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## FILM REMAKES

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How often have you come away from a remade movie or TV show comparing it to the original or wondering what the original was like? Films and TV shows are remade all the time, often crossing linguistic and cultural borders. The phenomenon of Japanese horror remakes, with American films such as *The Ring* (2002) remaking Japanese movies (in this case, Hideo Nakata's *Ringu/Ring* from 1998), is a well-known example. But there are also American remakes of British TV shows, such as *The Office* (2001-2003) and its American counterpart *The Office* (2005-2013), where differences in cultures, rather than differences in languages, had to be negotiated by the producers. Remakes have been around in the cinema ever since George Méliès' *Une partie de cartes/Card party* (1896), which was a remake of Louis Lumière's *Partie de cartes/Card game* (1896). In other words, remakes are almost as old as cinema itself.

This chapter focuses on film remakes as a form of translation. This may sound contentious, especially as remakes are seldom included in overviews of translation theory such as *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (Baker and Saldanha 2008) or Jeremy Munday's *Introducing Translation Studies* (2012). Even in some overviews of work on audiovisual translation (e.g. Chiaro 2009 or O'Connell 2007) remakes are not mentioned. In other cases, remakes are briefly mentioned but the text focuses mainly on other audiovisual modalities such as subtitling and dubbing (examples of this include Delabastita 1990; Gambier 2003, 2004; O'Sullivan 2011). In the last few years, there have been a number of articles in translation studies that have worked towards redressing this balance (Wong 2012; Evans 2014a, 2014b; Yau 2014). In addition, Henrik Gottlieb (2007) and Stephen Mandiberg (2008) both argue that remakes are a form of translation as they replace the signs

of the source text, in other words, as they replace the units of meaning in one language with units of meaning in another language.

Interestingly, scholars working in film studies have often used translation as a way of discussing remakes. Jennifer Forrest and Leonard Koos, for example, use the traditional categories of free and literal translation (which translation studies has generally moved away from) to suggest ways in which remakes might be conceptualised (2002: 15). Other scholars have similarly used translation as a metaphor for the remaking process (Aufderheide 1998; Wills 1998; Grindstaff 2001; Leitch 2002; Booth and Ekdale 2011). While these scholars compare remakes to translations, there is work that more specifically reads remakes through translation theory. Lucy Mazdon, for instance, uses Lawrence Venuti's concept of 'foreignizing translation' in her *Encore Hollywood* (2000) and elsewhere (Mazdon 2004) to explain her approach to remakes as a 'site of difference' (Mazdon 2000: 27). Yiman Wang (2008) also borrows from Venuti in her analysis of how Hong Kong remakes inscribe foreignness. Taking a slightly different approach, Laurence Raw (2010) uses skopos theory to discuss the Michael Winner's remake of *The Big Sleep* (1978). These scholars demonstrate the relevance of translation theory to film remakes, even when they are discussing, as Raw does, a remake in the same language. However, many of the mentions of translation in work on remakes tend to be equivocal, simultaneously giving remakes the status of translation and also revoking it (Evans 2014a: 301-303). A good example of this is Abé Mark Nornes' statement that Hollywood 'eschew[s] translation for the remaking of perfectly wonderful foreign films – the ultimate free translation' (2007: 8). Here Nornes simultaneously says that remakes are translations and contrasts them to translation; for if one eschews translation for remaking, then remaking cannot be translation. There persists a certain discomfort in according remakes the status of translation in other scholars' work (e.g. Wehn 2001; Grindstaff 2001) that could be explained by the perception that translation solely acts on

language. This perception is one that is also shared by the localization industry, where it is felt that translation is the ‘replacement of natural-language strings’ (Pym 2004: 52). Much recent work in translation studies has focused on the multimodal aspects of translation (e.g. O’Sullivan and Jeffcote 2013; Pérez-González 2014; Bosseaux 2015) and there is a wealth of work that argues that translation goes beyond just replacing strings of natural language, as Anthony Pym (2004: 52) points out. Remakes are a multimodal form of translation (Evans 2014a) where more than just language is translated and they may therefore trouble traditional perceptions of translation.

