

KADIR HAS UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



**LET'S MAKE IT AMERICAN: AMERICAN REMAKES OF THE
BRITISH FILMS**

M.A. THESIS

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BRITISH FILMS**

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"I, Elif Kahraman, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis."

ELİF KAHRAMAN

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ABSTRACT

LET'S MAKE IT AMERICAN:
AMERICAN REMAKES OF THE BRITISH FILMS

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Master of Arts in Cinema and Television

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The purpose of this thesis is to analyze American remake versions of the original British films taking narrative as a basis. It claims that the American remakes put America forward as a cultural product for sale, and makes the British narrative Americanized.

For the study, six films have been chosen for analysis: *Alfie* (1966, dir. Lewis Gilbert), *Alfie* (2004, dir. Charles Shyer), *Bedazzled* (1967, dir. Stanley Donen), *Bedazzled* (2000, dir. Harold Ramis), *The Ladykillers* (1955, dir. Alexander Mackendrick), *The Ladykillers* (2004, dir. Ethan and Joel Coen). This study explores the narrative elements of the American remakes by comparing the remakes with their originals. These narrative elements are setting, characters, intertextuality and turning points and transformations as well as Americanization.

Keywords: remake, American cinema, film, narrative

ÖZET

HAYDİ BUNU AMERİKAN YAPALIM: İNGİLİZ FİMLERİNİN AMERİKAN YENİDENYAPIMLARI

Elif Kahraman

Sinema ve Televizyon, Yüksek Lisans

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Bu tezin amacı İngiliz filmlerinin Amerikan yenidenyapımlarını anlatı açısından ele alarak analiz etmektir. Bu çalışma Amerikan yenidenyapımların başka hikayeleri alıp Amerika'yı satılacak bir kültürel ürün olarak öne sürmelerini ve İngiliz anlatıyı Amerikalılaştırmalarını iddia etmektedir.

Bu çalışma için analiz edilecek altı film seçilmiştir: Bu filmler: *Alfie* (1966, yön. Lewis Gilbert), *Alfie* (2004, yön. Charles Shyer), *Bedazzled* (1967, yön. Stanley Donen), *Bedazzled* (2000, yön. Harold Ramis), *The Ladykillers* (1955, yön. Alexander Mackendrick), *The Ladykillers* (2004, yön. Ethan and Joel Coen). Bu çalışma Amerikan yenidenyapımların anlatı öğelerini yenidenyapımları asıl versiyonlarıyla karşılaştırarak araştırmaktadır. Bu anlatı öğeleri şunlardır: Amerikanlaştırma, sahne, karakterler, metinlerarasılık, dönüm noktaları ve değişimlerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yenidenyapım, Amerikan sineması, film, anlatı

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INTRODUCTION

Cinema in the 21st century offers varieties, and especially American cinema, Hollywood, is a production machine. Interesting enough, Hollywood needs the previous stories to take and make a new one, which is called as the remake. It is important to know the difference between an adaptation and a remake. According to the explanation in *A Dictionary of Film Studies* an adaptation is “a pre-existing work, often literary or theatrical, that has been made into a film” (5) whereas in the same book a remake is explained as “a new version of an earlier film” (348). Hence, while the adaptation is used for the change in the means of conveying the story, the remake puts emphasis on the fact that there is a pre-existing film and it is used to make a new one. This study is about American remakes and their relations with the predecessors, the original British versions. The films that I analyze in this thesis are: *Alfie* (1966, dir. Lewis Gilbert), *Alfie* (2004, dir. Charles Shyer), *Bedazzled* (1967, dir. Stanley Donen), *Bedazzled* (2000, dir. Harold Ramis), *The Ladykillers* (1955, dir. Alexander Mackendrick), *The Ladykillers* (2004, dir. Ethan and Joel Coen).

Narrative is the main element in this study in order to analyze the remake versions and their relations with the original ones. Paul Cobley states, “... narrative does not reveal universality; rather it has been instrumental in the promotion of difference, helping to preserve some memories and not others, and helping to bind some people into a given community and not others” (38-39). Upon the views of Cobley, narrative of the remake version differs from the original one although the story is the same. Taking the story from the original, American remake version puts American elements into the narrative giving the priority to sell the culture especially

with pretending that this is for the world, not just for the Americans themselves. The bound community is the community of marketing for the culture.

Story and plot are elements of the narrative and they are important in the analysis of the remake versions. Paul Cobley states, "... 'story' consists of all the events which are to be depicted. 'Plot' is the chain of causation which dictates that these events are somehow linked and that they are therefore to be depicted in relation to each other" (5). Taking three films with their remake versions I analyze the story with its differences and plot in order to see if there are any differentiations in the line of the events. It is important to mention the difference between story and plot because of the fact that there may be a possibility that the stories of both versions of the film could be the same whereas the plot, that is to say the order of the events, could be different. Seymour Chatman defines plot as "The events of a story are traditionally said to constitute an array called 'plot'" (43). Hence, not just the story gains an importance but also the order of the elements in the story becomes a prominent issue. That is the reason why it is important to analyze both elements for the narrative in general.

Characters and setting are part of the story. Syd Field states "The way you drive your story forward is by focusing on the *actions* of the *character* and the dramatic choices he or she makes during the narrative story line" (46-47). It is important to compare the characters in both versions of the film for the narrative analysis. Whether the main characters and also the supporting ones have the same actions, thoughts, and appearances is important because of the fact that this leads them to dramatic choices, which can be highly affective on the story itself. Setting is also important because it may have an effect on the flow of the story.

Due to the fact that there are two films compared in each chapter, one original and one remake, intertextuality gains in importance. Peter Verstraten describes, "... we always watch intertextually ... Intertextuality is a way of reading or viewing. It does not adhere to a prescribed trajectory and has an impromptu nature. The reason is that the viewer is not a part of the representation but its addressee" (26). Although there is always a possibility for the audience to link the story to the previous ones deployed in memory, the remake version of any film has a previously told story, a resource, so it is inevitable that there is a link in the memories of the audience. In addition, the remake one itself could directly give the reference to the original one, the predecessor.

