

# Introduction

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## Abstract

The cinematic remake has long been critically dismissed as little more than evidence of the commercial might and creative poverty of Hollywood. While it would be foolish to deny the commercial imperatives which surround the remake, it is a far more complex process than these accounts would have us believe. Although it is possible to discern patterns that help us to understand why particular films get remade and why industries embrace the practice at specific junctures, there are no hard and fast rules. This article emphasizes the location of the remake within the broader landscape of adaptation, translation and rewriting, revealing the welter of images and meanings to emerge and re-emerge as texts are revisited by film-makers, audiences and academics alike. Films are shown to be highly intertextual artefacts which lend themselves to reworking in a number of different ways. The remake is thus shown to be both a feature of an extensive network of cultural reproduction and an echo of the very identity of film itself.

**Keywords:** remakes; rewriting; translation; adaptation; cinema; intertextuality

The cinematic remake is a far more complex process than many critics would have us believe. Despite frequent claims to the contrary, there can be no simplistic division between 'original' and 'copy'. There exist successful remakes based upon less interesting sources and great works of cinema have given rise to nondescript reworkings. While it is possible to discern patterns that help us to understand why particular films get remade and why industries embrace the practice at specific junctures, there are no hard and fast rules and the articles which follow demonstrate the value of taking each case on its own merits. The films analysed here reveal only too well the complexity of the remake process, its position within the much broader landscape of adaptation, translation and rewriting, and the welter of images and meanings to emerge and re-emerge as texts are revisited by film-makers, audiences and academics alike. If films are indeed intertextual artefacts, as I will argue in this introduction, and as, I believe, the ensuing contributions demonstrate, then it seems not simply appropriate but also perhaps necessary that they should be reworked: their plural meanings can never be fixed in a single gesture. As David Wills argues in his essay on the remake, films are by definition endlessly repeatable, never intact and complete: 'Thus what is being commonly and communally referred to here as the remake, the possibility that exists for a film to be repeated in a different form, should rather be read as the necessary structure of iterability that exists for and within every film' (Wills 1998: 148). Wills is of course basing his claims upon the work of Jacques Derrida, and Derrida's writing on translation is indeed pertinent. He claims that the

'original' is never complete. Rather it exists in a state of need, of lack, of exile: 'Sa survie est une demande de traduction, un désir de traduction, un peu comme Babel demande: traduisez-moi' (Lévesque and McDonald 1982: 201) ['Its survival is a request for translation, a desire for translation, a little like Babel asks: translate me']. The remake, then, can be seen as both a feature of an extensive network of cultural reproduction and an echo of the very identity of film itself.

This correlation between the remake, translation (understood in its more traditional sense as the reproduction of a written text in a new linguistic context) and other forms of adaptation begins to underline the immense cultural significance of each of these practices. As André Lefevere demonstrates in his seminal work in the field of translation studies, rewriting in all its forms plays a dominant role in the acceptance or rejection, canonization or non-canonization of literary works (Lefevere 1992: 2). He argues that rewritings (and these can include translation 'proper', criticism, adaptations, anthologies, reference works and editions) provide images of texts, and it is these images that reach out to the great majority of a society's potential readers and viewers. While Lefevere limits his attention to literature, it is quite possible to extend his claims to other domains, including the cinematic. Thus, just as our knowledge of a particular literary text may emerge from televisual adaptations or critical accounts rather than the text itself, so our knowledge of a particular film may be based upon critical appraisal, various forms of marketing and publicity or indeed the remake.

The cultural and indeed political importance of rewriting also lies at the heart of Lawrence Venuti's work on translation.<sup>1</sup> Venuti sets out to describe the ideological work of the translation process and the ways in which it works upon, and is worked upon by, the discourses and structures of power in specific societies and cultures. He claims that the hegemonic construction of translation in the West has been a 'fluent' strategy; traditionally rewriters have attempted to transpose texts into a target culture by effacing any trace of the process of translation. In other words, they have committed acts of cultural appropriation while at the same time exercising a fluent strategy which denies the act of rewriting and thus somewhat paradoxically valorizes the original (Venuti 1995: 5). This practice is evidently in line with Western traditions of expressive realism. Just as the text is supposed to 'reflect' the individual experience and talent of the author so the translation sets out to 'reflect' the 'essence' of the foreign work. The ultimate result of this strategy is the production of translations which do not read like translations but which can masquerade as 'original' works. This in turn renders invisible the translator, the producer of the 'effaced' translation, thus maintaining a hierarchical division between debased reproduction and reproducers, and powerful 'originals' and creators. In other words, translations and rewritings might exist, they may even become powerful and canonical texts but they achieve this through an effacement or disguising of their status as reproduction.<sup>2</sup>