This chapter will focus on interlingual remakes, that is, remakes where the source films were created in another language. There are many remakes where the language is not changed and these have been discussed in film studies (see e.g. Horton and McDougal 1998; Verevis 2006; Zanger 2006). While such remakes require a similar recontextualisation of the film to translation, due to a change in audience over time or, in the case of American remakes of British productions, for a different culture, the interlingual focus of this chapter places remakes more comfortably into what Roman Jakobson called ‘translation proper’ (1959: 233), that is, the translation of a text from one language to another, highlighting similarities with other forms of translation.

The chapter explores the history of remakes before moving onto the theoretical aspects of remakes as a form of translation. The first section, **Multiple-language versions and early remakes**, focuses on the early remakes and multiple-language versions made in the early sound period (1929-1933). The second section, **Recent American remakes**, analyses the sorts of remake most people will be familiar with, that is, American remakes of productions from elsewhere in the world. This sort of remake is often at the root of negative approaches to remakes which see them as ‘a less than respectable Hollywood commercial practice’ (Forrest and Koos 2002: 2). There is considerably less work on remakes into other

languages, which form the focus of my third section, **Remakes around the world**. In this section, I look at local versions of American movies as well as remakes that do not travel via English, such as the Korean remake of *Ringu*, *Ring/The Ring Virus* (1999). In the final section, **Remakes and translation theory**, I discuss how remakes can be conceptualised as translations and discuss theoretical issues such as audience recognition, legal acknowledgement and remaking as industrial process.

### **MULTIPLE-LANGUAGE VERSIONS AND EARLY REMAKES**

The arrival of sound film caused a disturbance in the various global film industries (Williams 1992: 132). Despite Hollywood's position of power, films were being produced throughout the world in the early twentieth century (Shohat and Stam 1994: 28). Silent cinema had seldom been silent, with musical accompaniment and lecturers, or *benshi* as they were known in Japan, reading out intertitles and giving commentary on the film (Nornes 2007: 89-122). Text was often limited to intertitles, which could be translated. Both intertitle translation and lecturers/*benshi* allowed for a reasonably global distribution of films, although Hollywood was the main exporter of texts: various countries installed quotas to limit the importation of American cinema in the 1920s (Ďurovičová 1992: 140).

Sound complicated this arrangement. Not only did cinemas have to be refitted for sound film, studios had to learn how to record sound and produce synchronised dialogue, actors' voices could now be heard, which had consequences for non-native speakers of English working in Hollywood (as dramatized in the 2011 movie *The Artist*). In Europe, the arrival of sound film led to the demise of French Impressionist and German Expressionist cinema as well as vastly affecting avant-garde cinema (Williams 1992: 135).

Sound, as you might imagine, brought the element of language to the fore in film. Up until then, silent cinema had been constructed around sequences of moving images with

speech represented as text in intertitles. With the arrival of sound, it became possible to hear the voices of actors on screen. This made it impossible to continue with the previous methods of translation, as intertitles became much less common and the audience wanted to hear the recorded sound as part of the film. Given the high percentage of profits due to world sales by American studios, which could be up to forty percent (Ďurovičová 1992: 139), Hollywood invested in finding a way of selling sound films to non-English-speaking locations. A number of solutions were tried before the forms of subtitling and dubbing, as they are understood today, became the dominant forms of audiovisual translation. These early, short-lived solutions included removing the dialogue and replacing it with intertitles (Cornu 2014: 27), replacing scenes of dialogue filmed in English with scenes of dialogue filmed in the language of distribution (Ibid.: 28) and making multiple-language versions of films (Ďurovičová [1992: 139] uses the term ‘foreign language version’ to refer to these films). These latter are the focus of this section as they are, effectively, remakes made at the same time as the films themselves.