Turning points, or plot points, are important for characters and the story. Syd Field explains, "A Plot Point is defined as *any incident, episode, or event that hooks into the action and spins it around in another direction*" (26). Although this is mainly about screenwriting, it is important for the narrative analysis in this study because of the fact that if the plot point differs in the remake version, the story changes and goes to another direction. Then, transformation is important.

Transformation has a link with both the plot point and ending of the film. Mark Axelrod states,

Regardless of when or where the blunder or chance occurs, the *call to adventure* initiates what is the onset of a character transformation that the hero-protagonist undertakes as a result of events (obstacles, predicaments, dilemmas, conflicts) throughout the course of the film, but that are clearly initiated in the first act (21-22).

It is possible that in the remake version there may occur a transformation of the character or not and also there is a possibility of transformation in different ways, and all of these could have an effect on the story itself, regarding the comparison of the original and the remake versions.

There are also minor issues that I examine under the major parts that I have explained so far. The first one is representation. Representation is important especially regarding the fact that the original version is British whereas the remake version is American. Hence, comparing how characters are represented, as well as the setting, is important for the narrative analysis. David Bordwell states, “We can treat narrative as a *representation*, considering the story’s world, its portrayal of some reality, or its broader meanings” (xi). Hence, it is crucial to take the narratives of the American remakes as representations of the original British films and to analyze the changes in the narratives. The other one is culture due to the fact that there is British culture in the original and American culture in the remake. Paul Cobley states, “Epics, romances and novels remained representations of human action; they continued to play out the definitions of identities; and they made narratives crucial vehicles and investment points for cultures which sought to know their past and present” (86). Comparing American and British narratives brings the point of view about the ideas, which are conveyed through the narratives, about the culture, especially the American culture in this sense.

1.1 METHODOLOGY

The main question that I intend to answer throughout the study is “What changes in the American remake of the British films?” The main question becomes the methodology throughout the study. I use narrative analysis and narrative elements to compare and discuss of the two versions of the film: the original and the remake. David Bordwell states, “We can, in short, study narrative as a *process*, the activity of selecting, arranging, and rendering story material in order to achieve specific time-bound effects on a perceiver. I shall call this process *narration*” (xi). In

order to analyze what is selected to be told in the narrative, I separate the narrative into its elements. These narrative elements are story, plot, setting, characters, intertextuality, turning points and transformations. The minor questions related with these narrative elements are: Is there any change in story and plot in the remake version comparing with the original one? If so, how does the change occur and what are the reasons of the change? How is the setting in the remake version? Are there any significant changes via setting? Are there any differences in both major and supporting characters? If so, how does the change occur and what is the purpose of the change? Is there any intertextuality in the remake version to refer to the original one? If so, what is the reason of it? Do turning points in the remake version differ regarding the original version of the film? What are the transformations of the characters in the remake version? Are there any similarities or differences in transformation comparing the original version of the film?

I especially choose these films because of the fact that the original versions are British whereas the remakes of them are American, and these remakes are made in the 21st century though the originals belong to the 20th century and last of all, all remake versions have the same title as their originals. There are three chapters, each of which analyzes two films. I designate five subheadings, which are also part of the methodology. The first part in each chapter is for analyzing the narrative elements of the remake version in general, especially searching for the specific issues about America, America's being a cultural product to be sold, the American Dream and American people.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is about the comparison of the narratives of the American remake and original British versions of the film as I previously mentioned. That is why, I benefit from resources on narratology and narrative. It is crucial to understand the narrative in general and then the film narrative and its elements that I mention in the Methodology. In addition, I use resources on screenwriting and screenwriting theory because of the fact that these two are important regarding the narrative elements. There are not studies about these films regarding the narrative analysis comparing the original and the remake version. Although I have read about the adaptation studies including the remakes, these are not the main theme of the study.

1.3 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

This study consists of three chapters and within each chapter there is an analysis of a film and its remake version. The first chapter *Alfie* is about the change in narrative in the American remake version of the original British film *Alfie*. There are five subsections America as a Cultural Product, Setting, Characters, Intertextuality and Turning Points and Transformations. In America as a Cultural Product, I discuss how the American remake version of the film takes the original story and adds elements to the narrative in order to make it Americanized. This Americanization of the narrative puts America into the narrative as a cultural product to sell to the world. In the Setting section, I examine the important issues in narrative of the remake version related with the setting and I analyze how setting becomes an important part both to sell America and show the main character's state of mind. In the Characters section, I compare the characters in the original version with the

remake one and analyze the differences and their effect on the narrative. In the section on Intertextuality, I find the references to the original film in the remake version and I analyze the reason behind it. In the last section, the Turning Points and Transformations, I compare the important turning points of the original and remake versions with the transformation of the characters if there is any.

The second chapter *Bedazzled* consists of five sections as Americanization, Setting, Characters, Intertextuality and Turning Points and Transformations. The Americanization section deals with the American elements in the narrative of the remake version. In the Setting section, I compare the settings of both versions of the films and the contribution of the setting to the narrative and how the change affects the narrative in the remake version. In the Characters section, I discuss the similarities and differences of the characters in both versions of the film. In the section of the Intertextuality, I analyze the references to the original film and give the reasons. In the Turning Points and Transformations section, I compare the turning points of both films and transformations of the characters.

The third chapter *The Ladykillers* has five sections; Americanization, Setting, Characters, Intertextuality and Turning Points and Transformations. In the section of Americanization, I analyze the remake version with its American elements regarding the narrative. In Setting, I discuss the differences in terms of the original version of the film. In Characters, I compare the main and supporting characters in both versions of the films and the Americanization of the characters in the remake version. In Intertextuality, I analyze the references in the remake version to the original one. In the section Turning Points and Transformations, I discuss turning points and transformations in both versions of the film.