The distinction between dominant and dominated cultures is central to Venuti's account of the translation process. A 'dominated' culture (in other words, a relatively small or poor culture, or one in the process of formation) will tend to translate much more than a 'dominant' culture. These translations will perceive the source text,

coming as it does from a stronger, or better established culture, as the site of authority and so translation strategies will entail some incorporation of features of the source language and culture; the translation will involve some 'foreignizing' or 'othering' of the target text. However, when the text to be rewritten comes from a dominated culture the rewriter takes on all authority and incorporates the source text into the hegemony of the target culture. Nevertheless, by effacing the very process of translation and appropriating the reproduction as an 'original', binary valorizations of production and reproduction, original and copy are retained.

Venuti's account of translation merits mention here as it underlines the absolute centrality of rewriting in the construction and dissemination of cultural identity. Textual rewriting or reproduction in all its forms is instrumental in determining which cultural artefacts become or remain available and impacts heavily upon their modes of consumption. Which brings us back to the remake. Both Lefevere and Venuti essentially limit their attention to literary rewriting while repeatedly advocating the potential of their models for other forms of cultural production. While it would be foolhardy indeed to ignore the great differences that separate the literary from the cinematic, I do believe that their accounts can be usefully applied to different forms of filmic rewriting including the remake. The decision to remake a film and responses to that remake do have a significance which extends well beyond the movie theatre; they can tell us much about the state of the cinema industries involved; they can also reveal a great deal about the relationship between the different cultures involved. As my earlier work has demonstrated, the dominant/dominated binary posited by Venuti is not always as straightforward as he seems to suggest.<sup>3</sup> When examining Hollywood remakes of French cinema, for example, it is vital to counterbalance the economic dominance of Hollywood with the cultural power of French film. In other words, relations of dominance depend upon where you are looking. The remake does enter into these shifting relations of power and does impact upon them. Thus the remake, like other forms of rewriting, *is* important.

Despite this importance the remake has, for many years, been accorded only scant critical attention. Until quite recently it was apparent that, of the small amount of written material devoted to the remake, the vast majority was journalistic and overwhelmingly negative in tone, while the existing monographs amounted to no more than briefly annotated filmographies.<sup>4</sup> The only exceptions were a handful of articles on specific films and their remakes and a collection on the remake for *Cinémaction* edited by Daniel Protopopoff and Michel Serceau (1989). While this collection did at least pay extended attention to the practice, it unfortunately tended to reiterate, albeit in a rather more sophisticated fashion, the value judgments and reductive binaries which plague the journalistic work. The situation has improved in recent years with the publication of two studies of the Hollywood remaking of French cinema (Durham 1998 and Mazdon 2000) and two edited collections on the cinematic remake in general (Horton and McDougal 1998 and Forrest and Koos 2002). This begs the question as to why there should be a fresh interest in the remake at this juncture; after all it is not a new phenomenon. Whilst the remake did take on a new prominence in Hollywood during the 1980s, it has an extended history hitherto

widely ignored. The decision on the part of a number of writers and academics finally to accord the remake the serious attention it has, to my mind, long deserved is then perhaps less due to the proliferation of the practice itself (although this is not negligible) than to shifting academic paradigms. The impact of cultural studies upon film 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 for study. A growing interest in constructions of 'national' cinema and the discourses of transnationalism similarly lend themselves to a study of the remake which moves away from the cries of imperialism and vampirization which had dominated earlier work.

So the remake has moved, if not to the centre of the academic stage, at least to a position which enables us to analyse and appraise with clarity and insight. In order to embark upon this analysis, we should begin by defining the remake, and this in itself is no easy task. The remake is adaptation as it reworks one text within another context and for new audiences. It can be translation as it transposes a text from one culture and one language to another. It can cross temporal, spatial and media boundaries, thus underlining the potentially non-discrete nature of the cultural text. In an extremely useful account of the early history of cinematic remaking, Jennifer Forrest reveals that the very concept of the remake is both longstanding *and* culturally and historically specific (Forrest and Koos 2002: 89–126). Early film was not accorded the protection given to contemporary cinema because it was not considered to constitute 'art'. Interestingly, concerns about the need to protect film from reproduction emerged once its status as a profitable commodity became apparent. As Forrest points out, early cinematic piracy (a precursor to remaking as we understand it today) was largely ignored, as films were seen to have little commercial or artistic value. It was only when it became apparent that film sales would outstrip equipment sales that film manufacturers realized that 'duping' or remaking 'seriously threatened the commercial run of what was increasingly assuming the form of valuable properties' (Forrest and Koos 2002: 101). So in other words, film remakes existed right from the very start of cinematic production and yet they also did *not* exist, or rather they were not seen as a category apart – the remake – with all the potential problems that could entail. Instead they were a normal, acceptable and useful element of this exciting new film-making process. Only when films began to show their commercial value did the remake emerge as a source of concern:

The contribution of the industrialization of the cinema in earning the protection of the integrity of the film product can hardly be underestimated, especially when compared to the pre-industrial nature of its sister entertainments that were unable to obtain comprehensive copyright protection. For while the early cinema shared audiences, exhibition sites and acts/subjects with its popular precursors and competitors, it would succeed where the latter would fail. (Forrest and Koos 2002: 105)

This is a fascinating insight when we consider that later condemnation of the remake frequently voiced concerns about the impact of the practice on aesthetic qualities. In

other words, remakes were a purely commercial attack upon earlier or foreign 'works of art'. If we accept Forrest's account of early attitudes to the remake, then we can see that the very notion that films might need or deserve protection akin to that offered to other art forms emerged from a new sense of their commercial potential. It would seem that the art/commerce dichotomy which underwrites so much condemnation of the remake is itself historically and culturally specific. This in turn perhaps forces us to rethink the straightforward binaries which describe the 'original' film in terms of quality and value and the remake or 'copy' in terms of vulgar commerce, a radical gesture when one considers the long-standing and pervasive valorization of 'originality' (or the appearance of originality) in Western art.

Forrest's historical account of the remake describes the various legal decisions which were instrumental in defining and curtailing different forms of cinematic reproduction. Notable is the case of *Harper Bros. et al. v. Kalem Co. et al.* (1909) which, as Forrest reveals, conferred priority on the written source of the filmic text (Forrest and Koos 2002: 108). The Kalem Company had adapted General Lew Wallace's novel *Ben Hur* without authorial permission. Harper Brothers possessed the rights to dramatize the book and Klaw and Erlanger were the licensees of a theatrical version. The court's decision that the filmic adaptation had infringed the author's exclusive right to dramatize his or her own works implicitly defined the remake in terms of 'a dramatization referring back to an original play/novel/photoplay, and not to other dramatizations from the same medium' (Forrest and Koos 2002: 108). As Forrest demonstrates, these decisions bestowed ultimate authority upon the written source and what this means is that 'all remakes subsequent to film's inclusion in copyright law are, in essence, adaptations' (Forrest and Koos 2002: 110).

Certainly from a purely legal standpoint, this definition of the remake is accurate. One need only check the credits of most cinematic remakes to see that it is the written source that is most frequently cited as the basis for the new film. In some cases this may well be true. In an interview with Forrest, Norman Corwin, screenwriter for *The Blue Veil*, Curtis Bernhardt's 1951 remake of *Le Voile bleu* (Jean Stelli, 1942), claims never even to have seen the French film (Forrest and Koos 2002: 309–36). However, one feels sure that Bernhardt himself was familiar with Stelli's work and was in some way influenced by it. Moreover, the decision on the part of the film's producers, Jerry Wald and Norman Krasna, to acquire the rights to *Le Voile bleu* was surely not entirely unconnected to the commercial success of the French film. In other words, while in legal terms the remake is indeed an adaptation of a written source, it is also rather more than this. It is a reworking of a cinematic text, a reworking that depends upon both aesthetic and commercial imperatives. To think of the remake as an adaptation is, I believe, useful as it enables us to compare and contrast this particular form of transposition with others. This in turn brings us back to the accounts of rewriting outlined above and enables us to position the remake within a broader taxonomy of reproduction and translation which may avoid a potentially reductive vision of the practice as a unique phenomenon. However, it is also vital to think about the specificities of this form of rewriting, to accept that the remake is not simply an adaptation of a written source (and in some cases it may ignore that source entirely)

but rather establishes a fascinating trajectory between *at least two* cinematic texts. As Kathleen Vernon reveals in her discussion of Sternberg's *The Devil is a Woman* (1935) and Buñuel's *Cet obscur objet du désir* (1977), the relationship between the two films was mediated by their reliance on Pierre Louÿs's novel *La Femme et le pantin* (1898) and there was no acknowledgment on the part of the film-makers of the later film's relationship to its predecessor. Nevertheless a relationship does of course exist, as Vernon demonstrates, suggesting that, at least at the level of reception, they can and should be seen as both adaptations and remakes.

