

Examining the hollywood remake films in other countries media essay



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It is widely known that Hollywood remake films from other countries become an indispensable element in the industry. More and more Hollywood remake films based on Asian or European films, as a result that international remake films become a special part of globalization.

In economic perspective, the film consumer as the mass-audience of remake films is the one that has to consume the films through Hollywood because of the globalized market. According to Marx (1976), every social process of production is at the same time a process of reproduction. Therefore, remaking films as the process of reproduction is a social process at the same time in terms of different perspectives: culture communication and adaptation.

Based on this reproduction process, the following section of the essay looks at the reason that films made in one nation and remade in Hollywood. Moreover, third section examines what gets added or removed in the process of adaptation with two specific examples of Hollywood remake films from European and Asian: *Vanilla Sky* (2001) and *The Departed* (2006). Additionally, during the comparing and contrasting, the unique cultural communication of Hollywood remake films will be paid more attention to. The major findings with a summary of this paper will be presented at last.

2 the reason that Hollywood remake films from other countries

Firstly, increasingly expansion of communication and information development in the recent decades has produced a great require for culture exchange. Hence the culture exchange among states and the interaction of culture has been in active for centuries (Nae, 2003). Within this culture

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exchange, it can be known that the transnational cultural communication through different media such as TV, newspapers and film. Thus, the Hollywood remake films from other countries are now being practiced more intensively than ever. It seems that transnational cultural communication seems to be the first reason that Hollywood remake films from other countries.

Secondly, since the beginning of global cinema, films as cultural commodities have been exported and imported to various areas all around the world. As Kotler (1991) says, the globalization enhances the international business and the motivation of the effectiveness of producing, using new technology and improving management methods. Likewise, as another method of producing films, Hollywood remaking films from other countries is a consequence of globalization. So globalization, especially globalized market, has also resulted in enlarging movement of movies from national to Hollywood.

Thirdly, according to Horkheimer and Adorno (1969), the film industry is included in profit driven businesses. Because of commercial profit from the worldwide market, Hollywood may have to find more strategies to earn as much as possible. Remaking film is a win-win for both national film and Hollywood due to maximum financial incomes. On one hand, national films benefit from the copyright income in globalized market. On the other hand, Hollywood might remake the successful national film instead of producing completely new films in order to predict desires of film audiences and save pre-production cost. In addition, Hollywood remake films from other

countries are able to express the national unique stories to larger markets
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and to ethnically diverse audiences. Therefore, another reason to Hollywood remake films from other countries has relevantly been toward producing more economically profit.

Finally, another typical illustration to remake films from other nations it is innovation outsourcing. According to Manning et al's (2008) definition, outsourcing from different organizations may engage an agreement about trading products or services. Particularly, Hollywood outsources creativity from the other suppliers in other countries. Besides, remake films were also negatively discussed. Some studies claim this outsourcing is a kind of Hollywood's style " vampirism". They remake foreign films is a symptom due to the creativity bankrupt. Remaking is seemed to be an easier way of movie production, as a result, the lack of innovation capacity might be another reason.

3 the Process of Adaptation: the Departed (2006) and Vanilla Sky (2001)

3. 1 The Departed (2006)

To examine what gets added or removed in the adaptation of Hollywood remake films, I make an illustration as Hong Kong's 2002 film *Infernal Affairs*'s Hollywood remade version *The Departed* (2006). The Hollywood director Scorsese displays a creative adaptation to the larger global market of Hollywood by remaking this Hong Kong film. In the essay will focus on discussing this adaptation of remake films between Hong Kong and Hollywood.

3. 1. 1 A new title

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The original Chinese title of the film is Wu Jian Dao, which is a word from Buddhist scripture. It means Continuous Suffering Hell, the worst of the Eighth Hells, which refers to the two lead characters suffer from playing as double spy in both bright and dark. So the English translated title of the film is Internal Affairs, also contains a symbolic Buddhist element. The cultural background of Asian audiences is present to help them understand this Buddhism title and the meaning behind it.