CHAPTER I

***ALFIE*: The Original and The Remake**

“Explain to me what everyone sees in that Eurotrash?” – Alfie (2004)

1.1 Introduction

Alfie is originally a British film directed by Lewis Gilbert and it was made in 1966 and is an adaptation of a novel and play with the same title by Bill Naughton. The remake version holds the same title as *Alfie* and it is an American film that is directed by Charles Shyer and made in 2004. These films have common features as well as differences. First of all, what is the difference between these two films regarding the narrative? Secondly, what is the purpose of the differences that take place in the remake version? To begin with, the story and the plot are the same. Alfie is a man who is promiscuous and has relationships with women based on sexual life rather than getting involved emotionally. The film is about the experiences of Alfie with the women and how he is kind of surprised at the end by the betrayal, although he has been a winner all the time. The important thing is how the issue of advertising America is injected into the very same story and the plot regarding the narrative structure of the remake comparing with the original British one. Alfie the remake serves to advertise and sell the United States in general especially with its opportunities of big city life. The setting, characters, turning points and transformations are Americanized, which is the main point regarding the change in narrative style. Narrative has been used to store information about identities and as a foundation for cultures; but, in doing this, it has been selective, leaving some details

out of the formulation of a culture in favour of others (Cobley: 216). Hence, comparing the narratives of both versions I intend to show how American culture and identity is embedded in the remake version; to put in another way, how narrative elements are used in a selective way to convey Americanization.

1.2 America as a Cultural Product

The introduction of the story is an important part to begin with in the analysis of the film. In the very beginning it gives us some directions to take for the rest. All stories begin with an image, which instantly introduces us to the principle theme of the script. It is like a gateway to the story. At the same time, this gateway opens the way into the space and time of the story (Kallas: 67). At the beginning of the remake version, we are invited to Alfie's bedroom, which is a gateway for the audience to enter into the story. It is an invitation due to the fact that the character Alfie directly starts a conversation with us, the audience, as soon as he wakes up. In the meantime Alfie is waking up, our eyes wander around the room and the objects in it piece by piece. Here is the very first step to the introduction to advertising America, in other words, objectifying America as an advertising product culturally and it is the time to smell Americanization. Popular films often initiate or continue an endless chain of other cultural products (Wasko: 4). Regarding famous Jude Law starring as a main character Alfie, this is a kind of popular Hollywood film and the film is readily offering cultural products. Although Alfie is a British man which it is understood both by his accent and his dialogue afterwards, he has American cultural products in his room. First of all, a poster of the film *Let's Get Lost* which is a documentary film about the jazz trumpeter Chet Baker. Then, Superman figurine is seen. These things

are especially focused on in order to present the United States with its cultural artifacts.

When he goes out of his flat, the streets of New York become a cultural product. They are alluring both for Alfie and for the audience especially regarding the fact that how the weather is sunny and shiny and how all the people passing by are happy or at least content with their situation. Alfie says, “Now, back home [meaning England], you are always hearing tales about some bloke migrating to the States and winding up with buckets of money.” This is the advertisement of America with giving the message of one can be rich in the world of opportunities. Not only he mentions about the American Dream but also there is a billboard that has “Pursue” written on it, inferring to pursue your dreams in America (See 1.1). Then he continues, “So not long ago, I packed up my bucket and headed West. Now, I must admit, I had a second motive. I’d always been told that the most beautiful women in the world resided in Manhattan. And when it comes to the shagging birds, it is all about one thing: Location” (See 1.2). Here, scenes of New York back up his words and create a charming and alluring scene that is an irresistible product. In addition to that, women become products, too, to buy and use. He says, “God, I love this city. Just look around. I mean, every one of them, unique, special, like snowflakes.” Here, the center of America and the world at the same time presents diversity in “products” like women. So, for a foreigner it is only left to choose and have. The old and classic tale about the American Dream is the first motive of this Englishman in New York. It is not obvious what actual life of him was like at home. Regarding the fact that, although Alfie likes to have luxury in his life in a way especially when his clothes are the issue, he does not look to be rich and he even mentions about that saying “I have no desire to be the richest stiff in the cemetery.” Hence, what made him to

come to the States probably is not the American Dream itself although the film insists on the idea that it is. On the other hand, New York has become a product that is charming for the foreigner having the most beautiful women whom throw themselves at men. Not only New York is objectified, the women also become objects to go for and be in possession of. Here, men are the ultimate customers in the market of the States and New York is a shelf including women.



Picture 1.1 *Alfie* (2004) When Alfie drives on the streets of New York

Furthermore, Alfie has a tendency to see all the characters including himself as a product. In another scene, Alfie sees an old woman who is a prostitute and trying to get customers. Upon seeing that he mentions, “Sights like that make you realize we all have an expiration date and women do have a shorter shelf-life than men, don’t they?” This is an explicit remark about objectifying especially women as a product to be consumed especially in a specific time.



Picture 1.2 *Alfie* (2004) Scene from New York

Although *Alfie* is originally a sexist film, it is rather surprising to see its continuity in the 21st century especially the American remake. The reason why the character is British rather than American is to put stress upon the fact that Americans do not want to take this sexist blame on themselves, so it is easier to have a British scapegoat regarding the predecessors of the film. In the remake version Alfie says:

Here's my theory: For most women, if a guy's a good provider and generally a nice chap, six-pack abs really aren't a deal-breaker. On the flip side, however, even though the PC boyfriend sat next to you with his arms slung around your shoulder will deny it. And he will deny it. For us boys, it's all about F. B. B. Face, boobs, bum. I'm just being honest.

In his statement, women are seen as searching for a provider as it is in the old times and they do not care about the physical features whereas for men the upmost important thing is the physical appearance and nothing more. This opinion of him shows that he has a mind of the Alfie in the original film: old and shallow.

Furthermore, the American character Marlon is not sexist, he cares about women without seeing them as an object and he goes further enough to welcome the child of his best friend. So, in the remake the damage is done by the British, again, and American characters are ready to clean the damage, they are the silent heroes, implicit Supermen who rescue the women left behind as objects expired and are thrown out. So, here is the American spirit that Alfie does not have, although this makes him envy sometimes the happy view of others. Alfie only could be the Superman knick knack, which is plastic, not in flesh and blood, fantasy of the women while Marlon could be the real Superman regarding his characteristic virtue.