There were also a number of silent films remade into sound films throughout the 1930s, but my focus here is on the multiple-language versions of films as they can be understood as a form of translation. They have typically not been studied in translation studies, though short sections can be found on them in the work of Nornes (2007: 137-141), Jean-François Cornu (2014: 29-30) and Luis Pérez-González (2014: 215-217). Scholars in film studies have paid a little more attention to them, though, as Ginette Vincendeau (1988: 24) notes, there are numerous archival issues involved in the research on multiple-language versions, leading to difficulties researching them. It is worth pausing to reflect that, because of the central status of the original, often English-language film, the foreign language remakes are seen as secondary products and may not have been archived and preserved in the same way as the English-language version of the film. Vincendeau argues that many of these

multiple-language versions are seen as aesthetic failures (Ibid.) and so have been ignored by film scholars, with a few exceptions by *auteur* directors such as G.W. Pabst's 1931 *Die 3 Groschen Oper/The Threepenny Opera*, which was also released in 1931 in a French version known as *L'opéra de quat'sous*. The combination of languages makes Pabst's *The Threepenny Opera* an exceptional case in more ways than one. Recent home-viewing technologies, such as Blu-ray and DVD, have made access to some of these multilanguage versions easier, as the BFI DVD release of *The Threepenny Opera*, for example, contains both versions. These releases suggest an interest in these early multiple-language versions among the contemporary audience.

Multiple-language versions flourished for a brief moment in the period 1929 to 1933. As Nataša Ďurovičová notes, '[the] brevity of the phenomenon is taken as proof of its insignificance' (1992: 139), leading many film scholars to overlook them. Yet even if multiple-language films were, ultimately a failure, due to being too expensive, they also represent a moment in film history where the translation of film became of key significance.

Multiple-language versions are more similar to literary translation than other forms of audiovisual translation. In subtitling and dubbing, the focus of the translation is on the verbal elements of the text. Subtitling adds a written (and often condensed) translation of the verbal elements of the film, while dubbing replaces the audio elements in the source language with audio elements in the target language. Multiple-language versions replace the whole of the source film with the target film, just like other remakes (Evans 2014a: 310), but where they differ from other remakes is that they are supposed to offer a trustworthy representation of the source film, following what Andrew Chesterman has called an 'ethics of representation' (2001: 139-140). Yet it is also clear that multiple-language versions did more than just copy the source texts: they add to and alter the narratives in various ways. Pérez-González (2014: 215-217) discusses the differences between the English, French and Spanish versions of the

Laurel and Hardy vehicle, *Blotto* (1930). He notes that there were ‘a number of scenes ... that were too risqué for the American audience’, such as cabaret scenes, which were extended in the Spanish and French versions (Ibid.: 216). In fact, the French and Spanish versions were one reel longer than the English version (Ibid.: 217), demonstrating significant expansion of the text. Nornes (2007: 139) notes that differences in representation of sexuality were common in multiple-language versions. In the German version of *Anna Christie* (1930), Greta Garbo ‘wore sexier costumes, and her character’s sexual past was more explicit’ (Ibid.). These changes represent the different national standards of censorship and attitudes to the female body at the time.

One of the most written about examples of a multiple-language version is *Drácula*, the Spanish-language version of Tod Browning’s *Dracula*, directed by George Melford. Both films were produced in 1931 by the same company; the English-language version was shot on the sets during the day, the Spanish-language version was shot by night (Nornes 2007: 137), as was common practice at the time (Lénárt 2013). Melford’s version is substantially longer than Browning’s, running for an extra thirty minutes. András Lénárt (2013) argues that this is due to the interference of the producers in Browning’s version, compared to the freedom given to Melford. However, Melford’s budget was also significantly less (Ibid.). The Spanish-language version used actors from multiple Spanish speaking countries, in an effort to delocalize the connotations of the Spanish accents, but the effect has been called ‘infelicitous’ (Barrenechea 2009: 228). However, there are aspects of the film that are considered more successful than the English-language version. Antonio Barrenechea (2009: 229) argues that the plot feels more developed; the extra half hour allows for extended scenes. He also argues that the cinematography in Melford’s version offer a ‘nightmarish ambiance’ (Ibid.: 230) which is suitable to the story. Nornes also states that ‘people familiar with the Spanish *Dracula* prefer its luscious photography and racy atmosphere’ (2007: 137). *Drácula*



suggests that the multiple-language versions could offer more variation from their source texts than commonly expected of them. Their use as a common form of translation, however, lasted only a few years, before dubbing and subtitling became standard. However, Hollywood did not stop making remakes, either of American or foreign movies.

