domesticating translation I have attempted to link its use to domesticating translation strategies that have existed within particularly imperialistic cultures including 20th and 21st century United States. In this section I will analyze two Hollywood remakes and their Japanese sources. I argue that the important points of difference between original and remake are places where the originals problematize the ideas of domestic, foreign, and the current globalization, and the remakes domesticate the same aspects and thereby support a smooth, global homogenization.

I focus on remakes from Japan as they have been under theorized in current remake discourse by being grouped in the category of Asian cinema. The interrelation of Hollywood and any specific foreign film community can be differentiated through specific historic and current

[111] Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, p. 40.
[112] Durham, *Double Takes*, p. 8.

politics. For instance, to claim that Hong Kong, Chinese and Japanese films can be easily lumped together as "Asian cinema" is to ignore the past histories of China's Empire, the closing (and opening) of Japan, the history of European colonialism, the 20th century aggressive expansion of Japan, the current interaction of Hong Kong with both England and China and the post 1945 relationship between the United States and Japan.

The concept of seeing the Japanese remakes as contained within the genre of Asian horror is problematic, yet this appears to be a trend in the popular and academic discourse.[113] It reduces the history of local, national, regional and international differences under a regional universal. Labeling the films as generic renders specific differences of the originals less important than the (supposedly) universally accessible similarities within the generic remakes. The inclusion of a film into a universal grouping determines that its individual elements must match with the generic boundaries; the points of difference are ignored in the remakes despite their centrality to the original films. This is Leitch's point about the foundation of genre and empire through systematic acknowledgement and denial of specific elements. While the label of genre might explain the remake of horror films only a small portion of the remade Japanese films are horror. It is not only horror films being remade, but by emphasizing the universality of generic horror and hiding the domestication of the films that happens within the United States' discursive translation strategy a concept of universality and natural globalization are encouraged.

Japan is all the rage right now. The United States' engagement with Japan can be seen in academic and popular presses,[114] in the manga sections of bookstores that have grown

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[113] Lim, "Generic Ghosts."

[114] See: Ian Condry. *Hip-Hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006; Timothy J. Craig ed. *Japan Pop!* Armonk: Me. E. Sharpe, 2000; Roland Kelts. *Japanamerica: How Japanese Pop Culture Has Invaded the U.S.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006; D. R. Martinez ed. *Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture: Gender, Shifting Boundaries and Global Culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

exponentially in the past ten years, in the spread of anime,[115] Pokémon,[116] Harajuku cute,[117] technological gadgets, and, of course, the remakes of Japanese films. In 2002 Douglas McGray used the term "national cool" to indicate a sort of tangible cultural capital equal to, but different than, economic or military dominance. While "[Japan] limps its way into G-8 meetings and remains locked out of the U.N. Security Council… it has far greater cultural influence now than it did in the 1980s, when it was an economic superpower."[118] McGray claims the concept of national cool is a type of "soft power" that Japan has previously been unable to take full advantage of due to lack of message.[119] National cool is similar to Koichi Iwabuchi's theory of "cultural odor," which can be both positive and negative (fragrance vs. foul smell).[120] Iwabuchi claims that products give off an odor of their culture of origin. Coca-cola and McDonald's smell like America, which can be good (fragrance), bad (stench) or somewhere in between (pungent) depending on the context. However, Iwabuchi further claims that Japanese products are odorless.[121] Unlike McGray, who discounts Japan due to its lack of hard power and message, Iwabuchi argues that culturally odorless products such as manga, anime and electronic gadgets

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[115] See: Laurie Cubbison. "Anime Fans, DVDs, and the Authentic Text." *The Velvet Light Trap* 56 (Fall), 2005; Sharon Kinsella. "Japanese Subculture of the 1990s: Otaku and the Amateur Manga Movement." *Journal of Japanese Studies* 24.2, 1998; Susan J. Napier. *Anime from Akira to Princess Mononoke: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation*. New York: Palgrave, 2001; Annalee Newitz. "Anime Otaku: Japanese Animation Fans Outside Japan." *Bad Subjects* 13, 1994.

[116] See: Masakazu Kubo. "Why Pokemon Was Successful in America." *Japan Echo*, April 2000: 59-62; Joseph Tobin ed. *Pikachu's Global Adventure*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

[117] See: Anne Allison. "Cuteness as Japan's Millennial Product." in Joseph Tobin, ed. *Pikachu's Global Adventure*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004: pp 34-49; Andrea G. Arai. "The 'Wild Child' of 1990s Japan." *Japan After Japan*. Tomiko Yoda and Harry Harootunian, eds. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006; Sharon Kinsella. "Cuties in Japan." in Lise Skov and Brian Moeran eds. *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995. pp 220-254; Tomiko Yoda. "Girl-Time: Gender and Mass Culture in Contemporary Japan." Talk given at New York University, April 19, 2007. Also see the current brand of Harajuku coffee table fashion books: Aoki Shoichi. *Fruits*. New York: Phaidon, 2001; Aoki Shoichi. *Fresh Fruits*. New York: Phaidon, 2005; Masayuki Yoshinaga and Katsuhiko Ishikawa. *Gothic and Lolita*. New York: Phaidon, 2007.

[118] Douglas McGray. "Japan's Gross National Cool." *Foreign Policy*, May/June, 2002: p. 47.

[119] McGray, "Japan's Gross National Cool," pp. 52-4. The concept of "soft power" is from: Joseph S. Nye Jr. "Soft Power." *Foreign Policy* 80, Autumn 1990: pp. 153-171.