1.3 Setting

In this part, I discuss two ways of using the setting. The first one is the place that is a part of *mise-en-scène* and the second is the the tool to use the place as a

cultural selling: a counter. Setting is an important tool for branding the United States. Film is an expository medium: its narrative mode is ‘showing’ (Bal: 40). From this point of view, setting becomes an element of showing both the inner feelings of the character and selling America on the counter of the culture. As a British film, *Alfie* the original is set in 1960s London, England whereas as a Hollywood film *Alfie* the remake is set in 2000s New York, U.S.A. In the original version, London is not used for advertising the country or the city whereas the remake version of *Alfie* uses New York as a place for selling America. That is the reason the opening sequences of these films differ. While the original version begins in London streets at night, and there is not any inferences about the way of life and shiny and glamorous life of London, the remake version begins with the apartment of Alfie and then makes him to go out in order to show and tell the beauties of New York, which is not relevant with the story in general (See 1.3). *Alfie* the original begins on the street, in contrast *Alfie* the remake begins in the home of Alfie but Alfie as a character is a part of the setting in the latter version.



Picture 1.3 *Alfie* (2004) Scene from New York

In addition, feelings are settings throughout the remake version. Zero is the first place, a state of mind that Alfie has been in, after he says goodbye to Dorie and while thinking about whether go to his apartment alone with cold bed or go to Julie (See 1.4). This is the implication of how he originally has nothing, a huge zero in his

life, an emptiness while Julie offers a very nice welcoming. He mentions, “Do I drag myself home to a cold flat, empty fridge, or nip across town for a hot bath, warm body, breakfast in bed?” That is the reason why he turns back to his original state after he loses Julie and is betrayed by Liz.



Picture 1.4 *Alfie* (2004) When Alfie decides not to go home

Desire has become a setting in the film. It is actually written on a billboard that is placed on a restaurant, where Alfie witnesses the birthday party of Max out of the window (See 1.5). He watches Julie and Max and their peaceful and happy moments, it is actual a desirable scene for him like a painting. That is why, rather than the restaurant a feeling, desire, has become a place.



Picture 1.5 *Alfie* (2004) The billboard upon the restaurant where Alfie sees Julie

Wish becomes another setting when Alfie goes home after the penis biopsy. His wish is being healthy again. His state of mind becomes a setting. Another billboarded state of mind of Alfie that has become a setting is Search (See 1.6 and 1.7). This happens when Alfie waits for Lonette's abortion of their baby. At this time, he mentions about his regrets and he actually searches for the answer whether this is the way that is to be done.



Picture 1.6 *Alfie* (2004) Alfie goes home after the penis biopsy

As I previously mentioned, there is a poster in Alfie's room and the poster belongs to the documentary film *Let's Get Lost*. It is not a billboard but a poster that represents his state of mind after he loses Julie. Lost is focused on as a word while he says, "Understand, it is not about replacing Julie. I just wanna get back to the simple life: Women who mean nothing to me." Actually, Alfie is lost in here and tries to consolidate himself with other women in order to forget about Julie.



Picture 1.7 *Alfie* (2004) When Alfie waits Lonette outside of the clinic

1.4 Characters

First of all, I would like to compare the main characters Alfies. Throughout this chapter, I discuss the original Alfie as Alfie the original whereas the remake Alfie as Alfie the remake. Both characters have common points. They are womanizers, opportunists, avoid attachments to other people, against marriage, likes luxury and aim to gain more in order to reach it, take whatever they want, hate drama, see women as objects, selfish and self-righteous but not bad intentioned. They are both blonde, slim and British. They are both drivers in a car hire firm. On the other hand, there are differences. Alfie the original does not show enough value to his friends whereas for Alfie the remake his friends have the utmost importance even if he has done wrong to them. Alfie the original is unapologetic whereas Alfie the remake is more apologetic, regretful, emotional and takes lessons from his mistakes. When Alfie the remake loses all the people around him, he encounters Dorie, whom he left previously, on the street. He says to her, “You know what I want to explain ... What happened to me is ... I don’t know. When it gets too ... Not close but something like that I start to feel ... Not stifled, not trapped but something like that ... I am sorry,” which does not take place in Alfie the original. In addition, Alfie the remake runs

into Julie in a cafe and he says to her, “I am sorry about what happened between us. And I am sorry how it all ended up. It wasn’t good. I felt bad about not seeing Max and about not seeing you.” Comparing with the original version, this is so un-Alfie like, putting his feelings into words and saying them to the face.

The confusing part in Alfie the remake is he sees himself as a Superman, a helper, a relationship rescuer especially in the case of Lonette and Marlon. He admits that he never had an intention to have sex with Lonette and adds, “If this will help her get past her anger towards Marlon, I owe it to both of them as a friend, right? To do whatever I can to help.” Even though he is well aware of lying to himself, Lonette’s make up with Marlon on the same night makes Alfie support his previous ideas. In addition, calendar words define the emotions of Alfie. The day after he could not enter to the birthday party of Max and becomes sad the first time, the calendar word is “resilience” and the explanation is “the ability to readily recover after disappointment or loss.” He always see himself as a person heals quickly when it comes to the emotions but this does not go beyond lying to himself. However, at least he finds a way to show his weaker side whereas this does not happen in the Alfie the original.

As a narrative style, both Alfies always talk to us, the audience, and tell their feelings and opinions about women and relationships. In the remake version Alfie says:

You’re lucky, you know. I rarely allow anyone into my flat. I know, I know, I know. Humble digs. Not exactly what you’d call a panty peeler. Do you know what I mean? But it suits me just fine. To be honest, I rarely spend a night in my own bed anyway.

This is a direct speech to the audience and both Alfies do not just talk with us when they are alone, they also talk about their thoughts even if they are with the other characters, which is surprising that they cannot hear the speech. Hence, the audience

takes the role of being silent, non-judgemental bestfriend due to the fact that the audience cannot reply. But when it comes to the moment for Alfie the remake to feel the pain of a loss, that is Julie and Max, he does not prefer to tell the audience openly, rather he skips the part with choosing the right calendar word by chance. At the time he thinks he has started to go back to the meaningless, one night stand relationships without any commitment and emotions, and he has become ineffective by his sickness, which is a kind of his body's reaction towards getting away from Desire, the place where he wants to be deep in his heart.

Although both Alfies reach the same conclusion, there is more awareness and self justification in thoughts of Alfie the remake. Here are the last words of Alfie the original:

When I look back on my little life and the birds I have known and think of all the things they have done for me and the little I have done for them, you would think that I had had the best of it all along the line. But what have you got out of it? I have got a bob or two, some decent clothes, a car, I have got my health back and I ain't attached. But I ain't got any piece of mind. And if you ain't got that, you ain't got nothing. I don't know it seems to me that if they ain't got you one way, they have got you another. So, what is the answer? That's what I keep asking myself. What is it all about?