Likewise, in the Hollywood's choice of the new English title for the remake version: The Departed. It seems to be a reference to the global market. Though The Departed is not the exact the same like the Internal Affairs represented from Buddhism, it supplies as a Hollywood's style adaptation of the Asian religious. The Hollywood is intent to make the global audience understand the film better by avoiding some special cultural gap. These filmmakers are likely to use the new title in order to communicate local culture within their films and make the film suitable to the Hollywood audience.

3. 1. 2 A new cultural background

As it is mentioned above, original version Infernal Affairs is a film that influenced a lot from Buddhism. In Hollywood version, however, even if the plot in The Departed is similar to Infernal Affairs, it does not remain any Buddhism. The reason to this is Scorsese relocate Hong Kong to American city Boston in the Hollywood film. Thinking about the region and racial differences in Boston, The history and religious setting of the film have to adjust.

Frank Costello (Jack Nicholson) disproves the Catholicism idea of the Church's want to put people in their place, instead of *Infernal Affairs's* Buddhism. Catholicism is replicated as a religion choice of Costello by refuting the Church. This leads to *The Departed* in absolute difference to *Infernal Affairs*. In remaking the *Infernal Affairs* where the powerful Buddhist themes are in attendance, the religious meaning is changed during the film *The Departed*.

However, as *The Departed* approaches to final, Catholicism seeped out the film. During the climax, Queenan (Martin Sheen) and Costigan (Leonardo DiCaprio) are cornered by Frank Costello's men. In order to help Costigan escape, Queenan blesses the god alone before facing up to Costello's gang. This gesture of religions within the film is an adaptation for the new cultural background.

3. 1. 3 A new group of audiences

Remaking film is not only the transfer between two languages, but also the localized content due to globalized market with a much wider audiences. What is more, a national film exports, such as Hong Kong's *Infernal Affairs* exports, can be used as a cinema product trying to import under globalization.

As a product, movie makes every effort on the growth of its audiences with the intention of catching better outcome at the box office. The goal of remaking films is the same that to strive to appeal more audiences further than the country cinema's borders. What *The Departed* has gotten is able to be considering as an attempt by Hollywood to make its films accessible to <https://assignbuster.com/examining-the-hollywood-remake-films-in-other-countries-media-essay/>

further audiences outside the shores of the previous region. In *The Departed*, Hollywood has effectively translated every part of characteristics in *Infernal Affairs* suitable for a bigger audience group who recognizes and believes the Hollywood culture.

Transformation into Hollywood *The Departed* is actually a process of Hong Kong film globalized into the United States film. As Hollywood's worldwide status, *The Departed* is more accessible to a lot of Hollywood international audiences. These people are armed with a better accepting and acknowledgment of US culture through Hollywood films and for that reason more accessible of *The Departed* than *Infernal Affairs*. Nevertheless, the target movie market does not necessarily mean the all content of remaking has been localized. In fact, it depends on audiences' demand.

3. 1. 4 A new language

More problematic issue is the language problem, for the reason that language is a cultural identity. Numerous multinational remake movies may ignore a very important part, the language. This would inevitably lead to a translation problem, a language translation process ought to be seen as equally important as cultural adaptation.

This should not be erased in the film remake of the language translation or cross-cultural power struggle to clarify the real practical problems. Language translation of a movie really shows the behavior of a cultural force. However, translation is not necessarily just the only activity, dislocation from the country or cultural background, the film's language. For instance, Chinese-speaking countries, their national films have to translate properly into <https://assignbuster.com/examining-the-hollywood-remake-films-in-other-countries-media-essay/>

English if remaking them by Hollywood. Therefore, cross-border remakes that involve in the translation of the text acts of translation only mix changeable relations among languages, rather than distracting these relationships by themselves.

On the other hand, as Bal and Morra's (2007) research, it is traditionally a large number of concepts and classification beyond the scope of the project, it is not possible here to repeat lots of debates in relation to language translation.