[120] Koichi Iwabuchi. *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002.

[121] Also see: Paul du Gay, Stuart Hall, Linda Janes, Huige Mackay, and Keith Negus. *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman*. London: Sage, 1997.

have been able to spread throughout Asia (unlike more culturally pungent texts such as live action Japanese films, which are remade), thereby creating an alternate flow of globalization. By bringing up McGray and Iwabuchi I do not intend to focus on Japanese power (or lack thereof), rather, I want to indicate that such a discourse about intangible power through cultural artifacts is the repetition of the 1980s-90s situation between France and the United States. I wish to argue here that the remake of Japanese films is a domesticating, protectionist measure by Hollywood, America's little state department, against the current spread of Japanese cultural popularity just as the remakes of French films in the 1980s opposed the French protectionism. I do not intend to argue that there is a conscious effort to block the spread of Japanese culture, rather, it is an aspect of the discursive American translation culture of sameness. Similar to Karl Vossler's claim that translation protects a country from foreign influence,[122] Hollywood's remakes serve to erase foreign difference under a naturalized grand narrative that, when the films move back out to other countries, leads to a homogenous global (film) culture based in American standards (ideology). By remaking foreign films as a universal genre Hollywood contributes to the creation of the standards by which films become understood. While America argued against the French protectionist measures and quotas, Hollywood's own practice of remaking is based on similar grounds of protectionism.

Over the past ten years Hollywood has begun to remake Japanese films, which I am arguing is both a reaction to Japan's rising cultural popularity, but also as it fits within America's standard translation method. *Ringu* (1998), which was remade as *The Ring* (2002), is situated as the beginning of the Asian horror genre. However, I will give an alternate reading of it and point

[122] Vossler claims, "Every translation is commissioned, as it were, by the instinct for self-preservation of a language community… Translation is the defensive aspect of our speech. The artistically perfect translations of some national literature must be regarded and valued as strategic fortifications, behind which the language genius of a people defends itself against the foreigner by the ruse of taking over as much from him as possible." Karl Vossler, *The Spirit of Language in Civilization*. Oscar Oeser trans. London: Routledge, 1932: pp. 175, 183.

out the elements that go missing in its move to genre. Then, I will provide a focused analysis of *Shall We Dansu?* (1996) and *Shall We Dance?* (2004). I have Chosen *Shall We Dance* for three reasons: it is not a horror film; it is almost completely ignored within the writings on remakes and film; the erased cultural specifics are almost identical to those in *Ringu*. My argument is that it is not the generic films that are remade from the late 1990s to the present, but the popular films that waft of Japanese cultural fragrance. Films that might otherwise signal an alternate flow of globalization are brought back into the comfortable fold of (Western) modernity by being remade (without the elements that reek of non-universality).

Ringu has a complicated history. It was based on a 1993 book of the same name and was followed by two sequels, *Rasen* (1998) and *Ringu 2* (1999), and a prequel, *Ringu 0: Basudei* (2000), some of which were also based on book sequels. The first *Ringu* film was immensely popular in Hong Kong and the nearby countries, spreading partially through illegal copying.[123] It is likely that this Asian popularity resulted in its remake by Hollywood.[124] *Ringu* was remade in the United States as *The Ring*, which followed the basic plot of the original, but changed the lead actors to American. The Hollywood sequel, *The Ring 2* (2005) followed. An important note is that the original Japanese director was brought in to direct the Hollywood sequel (*The Ring 2*), a fact that has been much repeated in support of a global cinema, but a fact that belies the dissimilarity between the Hollywood remake *The Ring 2* and the Japanese film *Ringu 2* from 6 years earlier. The *Ringu*/*Ring* series has since been followed by numerous films that form a budding genre that has been alternately called "Asian horror," "psychological horror," or "J-

[123] "The Ring (Ringu) Review." Variety.com. Posted: Aug 2, 1999. Accessed: Oct 6, 2007 <http://www.variety.com/review/VE1117914476>.
[124] Roy Lee is credited for bringing some 22 films, including *Ringu*, to Hollywood. See: Tad Friend. "Letter From California: Remake Man." *The New Yorker* June 2, 2003.

Horror."[125] From this brief history it is possible to understand the film as generic, but by doing so one misses the points of rupture and difference in the film, the points that are erased between original and remake as well as those traits that get left out of the new generic form.

Ringu is about a videotape that carries the malevolent spirit of a young woman. Seven days after watching the videotape the spirit comes out of the television and kills the viewer. The only way to avoid the curse is through copying the tape, and getting somebody else to watch the copied tape, essentially continuing the viral chain.[126] *Ringu* is about a reporter tracking down the mysterious deaths (individual, but linked in how they died) of a group of high school students. She finds the tape, watches it, solves the mystery of the malevolent spirit's death, and supposedly breaks the curse. However, the ending of the film reveals that she survived because she copied the tape and showed it to her ex-husband (who dies after they solve the mystery). The closing scene shows her trying to save her son, who watched the tape by mistake, by asking the grandfather to watch a copy of the tape thereby saving his grandson's life. The film is about the relationship of original, copy, and the ability to survive through copying/imitating something. Quite simply, the film is allegorical for Japan's troubled relationship between itself, the West and modernization through imitation. As Joseph Tobin notes, there are two general trends of self-exoticization within Japan's modernization since the Meiji period. The first trend is a sense of inferiority "characteristic of the Meiji and Occupation eras…[where] Japanese make themselves

[125] The difference between the names psychological, J and Asian Horror is related to the regionalization of the genre against the particulars of the domestic cinemas. While Japanese Horror films have typically followed certain principles such as ghosts and curses, but little gore, the rest of the countries have certain other particulars. While it is unlikely that Takashi Miike's gory dramas would ever be grouped with the goreless horror of *Ringu* in a Japanese video store such as Tsutaya, they have been retroactively equated due to the reductive, generic category of "Asian Horror." The standard, set by Hollywood's remaking, reduces the Japanese (as well as Korean, Hong Kong, Chinese, Thai et cetera) films to a universal genre.