## **RECENT AMERICAN REMAKES**

This section looks at more recent interlingual remakes made in America. I have already mentioned the wave of J-Horror remakes from the early 2000s, such as *The Ring* (2002) or *The Grudge* (2004), but Hollywood has consistently remade films from other countries, as well as remaking American movies. Many of the interlingual remakes' source films come from France: Lucy Mazdon (2000: 152-156) lists sixty remakes from French during the period 1936-1999. As such, much of the critical attention on remakes has focused on remakes of French films (e.g. Durham 1998; Mazdon 2000). There have been remakes from other countries, such as *Vanilla Sky* (2001) which remade the Spanish film *Abre los ojos/Open Your Eyes* (1997) (see White 2003), but numbers are smaller by country. Mazdon argues that France is the second largest source of films to be remade other than America itself (2000: 2). There are a number of factors that have contributed to the popularity of French film as a source for remakes, from the perception of French culture as prestigious (Ibid.: 21) and the relatively healthy state of the French film industry (Ibid.: 23) to the proactive stance of French production companies trying to sell remake rights (Ibid.: 25).

The popular perception of American remakes is somewhat negative. In an article in British newspaper *The Guardian*, Andrew Pulver argues that remakes show that 'Hollywood is bereft of original ideas' (2010), though he also provides examples of good remakes, such as *The Ring* and *Down and Out in Beverly Hills* (1986), which remade Jean Renoir's *Boudu sauvé des eaux/Boudu Saved from Drowning* (1932). The (re)use of foreign films by

Hollywood has been described as ‘imperialistic’ (Leitch 2002: 56) and Hollywood filmmakers as ‘colonizers’ (Ibid.). In this reading, Hollywood remakes take a successful, or well-regarded, foreign film and use the prestige that it already has to try and make more money: ‘the remake has long been seen as indexical signifier of Hollywood greed’ (Rolls and Walker 2009: 186). Films that are already successful represent less of a risk than new, original movies (Mazdon 2000: 14). There is no doubt that remaking is a commercial process in many cases, but there are also non-commercial remakes, made by independent or experimental filmmakers which aim to recreate older experimental movies, such as Perry Bard’s *Man with a Movie Camera: The Global Remake* (2008-ongoing), which recreates Dziga Vertov’s *Chelovek s kino-apparatom/Man with a Movie Camera* (1929). As Jaimie Baron (2012) notes in this case, Bard’s film encourages the viewer to explore the viewing process and always points to the source movie.

The scholarship on interlingual remakes generally tries to overcome the image of remakes as a ‘purely commercial venture’ (Mazdon 2000: 21), focusing on issues such as national identity and gender (Vincendeau 1993; Durham 1998; Mazdon 2000) or the relationship between art and commercial cinemas (Falkenberg 1985). These approaches all look beyond the commercial aspect of remakes to discuss them as a form of artistic practice.

There are certain patterns that have been observed across American remakes. Almost all relocate the action to America, which leads to a number of cultural adaptations. As Vincendeau notes, American cinema tends to rely on ‘clear-cut motivation’ whereas European art cinema prefers ambiguity (1993: 23). The remakes that she is discussing tend to ‘streamline’ (Ibid.) their material in order to make it more accessible and clearer. Michael Harney (2002: 73-75) also notes that American remakes tend to amplify their material, making characters wealthier and their problems more complex. Again, this could be seen as a tendency to clarify and make explicit motivation; such tendencies are also seen in written

translation, where texts are often made syntactically more explicit or in other ways made less implicit than their source texts, a process sometimes called ‘explicitation’ (see Blum-Kulka 1986; Berman 2012 takes a critical approach).