There is a slight difference in the last words of Alfie the remake. Here is his speech:

I warned them all from the beginning. I always said something along the lines of. I must advise you, I am stamped with an invisible warning, I will not commit. I will never marry. Despite my best efforts, I am beginning to feel some small cracks in my faux finish. You know when I look back on my little life and all the women I have known I can't help but think about all that they have done for me and how little I have done for them. How they looked after me, cared for me, and I repaid them by never returning the favor. I used to think I had the best end of the deal. What have I got? Really. Some money in my pocket, some nice threads, fancy car at my disposal, and I am single. Unattached. Free as a bird. I don't depend on nobody. Nobody depends on me. My life is on my own. But I don't have piece of mind. And if you don't have that you have got nothing. So what is the answer? That's what I keep asking myself. What is it all about?

Alfie the original thinks at least he has done some little things to the women who have entered to his life whereas Alfie the original finally accepts the fact that the women in his life have made many things for him. Although both of them have reached to the same conclusion, Alfie the remake creates excuses about the damage he has done with stating how he has never given any promise about the continuity and attachment. This is just reassurance of his behaviors. These sentences show the closure the story from Alfies' sides. Many writers consciously choose an open ending, because they think it offers a stronger tie to real life experience – which does not seem to have much structure but seems instead like an endless strand of separate events without clear endings (Kallas: 140). Hence, the didactic endings of both films offer thoughts about the lives of Alfies after that but these are open endings at the same time because of the fact that we do not know whether they continue their lives same or with a change in their behaviors.

In another scene, when Alfie breaks up with Nikki he says, “Strange. But even when you know it has to end, when it finally does, you always get that inevitable thing: Have I done the right thing?” Here Alfie the remake is questioning the relationship whereas Alfie the original does not mention anything upon Annie’s leaving and he does not question himself. Then Alfie the remake admits, “I must admit I do miss the companionship. Nikki was a showstopper. But as me ugly old aunt Gladys used to say, ‘Looks aren’t everything’.” This is different because of the fact that Alfie starts to see the importance of inner beauty and character in a relationship whereas Alfie the original neither sees the inner beauty nor admits the missing of someone else.

Considering the supporting characters, there are differences between them. Gilda of Alfie the original and Julie of Alfie the remake stand for each other but they

are totally different characters. Alfie describes Gilda as not liberty-taken, “a stand-by”. Gilda provides food, shelter and her body to Alfie, she is like a housemaid but she does not require anything from Alfie. He is free to come and go as he wants. Gilda gets pregnant and gives birth to Malcolm and then marries Humphry. Julie is, on the contrary, more questioning, more passionate, naive but not in a pitiful situation like Gilda has been in and also she has a son called Max whom Alfie likes a lot. Julie makes her own decisions and is more independent than Gilda because Julie leaves Alfie and does not let him into her house after she has found the red lingerie of Dorie that Alfie left in the trash. Gilda asks Alfie whether he loves her and his answer is, “Well, shall we say I like you a lot.” This occurs between Julie and Alfie, too. Julie says “I love you” and Alfie just answers, “Thanks, babe” which makes her angry and show a negative reaction. The difference between Gilda and Julie is their reactions especially with dialogues. There is a dialogue between Gilda and Alfie after Malcolm’s birth.

- Alfie: You think I will spend my weekends dodging under wet nappies?
- Gilda: You won’t leave us, Alfie? Not now?
- Alfie: I will have to think about it.
- Gilda: Please! I won’t ever ask you for anything, not a farthing. But don’t leave us now.

In contrast to Gilda’s being content with everything about Alfie, Julie shows more reaction. She says, “You know, this is not Holiday-Inn, Alfie ... where were you tonight? Really? ... A little eyecontact, please, we have something here, or am I just a glorified booty call?” Here Julie is more aware than Gilda about what is really going on and she shows a resistance to Alfie however she loves her.

There are differences between Lily of Alfie the original and Lonette of Alfie the remake. The mutual point of Lily and Lonette is they have relationships with

Alfies' close friends and they are both pregnant from Alfies. Lily is a conservative woman and never had relationship other than her husband whereas Lonette is more independent than Lily regarding her relations with other men. In the original film, Alfie wants the abortion more and does not feel bad about it until he sees the remnants whereas in the remake version Alfie does not make Lonette to go for abortion and when she is at the center Alfie says, "But standing in the cold, I find myself having regrets. Thinking things like, here is another kid you will never get a chance to know." After she and Alfie have had sex, Lonette directly goes to Marlon to start a relationship again and she is ready to give the time to Marlon as he asked for previously. The sex has become a kind of awareness for her to realize the bad part of Alfie, which lacks emotions, and she prefers the American man who has been not just a partner for sexual life. Lonette is deeper than Lily as a character, we see her emotions and thoughts more. Lonette is stronger than Lily and she lies to Alfie about her abortion, she gives birth to Alfie's child but never mentions this to Alfie until he finds out by chance.

Annie of Alfie the original and Nikki of Alfie the remake are totally different characters who stand for each other. Annie is a kind of run-away girl and actually she is in love with someone else that we do not know about. Alfie gets her from Frank, takes her into his home but she has become a kind of housemaid. At the end, Annie leaves home due to Alfie's aggressive behavior. On the other hand, Nikki is a free woman who causes trouble with her extreme ways. In the end, Alfie breaks up with her. Annie has been more independent and courageous to leave Alfie whereas Nikki is more dependent on Alfie, which is the main reason for him to leave her.

While the three important women in the lives of both Alfies' have differences, the most important people in Alfies' lives, Liz and Ruby, stay the same. They are

both rich, older, independent, full of passion, courageous, self-confident women who end up cheating on Alfies with men younger than Alfies. When it comes to a strong woman appear in the life of Alfie the remake, he wants to prove himself as an equal because of inferiority complex. When he is at the luxurious apartment of Liz, she asks for what kind of a drink he wants. He answers, "I will have a spot of whiskey, please. Middleton Rare, if you've got it." Then he says to the audience, "I like dropping a fancy brand name in now and again, let her know she ain't the only one been around." The same scene happens in Alfie the original and he wants a beer with a trust to himself.