[126] The word used to copy a cassette is ダッビングする, which, when translated back into English turns into either copy or dub, which is interesting when separating dubbing dialogue and dubbing as copying

as Western as possible."[127] The second trend is "when Japanese consciously or unconsciously make themselves into, or see themselves as, the objects of Western desire and imagination." This appears as a heightened nationalism that can be seen in the closed Tokugawa era, the 1930s Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, and the 1980s economic boom and *nihonjinron* discourse (theories of Japanese uniqueness).[128] In the periods of inferiority Japan has imitated the West and sacrificed its native identity in order to survive. The Meiji period was marked by extreme westernization where the government instituted a massive reorganization based on the findings of a group that toured various Western European countries. After 1945 Japan was again restructured due to the influence of the occupying American forces. However, within the opposing, nationalistic trend, Japan's uniqueness resurfaces to produce moments of extreme, even violent, introversion or self obsession such as the isolationist (*sakoku*) period where Japan shut its borders from outside influence between 1641 and 1853, and the Co-Prosperity Sphere was an attempt to unite the Asian hemisphere under Japanese leadership, which included the slavery of lesser "races." Within *Ringu* Japanese uniqueness (the malevolent ghost spirit) is in eternal conflict with homogenization and Westernization (represented by the act of copying), and the sacrifice of the grandfather for the survival of the grandchild mirrors Japan's self-orientalizing sacrifice of native for foreign. However, these particulars are not translated into the remake.

The concepts of Westernization through imitation and sacrifice, and Japanese uniqueness do not exist in the Hollywood remake, *The Ring*. While the basic plot involving a videotape, with

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[127] Joseph Tobin. "Introduction: Domesticating the West." Joseph Tobin ed. *Re-Made in Japan: Everyday Life and Consumer Taste in a Changing Society*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992: p. 30.
[128] See: Takeo Doi. *The Anatomy of Dependence*. New York: Harper & Row, 1973; Harumi Befu. *Hegemony of Homogeneity: An Anthropological Analysis of Nihonjinron*. Rosanna, Victoria: Trans Pacific, 2001; Tomiko Yoda and Harry Harootunian eds. *Japan After Japan*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006; Masao Miyoshi and Harry D. Harootunian, eds. *Postmodernism and Japan*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1989.

spirit coming out of the tape to kill the viewer or copying the tape to survive are all repeated, the specifics have all been domesticated to American contexts. The main characters, mother, ex-husband, son, and spirit are all Caucasian-American, and the action takes place in the Pacific Northwest. Thus, the ideas of a foreign, and of Japan, are removed from the remake. Additionally, the film concludes with the mother, Rachel, trying to save her son not through the sacrifice of the grandfather, but the murder of an unrelated person. Originally, she showed the copied tape to a child murderer (a character that was to have bit role in the film), thus saving her son. However, this was changed to her copying the tape and placing it in a video store for an unsuspecting victim to rent the movie, watch the tape and continue the chain.[129] Not only is the opposition of native/foreign taken out, but the idea of self-sacrifice is replaced with, alternately, (self)righteous execution and premeditated murder. Additionally, the remake reduces the film to the generic borders of Asian horror where the repeated qualities such as ghosts and curses reproduce Oriental stereotypes. Within the remake the points of friction are domesticated in ways that remove the themes of foreign, modernity and imitation, points that are crucial for the original film.

The same opposition between native and foreign, Japan and the West that is eliminated in *The Ring* is taken out of *Shall We Dance?* in the movement to produce a globally spreading text based on false universalities. *Shall We Dansu?* was written and directed in 1996 by Masayuki Suo. It was subtitled into English for film festivals and art houses and was popular enough to win numerous awards and even be promoted by Miramax Pictures for two limited tours of the United

[129] "The Ring Trivia." Movie Mistakes. Accessed: April 28, 2008. <http://www.moviemistakes.com/film2807/trivia>; "The Ring ending/spoiler." Ruined Endings. Accessed: April 28, 2008. <http://www.ruinedendings.com/film2807ending>.

States and Canada in 1997.[130] However, despite the positive film festival reactions and significant monetary success in comparison to other foreign releases at the time it was unable to break out of the art houses in which it was shown to a more international/commercial success. Unlike the current brand of international co-productions that garner popularity, mainstream release schedules and awards such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) and *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), *Shall We Dansu?* remained a nationally based film and was therefore remade. In 2004 it was remade as *Shall We Dance?* starring Richard Gere and Jennifer Lopez. While *Shall We Dansu?* was a minor success both artistically (based on the awards it received) and economically, the remake was a major economic, if not artistic, success throughout the world, grossing more in Japan than the original.[131] That the Hollywood film sold more than the Japanese film is not rare in Japan where imported films almost always gross more than local productions. *Kinema Jyunpou* indicates that the top grossing films of the past 10 years have been anime or imported live action films while Japanese live action films have become increasingly rare.[132] *Shall We Dansu?*, a movie about dancing, was released into a Japanese society that saw ballroom dancing as essentially foreign; the remake coincides temporally with various reality dance shows such as *Dancing with the Stars*.[133] The main theme of the original film is that of native and