Indeed the articles that follow show only too clearly the multiple layers which can make up the remaking process. Many of the films discussed here are adaptations of literary texts and in some cases their relationship to that text will have a significant impact upon their production and reception. Thus the films discussed by Marcia Landy, *Malombra* (Carmine Gallone, 1916; Mario Soldati, 1942) are both based upon Antonio Fogazzaro's late nineteenth-century novel of the same name. Similarly, the two cinematic versions of Patricia Highsmith's 1955 novel *The Talented Mr Ripley* discussed by Michael Williams draw upon their literary source and are clearly adaptations. However, as these articles reveal, the later films are also remakes that in various ways can be seen to revisit their cinematic predecessors. In this way the remake becomes not a linear journey from source to target but a series of ever-shifting circular relationships.

This can perhaps best be described as a 'genealogical' approach to the remake. Michel Foucault claims that a genealogical account of history opposes itself to a search for origins: 'Ce qu'on trouve, au commencement historique des choses, ce n'est pas l'identité encore préservée de leur origine – c'est la discorde des autres choses, c'est le disparate' (Foucault 1994: 138) ['What we find at the historical beginning of things is not the preserved identity of their origins – rather it is the discord of other things, the disparate']. Thus history is divested of any claims to continuous progression and is revealed as the locus of division and change. If we accept that the remake can also be shown to have multiple origins and that the identity of its origins will be altered by its own coming into being, then we can see that it is possible, indeed necessary, to discard the straightforward causality of the relationship between origin and copy (an approach which has underwritten a great many accounts of the process) in favour of a much more fluid approach.

A key term here is of course 'intertextuality'. The very act of remaking a film is an inherently intertextual process involving as it does movement between a number of what at first may appear to be discrete cultural texts. This intertextuality is extended by movement across a range of cultural forms. In the examples cited by Landy and Williams this means a series of journeys from novel to screen. In other cases things may be more complex. Thus in her discussion of the various versions of José María Sánchez-Silva's 1952 morality tale *Marcelino pan y vino*, Jessamy Harvey reveals a process of reproduction which includes the 'original' story (itself based upon religious myth), two cinematic versions produced in very different historical and cultural contexts and a distinctly 'transnational' animated cartoon series. Similarly Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and Joseph Sullivan in their discussion of *Yojimbo* (Kurosawa, 1961)

and *Per un pugno di dollari* (Leone, 1964) reveal a complex network of intertextual relationships. Whilst Kurosawa was perhaps understandably unhappy about what he perceived to be the unacknowledged similarities between his film and that of Leone, Nowell-Smith and Sullivan reveal that this was not a straightforward case of plagiarism. They trace the story which forms the basis of both films back to Dashiell Hammett's novel *Red Harvest* and further still to Carlo Goldoni's play of 1745, *The Servant of Two Masters* (*Il servitore di due padroni*).

This process of intertextuality, the ways in which the interconnectedness of a remake and its source film frequently extends to a range of other texts, emerges as a key theme in this collection of essays. In other words, the notion that the remake can or should be perceived as always existing in a binary relationship is shown to be highly problematic. As we have seen, this is partly due to the frequent status of the remade film as *both* remake and adaptation. However, this hybridity of identity is furthered by the myriad other relationships which can and should be established between the single cinematic film and its broader cultural context. Repetition and reproduction are in many ways an intrinsic part of the cinematic text and the cinematic apparatus. Films are made to be reproduced. This has been the case since the very earliest days of cinematic production, and it is a phenomenon which has been extended through the development of the film archive, television, video and DVD, and the internet. As Anne Friedberg demonstrates, this is not simply part of a postmodern condition of referentiality but rather an integral feature of cinema:

Film production has always teetered on this precipice between originality and repetition. The cinema has repeated and remade the same stories, from myths and fables to plays and novels that are endlessly returned to for source material. But more than this form of repetition, where the textual reference is reencoded in a new text, the cinema has a metonymic capacity of repeating the same film over time: reissuing it, redistributing it, reseeing it. At its very base, then, the cinematic apparatus has the capacity to replay itself [...]. (Friedberg 1993: 177)

Unlike the performance of the theatrical play which (unless of course it is filmed) can never be exactly repeated, the cinematic film is destined for constant repetition. It is somewhat ironic that some of the most vitriolic attacks on the remake condemn the decision to reproduce a film that can simply be reissued in a new historical or spatial context. In other words, these critics ask why not simply show the earlier 'classic' or foreign work in the film club or the movie theatre? While the question is not misplaced, it does of course advocate one form of repetition over another, leading us to wonder whether we should not instead call for both, remake and reissue. Must economic imperatives mean that the former always prohibits the latter?