Other than Alfies' lovers there are differences between the other characters in both films. First of all, the concept of friendship changes from Alfie the original (Nat and Harry) and Alfie the remake (Marlon). Nat is the co-worker of Alfie and there is not much known about his personal life. Just after the abortion scene that makes Alfie upset, Alfie goes and tells him what happened and takes a loan of abortion money from him to give Lily. Harry shares the same room with Alfie in the hospital in the country. Harry cares about his wife Lily so much and Alfie visits him after in the country. On the other hand, Marlon is a real best friend of Alfie and they share everything with each other. They have a deeper relationship. Marlon is the opposite of Alfie. He cares about his lover that he breaks up with, he is aware of his mistakes in the relationship and he tries to make it up and start all over again with Lonette. In addition, he accepts the situation that has gone through between Lonette and Alfie, forgives her and accepts the child of Alfie as his own. This is a great example of how American man should behave in the 21st century while there have been the option of British Alfie, who is sexist and damages women emotionally. When Alfie loses him after what happened with Lonette, he feels guilty with longing for his bestfriend

ever. Second of all, there is Malcolm who is the real son of Alfie the original and Max who is the son of Julie in Alfie the remake. Both Malcolm and Max mean same with Alfies. They are the only people in their lives that they feel attachment.

1.5 Intertextuality

Intertextuality gives way to the interaction of the two Alfies. The remake version of the film takes the original as a reference. Why does a remake make a reference to the original? The remake version creates a kind of expectation for the audience about their knowledge of the original film. Intertextuality indicates that every visible filmic frame contains multiple concealed layers (Verstraten: 173). With a direct inference towards the original, the remake clearly puts the label of ‘this is the American version’. Furthermore, the British version is seen as an predecessor whereas the intertextuality takes place welcoming the American prodigy implicitly. First of all, Alfie the remake uses the same references of Alfie the original such as “bloke”, “blimey”, “it” referring to women. The intertextuality of these words is interesting enough regarding the fact that it is hard to encounter these kind of word usages in 21st century New York, though the main character is still British. In addition, the usage of “it” referring to women is unacceptable especially in the “center” of the world in this century. Alfie the remake first uses “it” referring to women when he is talking about Lonette’s dumping Malcolm in his own words “it dumped him”. The reason is Alfie has a tendency to see the superiority of dumping in hands of men and if a woman does this kind of a thing it is easier to depersonify her instead of a treatment using valid social language.

The reason why these are chosen to refer to the original is to show that this is not totally a new film, the film has an original version but although the main

character of the remake version quotes from the original one and although this is not fit into the remake version properly, this is an American product that gives credit to the original. This is a show off in order to put stress upon how important the remake or let me say that the American version is than the original version, British and probably lesser known one. The first time Alfie refers to a woman as “it” is when he tells how Lonette breaks up with Marlon. He says, “... it dumped him”. Because of the fact that Alfie is the man who leaves women, Lonette’s being strong and independent so far makes her a creature not described as “she”. She is not any usual woman character that Alfie has met so far. That is the reason he objectifies a woman from another perspective.

Also, same angles in shots are used to refer to the original. At the beginning when Alfie is introduced to the audience the written title appears in the same way (See 1.8). The second one is in the hospital scene when Alfie sees the funeral from the window of the hospital. This is where both Alfies think there is a possibility of death and they both realize the importance of living.



Picture 1.8 *Alfie* (1966), left, and *Alfie* (2004), right

The third one is when Alfie watches the happy family image of his previous lovers from a distance. In the original version Alfie encounters with Gilda and her family including Alfie’s son Malcolm and he secretly watches their happiness. In the

remake version Alfie intends to go to the birthday party of Max, the son of Julie, and when he sees the happy family portrait instead of entering to the restaurant he prefers to watch them out of the place. Last of all, when both Alfies introduce Gilda and Julie, both women wait for their lovers in front of the window in the same way (See 1.9).



Picture 1.9 Julie (*Alfie*: 2004) is on the left and Gilda (*Alfie*: 1966) is on the right

Secondly, the closing soundtrack of *Alfie* the original is the same in the opening soundtrack of *Alfie* the remake. The closing soundtrack in *Alfie* the original is about Alfie's last words, his deduction as "What is it all about" and putting this to the beginning of the remake version gives signals about the story, and probably will end with the same deduction. Last of all, in the credits at the end of *Alfie* the remake there is a picture of Michael Cane, who played Alfie in the original. Giving credit to the actor in the original is another show off the respect to the predecessors. This is not related with the narrative but the acting.

In addition, there is a reference to the film *Let's Get Lost* as I previously stated about. Although just the poster of it is seen at Alfie's room, *Alfie* the remake actually takes Chet Baker as a role model in a way. The documentary film is about the once famous jazz trumpeter Chet Baker and it is made when he was still alive. It includes conversation with his family, friends and co-workers as well as Baker himself. People around him mostly describe him as "junkie", "manipulator" and "James

Dean”. Baker’s girlfriend Diane Vavra says, “Chet cons people. He has an ability to illicit sympathy and it is all about big act ... You will never know when Chet is being sincere.” With the light of these clues about Baker, it is obvious that he is Alfie’s idol and alter ego in a way because of the fact that Baker lived a life without commitment to anybody, although he had married three times with children, he did not take any responsibilities for the others. Baker just lived for himself as Alfie has wanted to do. Alfie wants to be both Superman and Chet Baker at the same time.

1.6 Turning Points and Transformations

This part compares the turning points, which are the important elements in screenwriting, and transformations in characteristic features of Alfies due to their experiences that have effect on them in both versions of the film. The first turning point using the method based on the theory of mythological analysis developed by Campbell is called “crossing the threshold.” It is about the point in time when the hero finally begins his journey and steps into the special world of the story for the first time. The journey that is dedicated to the second act can begin (Kallas: 81). Turning points are important events that effect the character whereas transformation is the result of some of these events. “... almost every good screenplay demands that the character undergo some kind of alteration and come to some kind of revelation about the nature of reality and his or her reason for being” (Axelrod: 17). In the original Alfie birth of his son Malcolm is an important event that effects Alfie emotionally. Although he is against attachment to someone else, the birth of Malcolm makes him attached to him which he does not want to admit. He says:

Very soon, I find I am getting quite attached to him. Know what I mean? That is something I always guard against. Because sooner or later that is gonna bring you some pain. So if a bird ain’t got you one way, she has got you another.