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[130] The video diary DVD special feature by Suo depicts his American tour to promote the film. There were two tours, both in 1997. The first, from April 4 to 22, went to New York, Dallas, Houston, St. Louis, San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego. The second, from May 3 to 22, went to Seattle, Vancouver, Portland, Minneapolis, Chicago, New York, Washington DC, Atlanta, Miami, Detroit, Montreal and Toronto. The documentary shows the very limited reception the film received and concludes with a few numbers: $9,499,091 from its release; 268 theaters; 1,900,000 people. Finally, the numerous awards the film received scroll up the screen. Japanese DVD 2 disk set. "'Shall we dansu' amerika wo yuku: eizou nikki." Also see: Masayuki Suo. *Shall we dansu amerika wo yuku*. Bungeishunjyn, 2001.

[131] According to Box Office Mojo *Shall We Dance?* grossed $57,890,460 domestic and $112,238,000 foreign ($170,128,460 worldwide). It also made $19,578,973 in Japan. In contrast, according to BuzzSugar, the original grossed $42,976,677 with $9,499,091 in the United States. Box Office Mojo. <http://www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=shallwedance.htm>; BuzzSugar. <http://buzzsugar.com/movie/Shall_we_dansu>.

[132] *Kinema Junpo*. Tokyo: Kinema Junposha.

[133] *Dancing with the Stars* (2004) was an American television remake of the British television show *Strictly Come Dancing* (2004), which alludes to a long line of dancing movies such as *Dirty Dancing* (1987) *Strictly Ballroom*

foreign whereas the remake eliminates that opposition by reproducing a natively popular and far from marginal activity, and instead locates the nuclear family as the main point of contention. Because the remake changes the theme and then returns to Japan to outsell and displace the original it produces a concept of homogenous globalization where heterogeneity is emphasized in the original.

Shall We Dansu? is about a Tokyo salaryman, Sugiyama, who learns ballroom dance after seeing a woman in the window of a dance studio. The woman he sees, Mai, is the daughter of the school's owner, and is currently teaching against her will after losing at the international Blackpool dance competition and breaking up with her dance partner. The story is about the two characters, the salaryman who learns to dance, but keeps it hidden from his family and work, and the female dancer/instructor who teaches him and develops a better understanding of life, dance and why she lost at the competition. *Shall We Dance?* has a nearly identical plot except that the dancer's extended story is almost completely erased. The man, John Clark, works in Chicago, is married to a successful businesswoman instead of a housewife, and has two children. The dancer, Paullina's story only comes out during one flashback, and barely interacts with the man's story. She exists as a romantic foil against the man and his marriage.

Shall We Dansu? opens with the words "Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear"[134] centered on the screen. It is translated in a Japanese subtitle that attributes it to William Shakespeare, but does not give the exact source. The words are engraved on the arch of a stage, which one sees as the camera angle widens, then pans down to a group of elderly white couples dancing on the unknown dance floor in front of the stage. The dancing couples are accompanied by a voiceover, which one can later identify as the voice of Sugiyama, talking of the history of

(1992), and *Save the Last Dance* (2001). Interestingly, the title 'shall we dance' is itself a reference to *The King and I* (1956), indicating that ties to this history are an aspect of the foreign side of the Japanese film.

[134] The quote is from: William Shakespeare. *Venus and Adonis*. Line 145.

ballroom dance in Europe and Japan and quoting Adam Smith who claims that dance and music are the first of the human arts.[135] The disjunction of Japanese voice and highly foreign audio/visual subject matter initiates the film with a strong binary between native (Japan) and foreign (West). This difference is further pushed on the viewer when the title of the movie comes onto the screen: "Shall we" is written on the screen in flowing cursive style in English, but "ダンス" emerges on the screen providing a contrasting Japanese. However, the binary between Japanese and English is confused because the Japanese word used is *dansu* and not *odoru*. While *odoru* is the native Japanese word for *dance* the word used, *dansu*, is a foreign loan word written in katakana, the syllabary for foreign loan words. The two words are used in contrast throughout the film. Thus, both the purity of Japan and its mixture with the West are problematized from the very beginning of the film. The second scene moves to the main plot of the film, the stereotypical Japanese salary man leading actor and his daily life as a successful company man and husband, but also an unhappy/unsatisfied person. The original film's plot is about the contrast between his personal happiness and ideas of social and cultural responsibility, but these opposing drives are ultimately linked to the differences between foreign and native ideals.

Not only does the first scene with quotations, stage and European dancers not exist within the remake, but according to Suo, it was initially deleted from the subtitled release by the producers.[136] In contrast, *Shall We Dance?* begins with images of the city and a monologue of the same successful company man (it was filmed in Toronto, but depicts Chicago) who is unhappy and unsatisfied despite the job, wife and life. There is no culturally foreign other in the

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[135] A translation of the voiceover is: *Shakou dansu* is called *booruruumu dansu* in Europe. It is said that Bourbon era palace dances were the beginning and after that the dances of the world merged. What became know as *Igirisu Stairu* is now known in Japan as *shakou dansu*. *Booruruumu dansu* is in Europe a matter of high culture, enjoyed by the young and old, and also a healthy recreation. Scottish political-economist and philosopher Adam Smith once said, 'Created by humans themselves, dance and music are the first and most inventive of the arts.' Translated by the author. December, 2007.