Jim McBride’s *Breathless* (1983), which remakes Jean-Luc Godard’s *À bout de souffle/Breathless* (1959), has been discussed by many scholars (Falkenberg 1985; Wills 1998; Durham 1998: 49–69; Mazdon 2000: 79–88; Verevis 2006: 165–170; Evans 2014a). In some ways, *Breathless* is iconic of Hollywood remakes: it takes a successful French film and recreates it in an American setting. Unlike other remakes, however, its source film is very well-known in the USA and viewers would be likely to compare the two movies. While the remake was made by a Hollywood studio (Orion) and featured Richard Gere as its star, McBride had a background in underground, non-commercial film (such as his 1967 film *David Holzman’s Diary*) and it is difficult to read the film as solely a commercial appropriation. There is also an element of homage in the film, seen in careful reconstructions of certain scenes. In addition, Mazdon argues that *Breathless* transgresses some of the norms of Hollywood production, with its unresolved ending and its portrayal of sex (2000: 84). Scholarly work on *Breathless* has tended to focus on comparative readings of the movie with its source film, in a manner similar to translation analysis. Yet, where translations are supposedly for an audience who cannot access the source text (as it is in another language), *Breathless* can be most fruitfully read in relation to *À bout de souffle* as an intertextual work.

Another way of reading remakes is through Walter Benjamin’s concept of the text’s afterlife (1999: 72), as Dorothy Wong (2012) does. The idea of a translation or remake as an afterlife – or survival as it is also translated (Benjamin 2009: 31) – suggests that the target text will differ in many ways to the original, while still resembling it. Wong connects the afterlife to ghosts and haunting (2012: 24-25), offering another fecund metaphor for the relationship between remake and source film and linking it to wider work on spectralities in

cultural theory (see Blanco and Peeren 2013). The connection to ghosts is apt in relation to the wave of Asian horror films that were remade in the early 2000s (see Lim 2007). Both Bliss Cua Lim and Wong see these horror remakes as ultimately ‘deracinating’ (Lim 2007: 113), that is, removing the original context of the source film. This is a common complaint about remakes, which overlooks that remakes do not aim to present a foreign film as such (subtitled versions could do this), but rather adapt a film for a new audience. The issue remains, however, that American films are sold around the globe and remakes are sold back to the locations where the source film was made. Lim notes that the remake of *Ringu/Ring* made more money in Japan than the original film (Ibid.: 125).

The position of American remakes is somewhat problematic. American remakes can be seen as appropriations from other cultures, taking something that is successful, repackaging it and reselling it with the intention of making more money. Remakes represent a form of transcultural adaptation, which is never quite as predictable as the source culture would like (Appadurai 1996: 174). Yet, in an age where more and more movies are available for home viewing, remakes can also encourage viewers to find the foreign original. The fact that there is an American remake of a film may mean that the original becomes available on DVD or Blu-ray. Movies are no longer solely distributed in the cinema and there are multiple ways the public can access them. Equally, some remakes may offer new ways of looking at old movies, encouraging viewers to go back to those sources.

## **REMAKES AROUND THE WORLD**

America is not the only country that produces remakes: they are produced all around the world. This aspect of remaking has been received much less critical attention than American remakes. There are several possible reasons for this. Film studies has been criticised for Eurocentrism which overlooks film production elsewhere (Shohat and Stam 1994), though

this has been changing over the last twenty years. However, there still remains a problem of access to films from some places, often in Africa and Asia, as they are not distributed globally (Andrew 2006: 26). Iain Robert Smith (2008: 8) reports only being able to find a CD-R bootleg of the Turkish film *Turist Ömer Uzay Yolunda/Tourist Ömer in Star Trek* (1974), which suggests limited distribution, though video sharing sites like Youtube and Vimeo are making it easier to see such films, as well as a number of small DVD distributors.