Films are, then, reproduced; this is part of their condition and part of their intertextuality. Films are shot in a non-linear fashion and edited together to form a 'whole' at a later date. The distribution and exhibition of films are based upon repetition and reproduction as films are made to be viewed and re-viewed across space and time. Finally, the reception of these films becomes yet another process of reproduction as the text becomes a blend of the individual spectator's specific

moment of consumption and other texts previously consumed. Even when we return to the texts themselves – to the films – we can see that intertextuality is a dominant feature. This is not a recent phenomenon. Consider for example the heyday of the studio system in late 1930s and early 1940s Hollywood. As the need for more and more films to satisfy audiences was matched by the desire for commercial success, a struggle between novelty (with which to attract spectators) and uniformity (or increased security) emerged. This led to the standardization of plots into generic conventions which facilitated the development of variety within the familiar. What this meant in practice was that individual films now almost always bore a direct relation to the films which preceded and followed them. Each genre film may invite a discrete viewing but it simultaneously recalls and references other films of the same genre.

Intertextuality has, then, been a built-in feature of the cinematic text for many years. Indeed, it is possible to trace this back to the very earliest days of film production (remember the ‘dupes’ and pastiches discussed by Forrest in her account of early attitudes to the remake). However, this intertextuality has become especially prominent in recent years, most notably in recent Hollywood production. The bricolage of postmodernism has become a feature of many recent films. Indeed, the ability to recognize ‘quotations’ and references has become an important feature of contemporary viewing practices and a rich source of audience pleasure. Thus enjoyment of Mike Myers’s antics in the *Austin Powers* films will be heightened not just by knowledge of the different films in the series but also earlier cinematic references to 1960s ‘swinging’ London and the *James Bond* series. There are a number of reasons for this intertextuality. The synergy of contemporary Hollywood – the deliberate marketing of individual films across a wide range of products – calls for open-ended texts able to generate a variety of images. References to other films and texts extend this plurality and the potential for multiple points of access and, by extension, sale. However, I do not believe that is *only* a commercial phenomenon. Film now carries with it the combined weight of its past and its ever-changing present. Thus today’s film viewer will potentially have access to the films which precede that currently on screen. Television, video and DVD offer us all the chance to become film ‘historians’. Our memory of cinema can grow and penetrate new viewing experiences. Interactive media allow the spectator (who is perhaps now something more than a spectator) to construct a more dynamic relationship with film: ‘The screen becomes an “activity center”, a cyberchronotope where both space and time are transformed’ (Stam and Habiba Shohat 2000: 395). In other words, new audio-visual technologies change both text and reception: ‘The cinema in its long-heralded specificity now seems to be dissolving into the larger bitstream of the audio-visual media, be they photographic, electronic, or cybernetic, changing not only the “identity” of the cinema but also that of those who consume it’ (Stam and Habiba Shohat 2000: 394).

This state of affairs extends well beyond cinema. Repetition, reproduction and intertextuality seem to be a feature of so much contemporary cultural production. Popular music provides a key example with the mixing and sampling of earlier tracks



increasingly used as a basis for 'new' composition. Fashion collections similarly 'revisit' the past, creating a 'new take' on Dior's 'New Look', a 'revamp' of Chanel's early couture. Fredric Jameson describes intertextuality as a state in which texts no longer quote but incorporate (Jameson 1991). This, he claims, is part of a postmodern condition which leads to a depthlessness, a multiplicity of images which repudiates traditional depth models of essence and appearance, latent and manifest content, authenticity and inauthenticity, and the semiotic opposition between signified and signifier. Jameson asserts that the past as a referent is gradually effaced, leaving us with nothing but images and texts:

the word remake is, however, anachronistic to the degree to which our awareness of the preexistence of other versions (previous films of the novel as well as the novel itself) is now a constitutive and essential part of the film's structure: we are now, in other words, in 'intertextuality' as a deliberate, built-in feature of the aesthetic effect and as the operator of a new connotation of 'pastness' and pseudohistorical depth, in which the history of aesthetic styles displaces 'real' history. (Jameson 1991: 20)