3. 2 Vanilla Sky (2001)

I will examine another example of transnational remake film between Hollywood and Europe, which traditionally have been the most significant prolific. Hollywood remade the Spanish psychological suspenseful story *Abre los Ojos* (1997) into *Vanilla Sky* in 2001. Although this example is not as systematic as the Hollywood remakes of French films, it point out Hollywood's enlarged cinematic absorbing from a wider nation and culture.

Particularly, I engage another illustration of Hollywood remakes in a detailed analysis of the Spanish film *Abre los Ojos* (1997) and its Hollywood remake *Vanilla Sky* (2001), paying exacting attention to issues of adaptation.

3. 2. 1 The same and the different Europe

It is generally accepted that the film industries of Europe and Hollywood have been tangled at the beginning because the historically cultural and economical communication. However, these two cores of movie production

have had their own unique trajectories and, in fact, the two have been separated by considerably different ideas of cultural.

As a consequence of this, perhaps one of the most long-lasting and encircling has been a realistic and metaphorical separation between business and art, where European movies is interpreted as more relate to art invested and Hollywood as more likely driven by income.

3. 2. 2 Commercial element of Hollywood style

Smith (2004) presents a convincing and appealing relative analysis of *Abre los Ojos* and *Vanilla Sky*, he discusses the idea of “urban alienation and the danger of the image” in the movies, and compares the stylistic differences between *Vanilla Sky* and the *Abre los Ojos*. According to this, *Abre los Ojos* states from the start that it will explore the ideological purpose of identity.

The first sequence of this film repeats the opening of *Abre* and reiterates many problems. It seems that ideological constructions of individuals are too dramatic relative to the city’s material culture. Nevertheless, the film moved to New York City. As the film’s main character, David Ames steps out of his attractive Ferrari in Times Square. Here, the city is an obvious commercial space of Hollywood style, seen as the movie quickly presents advertisements. *Vanilla Sky* thus assigns commercial element of Hollywood style compares to ideological layers carried over from *Abre los Ojos*.

3. 2. 3 Cultural imperialism from Hollywood

However, cross-border remakes mainly occur as Hollywood remakes of films from other states, which characteristically gather some criticisms as cases of <https://assignbuster.com/examining-the-hollywood-remake-films-in-other-countries-media-essay/>

cultural imperialism. And certainly, Hollywood's almost exclusive seized the American media market, together with their supremacy over global film industry. Hollywood emerges to give a structural benefit in remaking movies from other countries, rather than allowing these movies to enter the American media market directly. Since production corporations in many other states cannot catch up with the strong power of Hollywood, they depend on Hollywood for worldwide distribution.

Miller, et. al (2001) claims that Hollywood films preserve international appeal through Hollywood style narratives and the communication of American national values. Actually, the financial and cultural relationships between *Abre los Ojos* and *Vanilla Sky* disclose a worldwide Spanish national identity, as well as Hollywood's US national identity. Collectively, they reveal the complexity of regarding Spanish national identity outside of transnational capitalism. Moreover, it demonstrates the influential power of American national identity in the international film industry.

Current system of international film industry enables Hollywood not only to distribute and make money from other places, but also to support its creations and be in charge of global market by remaking national films that proved to be successful in their local markets. Cultural imperialism is added in the adaptation of these films, as a result, the Hollywood remake films from other countries is a way to keep themselves in priority position.

4 Conclusions

Increasingly with the growth of Hollywood remake films from cross-cultural communication, throughout this essay, firstly we have seen the reason that <https://assignbuster.com/examining-the-hollywood-remake-films-in-other-countries-media-essay/>

films made in one nation and remade in Hollywood in the reproduction process.

Then the essay has focused on studying two specifically illustrations from Asian and Europe. One is remaking of Hong Kong film *Infernal Affairs* to the *Departed* (2006). The other is remaking from Spanish film *Abre los Ojos* into *Vanilla Sky* (2001). Based on these two cases, the essay analyses what gets added or removed in the process of adaptation from seven different aspects: a new title, a new cultural background, a new group of audiences, a new language, Europe and Hollywood, commercial element of Hollywood style and cultural imperialism from Hollywood.