A number of remakes made outside of America are remakes of American movies, such as the Turkish *Star Trek* remake discussed by Smith (2008), with other remakes being made in Turkey, India and East Asia (see Smith 2016; Wright 2009; O'Thomas 2010). In India, for instance, over seventy films since 2000 were remakes (Wright 2009). Chinese cinemas (including Hong Kong, Taiwan, PR China and Singapore) also have strong remaking traditions (Aufderheide 1998; Wang 2008, 2013; Evans 2014b). One of the key issues with these films is how they relate to Hollywood. As Smith (2008) and Evans (2014b) argue, remade films may both celebrate and criticise their source films. *Turist Ömer Uzay Yolunda/Tourist Ömer in Star Trek*, for instance, both celebrates *Star Trek*, which is the setting that it appropriates, but at the same time it offers a commentary on the TV show from a Turkish perspective (Smith 2008). There is a hybridity in the film that comes from connecting two cultures; this becomes more obvious when the viewer has access to the source film. Neelam Sidhar Wright (2009) similarly argues that there is a combination of resistance and innovation involved in Bollywood (Indian) remakes of American movies. Here the relationship between source and target cultures is different, as the remaking film industry is normally smaller, less well-funded and less well-distributed. The power relations (industrial, economic, political) between countries are implicated in any discussion of remakes.

Like American remakes, remakes out of English also tend to relocate their narratives and consequently make adaptations for the local culture. In *San qiang pai an jing qi/A*

*Woman, A Gun and A Noodle Shop* (2009), the action and narrative of *Blood Simple* (1984) are relocated from Texas to the Chinese Gobi desert in the pre-Qing (pre-1644) period. Beyond the obvious linguistic change from English to Mandarin Chinese, the Chinese film uses brighter colours than its source. There is also a more obvious strand of humour (Evans 2014b: 290) in the film. Interestingly, like many American remakes, it also makes motivation more explicit (Ibid.: 292), suggesting that this is not just a feature of American remakes. However, the source film was an independent movie, which did not follow Hollywood conventions. *A Woman, A Gun and A Noodle Shop* also differs from many non-American remakes in that its director (Zhang Yimou) was internationally known, meaning that it received a wider distribution than many other Chinese films.

Not all remakes involve an English source. There are a number of Korean remakes of Japanese films and television, such as the Korean version of *Ring*, *The Ring Virus* (1999). One reason for this is the ban on Japanese media in South Korea until 2004 (Byrne 2014: 186), following the legacy of Japanese imperialism. The Korean version uses a very similar narrative to the Japanese film, but differs in gender presentation, which becomes more fluid in the Korean version (Ibid.), as well as how it presents the horror aspects, as the Korean version focuses more on the mystery (Ibid.: 187). James Byrne argues that *The Ring Virus* draws from a tradition of Korean melodrama (Ibid.: 188). The Korean remake, then, adapts the narrative to Korean traditions but also adapts the presentation of character, exploring the source material of the novel both films are based on (Suzuki 2007) in a different way.

Remakes from around the world question the perception of remakes as ‘overwhelmingly, a Hollywood practice’ (Rolls and Walker 2009: 186). The strategies of cultural adaptation often remain the same, as the remakes localize the narrative and adapt the film to the local audience. More research is needed into the multitude of remakes around the world, especially between cultures where English is not spoken.

## REMAKES AND TRANSLATION THEORY

In this final section, I discuss how remakes have been and can be conceptualized as translations, as well as the issues they raise for translation theory. There are numerous attempts to taxonomise remakes, including Thomas Leitch's (2002: 45-50) four-part model, which includes 'readaptations', which are based on the same literary work as the film they are remaking; 'updates', which tend to transpose a narrative to the present; 'homages', which are respectful in their treatment of the earlier film; and 'true remakes', which try to replace the earlier film. Hans Maes (2005) offers a fifteen-part classification, which includes 'pornographic remakes' (i.e. a pornographic version of a film or TV show) and remakes that deny their status as remakes. These taxonomies show the variety of approaches taken in remakes and the variety of relationships between source and target texts in remade films. The approach of, for example, *Twelve Monkeys* (1995) to its source *La Jetée* (1962) is very different from the American remake of *Funny Games* (2006) to the Austrian version (1996). The former is very adaptive and expands on the narrative of the source while ignoring its formal experimentation; the latter is very similar to its source.

