

To what extent does
cinema provide an
opportunity for non-
western nations and
peo...

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Cultural Translation through Film for Non-Western Countries Cultural translation, especially with regards to the concept of cross-cultural encounter, refers to the transformation, change, and appropriation of a specific culture in different economic, political, social, and cultural contexts (Gabriel, 2011: p344). Specifically, cultural translation deals with the transportation of non-western culture to the West and to the rest of the world. This, in effect, is ideological appropriation projected toward a power relationship that is trans-cultural in nature. As such, non-western cultures will be represented by Western translators and, in this case, they assume cultural authority over non-western cultures that they represent. For instance, the cultural identity represented in cinema is usually a discourse that is over-determined and is constructed from the perspective of a Westerner. Therefore, Western translators play an important role in constructing a global frame of epistemology, where the cultural translation intellectual locus lies outside these non-Western countries, rather than inside them (Gabriel, 2011: p344).

Cowen (2000: p337) argues that Western opinion-makers and cinema critics are complicit in translating the culture of non-Western countries into a discourse that is self-serving, thus constricting the ability of non-western cultures to export their culture to the West by dominating and having authority over them. Non-Western culture in film, therefore, is influenced by the ideology and perceptions of the West and their culture is represented as "the other" by the West. However, in the globalization era, new translational interactions have allowed non-Western cultures to translate themselves, as well as how the West translates them. In this era, filmic discourse has grown

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into the most effective vector of cross-cultural translation. Rather than transposing non-Western cultures to the West and to other regions, filmic discourse also translates non-Western culture into global signification systems (Cowen, 2000: p337). However, to effectively translate their culture through cinema, non-Western cultures must show their unique aspects, while also translating their culture in a manner that can be understood by Western cultures.

References

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