[136] Suo, *Shall we dansu amerika wo yuku*.

film: the aspect of Japan versus the West is erased in the story's movement to the United States. Interestingly enough, the previews for the re-released Japanese original (released to promote the Hollywood remake both in the US and Japan) focus on the same themes as the remake (bored man and change of life) and ignore the original's particulars (native/foreign and importance of the dancer, Mai). The remake's sole internal opposition is old dance vs. new dance between Miss Mitzi Dance Studio (old/traditional) and Doctor Dance (new/popular), a temporal/hierarchical opposition where it is a spatial/hierarchical opposition between Blackpool (West/traditional) and the Dance Hall (Japanese/popular) in the original.

In one of the most important scenes in the original, Mai is lectured by a possible new dance partner, Kimoto. He proposes they give a demonstration at a local dance hall (night club), but she refuses to dance with "hosts and hostesses" claiming it isn't dancing, but cabaret.[137] The foreign, European Blackpool competition and dance floor is opposed to the native dance hall with less history and lower culture. Kimoto claims not only that enjoying dance is of primary importance, but that the lowly Japanese dance hall has a history just as important as Blackpool. The opposition of high to low (hierarchical) and native to foreign (spatial) is stressed in this interchange. When Mai finally holds the party that signals the restart of her career it is on the lowly dance hall's floor, indicating the primacy (or at least equality as she plans on returning to Europe) of the native over the foreign, and it stresses the equality of high and low. In contrast, the remake opposes Miss Mitzi's relatively unpopular dance studio with the hip Doctor Dance studio and club. The opposition is both temporal and hierarchical: Miss Mitzi is middle aged and teaches various forms of professional dance compared to the scenes in Doctor Dance that are almost all depicted as club/entertainment moments. And when Paulina decides to go study in

[137] Ironically, the actual words she uses, ホスト, ホステス and キャバレー, are all foreign loan words in katakana. Thus, even her word choice is based in an awkward schizophrenia between local and foreign.

England (a rather meaningless decision in the context of the remake) her going away party takes place in an unrecognizable locale. In the original, the Japanese spirit and history is implied to be just as important and meaningful as the European one. The film is highly nationalist in its context. The remake works to erase such nationalism by placing the theme of global/universal work and the international family man/nuclear family over that of foreign and native. Such movement complies with a universalization of remaking as domestication.

The remake, according to Leitch, works to displace the original by claiming it is everything the original was, but more. In a DVD special feature Randy Spendlove, President of Miramax Films Motion Picture Music claims they "wanted to capture the essence of the original, but really bring it into… 2004, 2005."[138] He directly refers to the two songs in the remake, "Sway" and "Let's Dance," which are covered by The Pussycat Dolls and Mya (instead of Paltro Beltràn Ruiz[139] and David Bowie), who Spendlove claims have "retain[ed] the classic elements, but put a contemporary spin on [the songs]." The entire film, songs and content, have been couched in an idea of updating instead of translating, so there is no foreign element retained in the remake. The essence, then, is moved from Japanese interaction with foreign other to dance as pleasure and the happiness of the modern American (read: universal) nuclear family. To avoid the cultural difference and problems that accompany a foreign remake the film is couched in a rubric of updating.

A domesticating translation takes the foreign text and moves it into the native context, making the reader's job easier by forcing the text to speak in a manner the reader is used to. In the Hollywood's domesticating remakes of both *Ringu* and *Shall We Dansu*, Japan's troubled interaction with modernity and globalization are removed. The local socio-political particulars of

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[138] *Shall We Dance?* Miramax Pictures. "The Music of Shall We Dance?" DVD Special Feature.
[139] Ironically enough, Spendlove names Dean Martin as the original singer of Sway. Martin recorded the song in English in 1954, but it was originally written in Spanish in 1953.

the original films are erased in the service of "universal" generic narratives that satisfy an American audience that rarely interacts with foreign others. Hollywood's remake process is a systematic erasure of difference and the foreign other that has been naturalized under the theory of the remake as cinematic intertextuality. This erasure within cinema is the same as with America's literary domesticating translation practice. Both serve to homogenize cultural difference and promote a naturalized grand narrative of globalization.

Alternate Futures…

Late Modernity's interactions have tended away from border crossings of a national basis toward more fluid ideas of global flow, or globalization. Within cinema this flow can be seen in the shift from nationally based cinemas such as Californian Hollywood toward international, or globally spread, cinemas. Miller et al. discuss this situation at length noting that films are increasingly created as international co-productions with work (directors/actors/actresses nationality as well as more formal work such as filming and editing) spread in different countries.[140] However, this shift to globality is fraught with problems of uneven flow, domination and opposed ideals between nations, classes and other groupings. In this section I will point out some of the current problems within the global shift as it relates to cinema. I will conclude with the claim that Venuti's parallel plea for foreignization in American translation is just as valid within media translation.

Within this globalization is the claim that cinema, both through remakes and general cinematic intertextuality, is leading to a globally flowing cinematic culture that is "not a linear journey from source to target but as series of ever-shifting circular relationships."[141] However,

[140] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, pp. 362-70.
[141] Mazdon, "Editor's Introduction," p. 6.