Also, Alfie the remake has an attachment issue of Max, Julie's son. He mentions, "Now, lads, learn from my mistake. Never get involved with a single mom. See, they come with accessories, some of which can be unfortunately irresistible." In the original version Alfie buys a teddybear for his son Malcolm but after Gilda and Alfie start not to see each other any longer and Gilda's marriage with Humphrey, Alfie has not have any chance to give the gift to his son. It is the very first time that Alfie buys something for a person. Later, after the abortion of Lily, Alfie gives the teddybear to Lily for her youngest son. In the remake version, Alfie buys a teddybear for Max for his birthday and it has been the first time that Alfie thinks about someone and buys something as it is in the original version. Alfie does not have enough courage to enter into the restaurant to give the present after he sees the happy family portrait of Max, Julie and her boyfriend. Hence, the emotional devotion of both Alfies' cost them the emotional pain.

The second turning point is his illness. When he learns that there are shadows on his lungs mostly due to his loss of Gilda and Malcolm, he panics and faints. This ends up with the transformation because he says "I used to think money was everything. If you've got money, I used to say, you can have beautiful birds, handsome suits, a car of your own. But those things ain't a bit use without good health." Alfie the remake has erectile dysfunction as illness. This is rather a punishment for him due to the fact that it is highly related with his manhood and this problem causes rumors among the women around him. He says, "I used to think there was nothing worse than death. Then, from out of nowhere, the unthinkable." This situation openly makes Alfie to "thinking about God and death" and he makes health and business plans afterwards. Furthermore, learning about the illness makes both Alfies admit their emotional situation. Alfie the original reacts as shown below:

- Doctor: Have you been worrying about anything lately, Mr. Elkins?
- Alfie: Who, me? No, I'm not the worrying sort. (Turns to the audience) You know what? Gilda's only decided to marry with Humphrey geezer. (Then to the doctor) I keep thinking about this kid I used to know. I was friendly with his mother. Nothing special, just an ordinary girl. But I knew him well, the child. All I wanted was her to come back with little Malcolm, so we could spend our Sundays together. But she never come. Do you understand me?

In Alfie the remake this conversation is like this:

- Doctor: So have you been under any unusual emotional stress lately?
- Alfie: Stress? Emotional? Me? No, never. (Turns to the audience) Well, unless you count that recent chat I had with Julie. (flashback)
- Doctor: ... So, in short, we can be fairly certain your problem was simply stress-related.
- Alfie: Translation: Julie-related. Like I always say, if they don't get you one way, they will get you another.

Thirdly, Lily's abortion and remnants is another turning point. For the first time

he cries after what he has seen and tells his friend Nat:

All I was expecting to see was ... Come to think of it, I don't rightly know what I was expecting to see. Certainly not this perfectly formed being. I half expected it to cry out. It didn't, of course. It couldn't have done. It could never have had any life in it. Not a proper life of it's own. Still it must have had some life, of course. And ... as it lay there so quiet and so still. It quite touched me. And I started praying or something saying things like, 'God help me!,' and things like that. And then I starts to cry. Straight up. The tears were running down my face. All salty. Like I was a kid myself.

Upon that Nat asks, "Crying for him, you mean, Alf"? Alfie replies, "No, not for him. He was past of it. For my bleeding self"! In the remake version this situation is not the same because of the fact that Alfie by chance learns that Lonette actually did not have an abortion, she gives birth to the child in case of any probability that the child may belong to Marlon. However, the child has Alfie's features and Lonette prefers not to mention this to Alfie till he learns the truth by chance. Because of the fact that he loses his best friends he chooses the old man, Joe, to talk about his feelings.

- Alfie: And I don't remember being in the car, I just ... I was stopped. And I'm crying.
- Joe: Crying for the little one?
- Alfie: I don't know exactly. Maybe for him. Mostly, I think, for me. And Marlon.

There is a double transformation here both regarding Alfie as a character and difference than the Alfie the original. Here, Alfie the remake gives much more importance to the issue of friendship than Alfie the original. Alfie the original never thinks about Harry, the husband of Lily, and the unborn baby but just himself. However, Alfie the remake involves the feelings of Marlon and is sorry for his best friend.

In addition, Alfie the remake asks Lonette "Is there anything I can do?" after he sees his child for the first time. It is a transformation because normally Alfie does not ask or think to help people in that way.

Last of all, Ruby's cheating on Alfie the original and Liz's cheating on Alfie the remake are the last transformations of both characters. Alfie the original buys flowers for the first time for Ruby. When he goes to her apartment he finds out that there is a man inside the bedroom of Ruby. For the first time Alfie is seen devastated and he asks, "Why him? Better than me? What's he got that I haven't? ... What's he bleeding got?" and Ruby replies as him being younger than Alfie. This makes Alfie disappointed and he leaves the apartment with taking the flowers back, then he dumps them into the river. Alfie the remake goes to florist and arrange the flowers for Liz and this is the first time that Alfie does something for a lover. His fate is very same with the original version: be cheated. In contrast to the original version, the audience is not permitted to see the man in the bedroom of Liz (See 1.10). The motive of Liz is the same, his being younger than Alfie. With the same manner Alfie gets his flowers back and throws them into the ocean.



Picture 1.10 *Alfie* (1966) is on the left and *Alfie* (2004) is on the right

Overall, in *Alfie* the remake the very first turning point is his illness of erectile dysfunction. When he is waiting for his test results he says “I should think about making some changes” and even after he gets the test results as negative he reminds us “not forgetting my oath to change my life”. Lonette’s abortion is another turning point that makes him sad and regretful. This is related with losing the friendship of Lonette and Marlon knowing about his son. Last of all is the cheating of Liz. After that he runs into Dorie and apologizes.