The distinction between official remakes and unofficial remakes is productive theoretically. The former of these acknowledge their source film paratextually, in the credits, or they may be advertised as a remake (as was the case of *A Woman, A Gun and A Noodle Shop*). The latter would not officially acknowledge their sources, as Forrest and Koos (2002: 5) argue that many remakes do not. Official remakes, then, are like other forms of translation (especially literary translation) as they acknowledge their source texts and are sanctioned by copyright agreements (Evans 2014a: 305). Unofficial remakes complicate the relationship between copyright and the status of a text as a remake. As Thomas Leitch (2002: 38-39) explains, films are based on a property, which can be an unpublished story or a published

piece of fiction or, sometimes, reportage (in the case of films ‘based on a true story’). The producers of the film need to pay for the right to produce derivative works based on that property. This is normally acknowledged in the credits somewhere, as, for example, ‘based on a story by’. Most narrative films are, then, a form of adaptation, even if the public never has access to the original property. Constantine Verevis (2006: 14-16) argues that some remakes are based on the earlier film and consequently pay adaptation fees to the owners of that film. If we accept that films are based on a property, these original films are actually adaptations of a text which is owned by the producers of the film. Given these prior texts, films are a form of intersemiotic translation (Jakobson 1959), where a text in one medium is adapted for another. Remakes are therefore a form of intersemiotic retranslation (Evans 2014a: 303), as they adapt a property that has already been adapted once again. As Leitch notes, remakes have a triadic structure of reference (2002: 39), referring at once to an earlier film and a source text or property.

Leitch’s triadic structure helps explain the legal and industrial background to remakes, but it does not account for the audience experience of the film. Audiences may just read the remake as relating to the earlier film, as a translation of that film. Given that many properties, that is, original stories, never become available to the public, many remakes are experienced in this way. Here remakes are like other forms of translation, as they represent a version of the source text that may be compared to it. Furthermore, in cases where the source film has not been made available in the remaking country (as happened in many cases [Mazdon 2000: 4]), remakes may be the only version of the film in circulation and the comparison between the two versions would be impossible to make. This is how most written translations are experienced, as readers seldom have access to the source text. In other forms of audiovisual translation, the source text sound may be present (as in subtitling) or replaced (as in dubbing),



but it is hard to know how much of the audience can understand the source language, meaning that in many cases the translated text is the way that viewers experience the film.

Remakes problematize the perception that translations should produce target texts which are equivalent to their source texts (see Pym 1995, 2014 for discussion of equivalence). As we have seen, remakes often vary significantly from their source texts, adding or removing parts and generally adapting the text for the target location (although they may be later watched in other locations). Even in the case of the early Hollywood remakes, or multiple-language versions, the translated text is markedly different from its source. Remakes seldom aim to give access to the source film, but rather recreate the film in a new way. Remakes may therefore productively be thought of as a ‘creative misuse’ of a foreign text, which is how Koichi Iwabuchi (2002: 40) describes the way that texts are negotiated when they travel across cultural borders. The interest in watching remakes, for most viewers (and most scholars), is actually in the productive difference they show from their source film. The Spanish *Dracula* offers an interesting rethinking and recontextualisation of the script of Browning’s *Dracula*. Even the two versions of *Funny Games*, which are supposed to be very similar, offer interesting differences. As such, many remakes, and particularly recent remakes, feel like translations made for a knowing, rather than an unknowing, audience. Their relation with their source films can often be similar to what Linda Hutcheon (2000) calls ‘parody’. Like the parodies Hutcheon discusses, remakes are often double-coded, pointing both back to the source film and to themselves. This is why they so often feel ambiguous, both in the tension between appropriation and homage in many American remakes and in the tension between celebration and critique in many remakes into other languages.