the specific erasure (censure) of locally inadmissible cultural elements in the remake and translation do not lead to an even mixing, but a directed (but not planned) interaction. Such a specific expulsion of elements is problematic, as it does not lead to even flow when the remakes with deleted elements continue to flow due to the concept of genre instead of translation and adaptation instead of censure. Similarly, there are numerous nationally based problems to the switch to global cinema. Lim writes that "Hollywood's appropriation of the Hong Kong action film from the late 1990s onward… coincided with Hong Kong cinema's losing ground in local and overseas Asian markets, its historical bailiwicks."[142] The 1990s almost ruined Hong Kong cinema financially, and Lim wonders if the Hollywood remaking of horror films will exacerbate that tenuous situation. On the other side of the sea, the Japanese film industry has had economic problems for decades and the fact that Hollywood remakes outsell the few remaining locally made Japanese originals certainly does not help the ailing industry.[143] Bollywood, which was relatively left alone in the past, has been cut back by recent Hollywood legal actions related to plagiarism and copyright protection, and it is unsure where such legal struggles will lead the industry in the future.[144] Even, the United States has problems: Miller et al. conclude *Global Hollywood 2* by quoting extensively from local cinema related companies in economic jeopardy within the new global cinema.[145] Some might argue that the breakdown of nationally based cinemas is inevitable within globalization. However, another change tied with globalization is a marked drive toward homogenization. As a heterogeneous media platform leads to growth and unexpected, beneficial cultural change one of the main critiques of globalization has been its

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[142] Lim, "Generic Ghosts," p. 125. Also see footnote #65, pp. 248-9.
[143] While Lim quotes a 65% Hollywood and 35% Japanese breakdown for sales within Japan she does not acknowledge the full local situation. That 35% is mostly animated, not live action films coming from two separate industries shown in the same arenas. Additionally, since the late 20th century there has been a huge reduction of movie theaters and a subsequent movement to home videos.
[144] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, pp. 238-40.
[145] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, pp. 268-70.

homogeneity. Hollywood's remakes are no different. If the remake, based on domestication, leads toward such homogenization within the United States and problems outside, then it should be avoided or at least questioned.

There are also more specific problems that can be seen quite clearly in the Japanese remake. The remake, unlike visibly translated texts, appears to be a new product and is able to flow back out to other countries. Nobody (other than translation theorists) translates translations back into the original language, but as the remake is seemingly divorced from its original (as an adaptation or version) it competes within both the source and target areas. Within the target culture it competes as a translation with the subtitle or dub (if those exist), but it also is able to travel back to the source culture to compete directly with the original as a new product. Such a comparison, or competition between versions is not of itself negative. It is what leads to intertextuality. The problem, rather, is that the remakes of Hollywood compete with the Japanese or French originals, but there is no competition or even acknowledgement of the foreign within the United States. *Shall We Dance?* was not advertised as having any relation to *Shall We Dansu?* in the United States. In contrast, within Japan, *Shall We Dance?* was billed as directly related, sold better, and now Gere and Lopez plaster the cover of books and products that are about the original. The United States' culture industry produces sanitary, foreignless texts through remaking. An intervention at the local level within the United States is required in order to problematize this situation.

In the conclusion to his chapter on Globalization, Venuti claims:

> For a translation ethics grounded in such differences, the key issue is not simply a discursive strategy (fluent or resistant), but always its intention and effect as well -i.e., whether the translating realizes an aim to promote cultural innovation and change. It can best signal the foreignness of the foreign text by revising the hierarchy of cultural discourses that pre-exist that text in the target language, by crossing the boundaries between domestic cultural constituencies, and by altering

> the reproduction of institutional values and practices. A translation ethics of sameness that hews to dominant domestic values and consolidates institutions limits these effects, usually to avoid any loss of cultural authority and to accumulate capital.[146]

Hollywood's system of remaking films is clearly based on an ethics of sameness. It domesticates foreign films through remaking and thereby gains both cultural authority and global capital. Whether the system of remakes is from France in 1980-1995 or Japan in 1996-2008, the strategy of remaking signals a struggle for cultural authority that is "not in the spirit of intertextuality and plural meanings" advocated by Mazdon in her defense of the remake.[147] Whether it is the current trade frictions or a notion of gross national cool, Hollywood remakes films from countries with large amounts of cultural importance (as in "soft power" or fragrant cultural odor), and the domesticated remakes then work back to their original country and override/merge with the original.

Venuti argues for a move to foreignizing translation in the United States to counteract the imperialistic, dominating elements of its translation practice. Similarly, a local move to a media translational culture grounded in difference should be made. In my final section I will elaborate one form that can work as resistant to the future of hegemonic Hollywood moved to a global stage.

…Alternate Methods

There must be a form of translation that is opposite the remake. As the subtitle as *adiecto* adds a translational layer on top of the original text, the opposite of the remake must be a multilayered translational method that is able to interact with all of Delabastita's elements, the visually and acoustically transmitted verbal and non-verbal signs. This complete variation of media

[146] Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation*, p. 188.
[147] Mazdon, "Editor's Introduction," p. 10.

translation must be a foreignizing, source-oriented translation that, similar to Philip Lewis' abusive translation[148] and Abé Mark Nornes' abusive subtitles,[149] dwells in the untranslatability of the filmic medium. My conceptualization of metatitles fully interacts with the various signs within film: it is a mixture of Midrash, *Pop-Up Videos*, layering and abuse.