Clearly this makes the search for true 'originality', absolute authenticity, fraught with difficulty and even somewhat futile. If we inhabit a world of fakes (and we are of course surrounded by them: fake bodies, fake odours, fake food), then what place should we accord to the 'real' if indeed it still exists? Or should we accept Baudrillard's claim that late capitalist Western society is a society of the 'simulacrum', dominated by simulations, objects and discourses that possess no origin (Baudrillard 1981)? More specifically in terms of our concerns here, should we discard the notion of an 'original' film? In my earlier book on Hollywood remakes of French cinema I suggested that all films can be seen as 'diffuse, hybrid, signifying systems' which by extension means that all films can be seen as 'remakes' or as equally 'original' (Mazdon 2000: 151). This is of course the logical conclusion of Baudrillard's world view and it is supported by the intertextuality of filmic production outlined above.

However, there is still much anxiety about this 'fake' society. Response and rejection can be perceived on a number of levels ranging from organic farming methods and a 'return to the soil' to religious and political fundamentalism in all its forms. On the level of the remake, hostility to reproduction is articulated through condemnation of the practice itself and, frequently, an advocating of the specific cinema 'threatened' by the remake. Not untypically this defence will be couched in the tropes of nationalism; thus 'French' cinema is threatened by Hollywood reproduction, the French filmic canon sullied by debased American copies. There is of course a flaw to this argument. Just as it seems increasingly difficult to determine the boundaries of the individual film, so the limits of a 'national' cinema are porous and subject to change. While I do not want to rehearse the discourses of nation and cinema here, suffice it to say that the growing interest in issues of transnationalism amongst film studies' scholars described earlier is in large part due to the situation of so-called 'national' cinemas within a global film culture and industry. What this means is that straightforward distinctions between, say, American cinema on the one hand and French cinema on the other are in many cases becoming progressively more

untenable. The typical description of the remake practice which posits a simplistic, plot-driven American copy and a more challenging, ambiguous European source does not necessarily render accurately recent remake 'pairs'. In his article on Alejandro Amenábar's 1997 film *Abre los ojos* and its American remake, Cameron Crowe's *Vanilla Sky* of 2001, Paul Julian Smith makes this abundantly clear. Amenábar's film is a Spanish/French/Italian co-production, so already its 'national' identity is far from straightforward. The director went on to make *The Others*, a critically and commercially successful English-language film, featuring an English-speaking, Hollywood-based star, Nicole Kidman, thus further problematizing his status as a director of 'Spanish' films. Moreover Smith reveals that the revivification of Spanish cinema that happened throughout the 1990s was largely due to a combination of local traditions with the Hollywood model. This is a pattern we can see repeated elsewhere, notably in France. Finally, Smith further disrupts the traditional perception of the remake pair by revealing that in this particular case the 'European version is more "Hollywood" than the American, more focused on and directed towards narrative and psychological coherence'.

I would like to close this introduction to the remake with one proviso. While I have attempted to demonstrate the cultural potential of the remake process – the ways in which it enters into and extends the myriad possibilities of textual meaning – the remake can and does of course occasionally curtail those possibilities. In other words, we simply cannot ignore the fact that in many cases the production of a remake prohibits the wider dissemination of the 'source' film. I am thinking specifically here of Hollywood remakes of European cinema when the purchase of the rights to these films enables American producers to block their release in the domestic market. This is clearly not in the spirit of intertextuality and plural meanings described above. This is harsh economic reality, a global industry dominated by powerful US audio-visual concerns. The fear is that this situation renders the fluidity and exchange of transnationalism little more than a utopia. Some of the films described here suggest that this need not always be the case. Nevertheless, for all its potential, as long as the cinematic remake functions within this particular set of power relations it runs the risk of being little more than one of Venuti's 'fluent' translations. So I would like to end with a call for both a new openness to the practice of remaking and new spaces, new audiences and new journeys for *all* cinematic texts.

## Notes

- 1 See in particular Venuti (1992 and 1995).
- 2 The plays of Shakespeare can of course be seen as examples of this process.
- 3 See Mazdon (1996).
- 4 See Druxman (1975), Limbacher (1991) and Milberg (1990).

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