The notion of the unofficial remake further complicates theories of remaking and translation. For example, *Angst essen Seele auf*/*Fear Eats the Soul* (1974) is often discussed as a remake of *All that Heaven Allows* (1955) (Mulvey 1989: 75), but there is no paratextual

acknowledgement. In this example, the audience perception of the remake is stronger than the copyright relationship. Are unofficial remakes still remakes? They can certainly still be read as remakes and comparing *Fear Eats the Soul* and *All that Heaven Allows* reveals a similar plot of an older woman chastised for falling in love with a man outside of her social circle but ultimately accepted again by her family and friends. There are also clearly differences and adaptations that address the local audience. There is a risk that 'remake' can be used to describe any repeated sequence in cinema (Verevis 2006: 21), making 'remake' too wide a category and most scholars would try to limit remakes to something more concrete; Verevis notes that acknowledgment and narrative repetition are usually present in remakes (Ibid.) while Mazdon argues that they are films 'based on an earlier screenplay' (2000: 2). 'Translation' may be used in a similarly metaphorical way to refer to various forms of 'mediation, change or confrontation with difference' (Sturge 2007: 13), while there is also a more specific practice of written translation, as it is commonly understood.

Remakes also differ from many other forms of translation as they require many people and a lot of resources to make. They are part of a large industrial process, which means that there are a lot of different influences on the final product. Studying remakes, then, requires taking into account these industrial processes as well as the product itself. In addition, as we have seen throughout, remakes form part of the cultural flows of globalization (Appadurai 1996), which means that there are constantly questions of negotiation and recontextualisation in their production and reception. These aspects are present in other forms of translation, but are highlighted by remakes.

## **SUMMARY**

The chapter begins by discussing the neglected position of remakes in translation studies and how film studies has often compared remakes to translations. It then moves on to the

multiple-language versions, produced between 1929 and 1933 as an early form of film translation. While supposedly offering a trustworthy representation of the source film, these remakes tended to differ in various ways, particularly in relation to the representation of sexuality. While these films have traditionally been difficult to access, they are becoming more available on home-viewing formats. The next section focused on Hollywood remakes, which are often regarded as commercial exploitation. American remakes are often culturally relocated and adapted for the new target audience, including for example making characters' motivation more explicit. Yet when reading the films, there is often a more complex relationship with the source film than the idea of remakes as appropriation supposes. In some cases, such as McBride's *Breathless*, it may be worth considering the remake as an intertextual work, or, as Wong (2012) suggests, an 'afterlife' of the source film. The third section discussed remakes into other languages, which also relocate and adapt the movies they are remaking. Here the relationship between source and target is often ambiguous, both celebratory and critical. The chapter discussed remakes of Hollywood films, as well as remakes that did not have an English source, such as the Korean version of *Ringu/Ring*. These films challenge the perception of remakes as solely a Hollywood practice. The final part of the chapter discussed the difference between official and unofficial remakes. Official remakes make clear their source text in paratexts, but unofficial ones do not. This leads to audience perception of the remake being stronger than the copyright relationship. The chapter also argues that remakes are translations made for a knowing audience and so question the idea of translations as a form of a reliable substitute for the source text, presenting instead intertextual rewritings. Finally, remakes were presented as an industrial process involving many people.

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## **SUGGESTED FURTHER READING**

- Forrest, J. and L. R. Koos (eds.) (2002) *Dead Ringers: The Remake in Theory and Practice*, Albany: State University of New York Press.

An excellent collection of essays on remaking, including many on transnational remakes. Includes useful essays on *Trois hommes et un couffin*, *La Femme Nikita*, and other American remakes of French films.

Mazdon, L. (1996) 'Rewriting and Remakes: Questions of Originality and Authenticity' in G.T. Harris (ed.), *On Translation French Literature and Film*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 47-63. This chapter uses Lefevere's idea of 'rewriting' to discuss remakes as a form of translation, helping to develop a translational framework for understanding film remakes.

Smith, I.R. and C. Verevis (eds) (2017) *Transnational Film Remakes*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

This book offers a collection of essays on transnational remakes and is edited by two key figures in the field. The introduction offers an excellent overview of the literature on remakes in film and media studies.

Bionote:

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