In the last few pages of "For An Abusive Subtitling," Nornes refers to the fan subtitling of Japanese animation that took place between the late 1970s and early 2000s in the United States. According to Nornes the fansubbers are a good example of abusive subtitlers in that their work interacts with the foreign and breaks with the corrupt practice of conforming subtitles to the medium.[150] An example is the Japanese term *senpai*. It is a term of respect used toward one's temporal superior at a company, school or club. In one official (corrupt) translation of *Ranma ½*, the term is turned into "upper classman."[151] This is not incorrect in its use within the television show: it is the term of respect used to refer to a character in a higher grade than the speaker at school. The problem is that the English term robs the title of its socially centered positioning and gives it a distinct school centered hierarchy. In actual usage the term is complex, as old school hierarchies become difficult work hierarchies when they do not maintain the same verticality in the relationship. The solution of the fan subtitlers was to continue using the word "*senpai*," but they also gave an extended definition that covered the screen with words.[152] It is an example of the possibilities of metatitles: the translation effort goes well beyond the standard translation in that it starts with a foreignizing pidgin, but also provides an incredible amount of information

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[148] Philip E. Lewis. "The Measure of Translation Effects." In Joseph F. Graham. *Difference in Translation*. Cornell University Press, 1985.
[149] Abé Mark Nornes. "For an Abusive Subtitling." *Film Quarterly* 52.3, 1999.
[150] Nornes, "For an Abusive Subtitling," pp. 31-32.
[151] Rumiko Takahashi. *Ranma ½*. Distributed by Viz Media, 1990s.
[152] As fan subbing was done outside legitimate practice I have no proper bibliographical information. However, it can be dated between the 1980s and 1990s: before Viz Media bought the rights, but after the original Japanese broadcast.

that works to bridge the viewer and source. However, fansubbing fails to move beyond the verbal acoustic (dialogue) and verbal visual (credits, letters and documents) layers.

In order to translate non-verbal acoustic and visual signs a further step must be taken where signs, movements, background information and a host of other cultural knowledge is acknowledged and translated in a new method. The 1990s VH1 television show, *Pop-Up Video*, helps elaborate the possibilities of translating non-verbal signs. *Pop-Up Video* irreverently plays with popular music videos by adding information in bubbles (officially called "info nuggets") that appear on the screen over the music videos.[153] The bubbles include information about the musicians, the production, general gossip and even information about particular artistic shots. The text of the music video is explained, or commented upon, by the pop-up bubbles. If one sees pop-up commentary as a layer of abuse on top of the text (music video or film), it is a single step from creating "info nuggets" to layering non-verbal translations on top of the filmic text.

Through such a layering commentary of the different signs the screen would quickly fill and overwhelm the viewer, and while there is something admirable in completely disrupting visual pleasure, such disruption is (currently) not my goal: all five film layers must be visible either alternately or simultaneously, and at the control of the viewer. As home video watching is generally at the command of a single user or a small number of viewers the DVD format is a uniquely suited mode to enact metatitles. Primarily, the main textual layer (the visual film) and the verbal audible signs (dialogue and its subtitles), but also the new, abusive, pop-up inspired translational layers: the visual audible signs (text on screen), the non-verbal audible signs (background noises that need explanation), and the non-verbal visual signs (culturally derived, metaphoric camera usage).

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[153] Gary Burns. "Pop Up Video: The New Historicism." *Journal of Popular Film & Television* 32(2), Summer, 2004: pp. 74-82.

Due to the DVD's increased capacity to store information there has been an incredible increase of "additional material" within home videos. "Extras" such as the director's commentary, multiple language subtitle and audio tracks, and deleted scenes are now ubiquitous.[154] As the user interacts with much of this material in the form of layers on top of the filmic text it would be simple to add translational layers in addition to, or instead of, actors/directors' commentary tracks. Creating translation layers of the four types of signs and allowing the viewer to pause, play, and overlay each of those sign layers at any given time through the DVD's 'track' technology would allow the possibility of metatitles. The other benefit of privileging the DVD format is due to the contrasting positions of cinema and video watching in the United States where almost all foreign films are released solely to home video and not to theaters. Miller et al. write of the near total exclusion of foreign films released in the United States. Despite "studies show[ing] that people all over the world have experienced more and more imported music, cinema and TV… [the] deregulated media world has delivered the most protectionist culture in world history."[155] They continue by noting that it has "reached the point where the costs of subtitling and dubbing have become insupportable," due to the extremely high cost of promoting films in the United States.[156] Almost the sole exception to this protectionism now resides in the plethora of remakes and the few remaining home video releases of foreign films. Thus, the place of maximum possibility for change (perhaps the only place in the United States where resistance can be nurtured) is home video watching.[157]

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[154] Klinger, *Beyond the Multiplex*, pp. 54-90.
[155] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, pp. 94-5.
[156] Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2*, p. 95.
[157] One boon to this situation is that Klinger notes there is a rise of home video and internet viewing in the past decades. This indicates there is a possibility of positive change if the DVD and Internet modes are fully embraced. See: Klinger, *Beyond the Multiplex*, pp. 4-5, 191-238.

A layered translation that uses the capacities of current technology is both an extension of the subtitle form and a return to previous translational methods: margins or Midrash. Tyndale translated the Bible using extensive commentary on the margins of his pages; such practice was simply called "margins" at the time. Midrash is rabbinical commentary surrounding the biblical text. Both forms of writing might now be considered exegetical notes, commentary or footnotes: palimpsestic writing.[158] Metatitles would work in a similar manner, hovering over the text, but just as the work of Midrash can never fully understand the divine works, metatitling would never fully acknowledge every aspect of the original text: it is a failed translation, just as all translation is failure. Metatitling is an eternally layered (its own textual layers) and interlayered (intertextuality between the layers) mode of translation that approaches something (be it telos, a glimpse at the Adamic language, or simply communication) through reveling in its own failure.[159]

To be sure, the concept of metatitles is but one alternate method that both revels in the intranslatability of filmic language and works against the dominant translation method of the remake. Other methods exist even if they were not created to be translations. Woody Allen's *What's Up, Tiger Lily* (1966) is on one level a parodic cut up and redub of the Japanese spy thriller *Kokusai himitsu keisatsu: kagi no kagi* (1965). Allen cut up the original film, re pieced it together, and formed a script about the theft of an egg salad recipe instead of the original plot. The film is an Orientalist, domesticating and highly inaccurate translation, and whether it is more violent toward the original than the current remakes is arguable, but it is certainly an alternate

[158] My link between these various types of writing comes partially from Gérard Genette's work on paratexts. Gérard Genette. *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky trans. University of Nebraska Press, 1997 [1992]; Gérard Genette. *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Jane E. Lewin trans. Cambridge University Press, 1997 [1987].

[159] It is not unlike the goal of Jeremy McGann's online philological work, NINES: a networked infrastructure for nineteenth century electronic scholarship (http://nines.org), which traces, and allows the simultaneous viewing of, all incarnations of 19th century texts. Whether one follows this line of texts toward a telos or backward toward an ur is not as important as the link itself.

method. Another variation is the late 20th century television show *Mystery Science Theater 3000* (1988).[160] *MST3K* is, on one level, the repetition of old B movies (usually genre based science fiction or horror films), with the superimposition of a shadow of three characters that comment on the films. Not only does it follow Klinger's comments that link current film viewing strategies with high degrees of repetition (we are watching people watch, and comment upon, old films), but it is also a type of commentary on the films that translates them for a temporally different audience.[161] Similar to the *Pop-Up Video* info nuggets, the three commentators of *MST3K* have a wide variety of complaints about the movies they watch: anything from comments about the actors/actresses/directors and the movie's plot itself to how the movie relates to current world affairs. In a way, *MST3K* could be considered a built in update of the old lecturing method of translation that has, in most locales, been abandoned. It is also an alternative to the remake that places it in a position to comment upon the situation of current film translation.

I have linked dubbing and subtitling, the two current methods of failed film translation, to remaking and metatitling, which I have argued are successful modes of media translations. I have also noted several other alternatives to emphasize that the remake is not a teleological movement of cinema, the natural and only combination of intertextuality, postmodernism and global culture, which is what current theory (Verevis) and practice (Tarantino) point toward. Through conceiving of a link that connects the various modes of media translation it is my hope that theory can move beyond the current situation where remakes are naturalized as the only outcome of the combination of (post)modernity and cinematic repetition. Through understanding the remake as just one type of several methods of filmic translation with a host of both positive and

[160] The television show aired from 1988 until 1999 and a film was released in 1996. The film does not stray from the show's general outline and instead lasts for slightly longer (the full duration of the movie).
[161] Klinger, *Beyond the Multiplex*, pp. 135-190.

negative aspects a translational ethics of media, similar to Venuti's project of locating an ethics of translational difference, can be encouraged in the movement of filmic texts.

All translation methods can be understood as resistant in certain situations. According to Antje Ascheid the ability to domesticate foreign texts results in a type freedom of interaction. "[Dubbing] holds the potential for the creation of a transformed, appropriated, rewritten new text, whose dependence on an original source text is hidden and sometimes even ignored."[162] For Ascheid the untying of dub and original is a benefit for small language communities that might otherwise be wiped out by dominant global languages such as English.[163] Similarly, Andrew Horton notes that *Time of the Gypsies* (1988), the Bosnian/Yugoslavian remake of *Godfather/Godfather II* (1972/1974), works against the dominant Hollywood tradition as a resistant, domesticating translation. "Time of the Gypsies is a vibrant example of how the more recognized border crossing represented by Hollywood remaking the films of other cultures can be reversed with imaginative cinematic and provocative cultural implications."[164] However, methods of film translation cannot be separated from the temporally specific cultural formations in which they are instituted. This is to say that any argument for the specific enaction of either remaking or metatitling must fully acknowledge its cultural surroundings.[165] In order to oppose the overwhelmingly strong domesticating translation strategy that exists within the United States in the early 21st century a strong foreignizing method should be encouraged. Metatitles which

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[162] Antje Ascheid. "Speaking Tongues: Voice Dubbing in the Cinema as Cultural Ventriloquism." *Velvet Light Trap*, Fall 1997: p. 35.
[163] Ascheid, "Speaking Tongues," p. 40.
[164] Andrew Horton. "Cinematic Makeovers and Cultural Border Crossings: Kusturica's *Time of the Gypsies* and Coppola's *Godfather* and *Godfather II*." In Andrew Horton and Stuart Y McDougal eds. *Play It Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998: p. 188.
[165] The Hong Kong remake is also a fruitful site for research as it must take into consideration both the current flow of texts as well as the Chinese art historical practice of imitating past masters, which is considerably different from Western art history's obsession with the original especially in the current mix of commercialism and art. See: Cornelia N. Moore and Lucy Lower eds. *Translation East and West: A Cross-Cultural Approach*. Honolulu: College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature, University of Hawaii, 1992; Gina Marchetti and Tan See Kam eds. *Hong Kong Film, Hollywood and New Global Cinema: No Film is an Island*. London: Routledge, 2006.

retain a complete link to the original culture and text, have the possibility of encouraging the viewer to acknowledge a foreign other.[166] It is my belief that such an acknowledgement of difference within areas of entertainment and pleasure are a necessary first step toward an idea of global responsibility.

[166] An alternate form of resistance is Cory Archangel's *Untitled Translation Exercise* from 2006. Archangel outsourced the script of *Dazed and Confused* (1993) to India to be recorded. He then resynchronized that dubbed audio into the original film. By combining the Indian accented English with a Hollywood film he manages to create a foreignizing dub.

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