1.7 Conclusion

The remake serves as an advertisement tool for the United States regarding the remake version of *Alfie*. The reason is *Alfie* is an old British film and *Alfie* is an attractive character to be used as a tool regarding the lifestyle. The events in a story are turned into a plot by its discourse, the modus of presentation (Chatman: 43). The cultural advertisement of the United States is not directly related with the story. It is embedded into the narrative with messages, objects and views of New York. On the other hand, due to the fact that the remake version is sexist as well as the original version, the blame is attributed to the British while making the American characters with dignity, strong regarding the characteristics and not sexist. Hence, American

characters have been glorified while the British becomes the scapegoat while he actually wants to be a Superman, who is a representation of American man, a hero who rescues the world. Setting becomes the issue of both cultural advertisement and Alfie's state of mind in the remake version. Characters have differences regarding the original one, there are stronger characters especially women who can make their own decisions without relying on Alfie no matter how they love him. Intertextuality takes place with an irony wrapped into the reference to predecessor of the film and this irony is about the degradation of Alfie in the remake version in front of the emotionally holy Americans. Last of all, the turning points and transformations give some credit to Alfie to show his resentment and beg for forgiveness.

CHAPTER II

BEDAZZLED: The Original and The Remake

“I would give anything to be myself again” – Bedazzled (1967)

2.1 Introduction

Bedazzled is actually a British film and it is directed by Stanley Donen in 1967. The American remake version having the same title is directed by Harold Ramis in 2000. The story and plot of the original version are used in the remake version with some changes and with an adaptation of America into the story. It is about a man unlucky and hopeless about love. He desperately goes for the call of the Devil: selling the soul in change of seven wishes in order to get the woman whom he is fall in love with. But the Devil ruins all the wishes and the main character becomes aware that his own struggle is much worthy than the readily given one, especially when it comes to the issue of love with cherishing one’s own personality. As O’Regan states, “It is in cinema’s nature to cross cultural borders ... to circulate across heterogeneous linguistic and social formations. This is an internationalism in production and in reception, in the making of films and in their consumption” (500) and analyzing these two films I intend to show that the remake version does not just cross cultural borders it also sells culture of America. So, what is the difference between the original and remake versions considering the narrative elements? In this chapter, I answer this question and show how American, that is to say, the remake version make the story Americanized as well as using a British woman as a Devil in order to show the cultural superiority over the forefathers regarding the narrative.

2.2 Americanization

In this part, I use Americanization as a concept to define some narrative elements that are used in the American remake version of the film as a tool to create American spirit in order to sell the culture and these elements originally exist in the original, that is to say, British version of the film, but they are not molded into the film as a selling culture. First of all, there is a change in location from London – setting of the original version- to San Francisco in the remake version. Considering what Wasko says, “Indeed, Hollywood ... can be considered one of the focal points of the culture industry ... and no longer as merely involved in the traditional production, distribution, and exhibition of movies” (4) San Francisco, which is among the favorite cities in the United States, becomes both setting and the marketing place to sell American culture. Initially, the city sells itself with its landmarks as Golden Gate Bridge and streets. All of these are used as welcoming images (See 2.1). Although the original version uses London as a setting, there is not an issue of using the city as neither an object nor a commodity that stands for an alluring invitation. On the other hand, the city, San Francisco is productized and becomes a charming background irrelevant to the story itself.



Picture 2.1 *Bedazzled* (2000) A view of Golden Gate Bridge

Another issue is Elliot wants a proof from the Devil for him to accept that she is a Devil herself. She wants him to wish something and Elliot says, “I wish I had a

BigMac and a large Coke’’. As it is widely known this product belongs to McDonalds, which is among the culture selling conductors of the United States, and the Coke having the large cultural share as hamburger, and they are used to create the feeling that these are homemade products as everybody knows, globally (See 2.2).



Picture 2.2 *Bedazzled* (2000) The Devil and Elliot are at McDonald's

2.3 Setting

Bedazzled the original is set in London, UK of 1960s whereas *Bedazzled* the remake is set in San Francisco, USA in 2000s. Stanley, who is the main character in the original film, works in a cafe called Whimpy's as a cook whereas Elliot, who is the main character in the remake version, works in a company called Synedyne.

There is a home scene of Stanley in the original film but there is not any home scene of Elliot in the remake version of the film. This part is important because of the fact that the home of Stanley reflects his miserable and hopeless situation whereas there is not any indication of the private life of Elliot, outside of the office. There is also the place of the Devil in both films and in the original version Devil's place is both his home and workplace that is a rendezvous club while in the remake version Devil's place is a bar called dv8. There is a church setting in both versions of the films. In the original, it is the place that the main character Stanley is introduced to us. This place is important, key place because of the fact that the Devil is in there and hears Stanley's prayers while watching him. The church is also used as a setting in the

remake version but not at the same style. After Elliot wants the deal off with the Devil, he goes to church to talk with God and he cannot hold a chance to do so. In the beginning of the remake version the world is a setting. The devil is scanning the world in order to find the soul to tempt and ends up in San Francisco.

2.4 Characters

According to the Field, “First, *define the dramatic need* of your character” (40). The dramatic need of both main characters is hope especially about the love. In the original film, Stanley is introvert, shy, diffident and hopeless person whom even cannot talk with the girl he has been loving through six years in the same workplace. His financial situation is at low, he has no family members, no relatives and no friends. He is a lonely and affectless person to the lives of the others around him. His naive and hopeless personality makes him an easy target for the Devil to deal with. Elliot in the remake version is a person that nobody wants to befriend with him. Unlike Stanley in the original film he tries to make friends at work with talking them, making jokes to them unfortunately everyone tries to run away from him because he is a kind of disturbing, clingy person. This is the main difference between Stanley and Elliot, but still the remake one cannot have conversation with the girl he loves in the workplace, in which they have been working for four years together with Alison, and in the original version Stanley has not had any conversation with Margaret for six years. Elliot is also an easy target for the Devil and while she has been searching for the new victim there are adjectives to define Elliot as “lovesick, desperate, oblivious, lonely and doormat” that makes him a good target. In addition to that, Stanley is naive too. In the original version, before meeting with the Devil Stanley prays at church as, “Please give me enough courage to speak to Margaret Spencer to

get to know her” whereas in the remake version Elliot says to himself, “Dear God, I would give anything to have that girl in my life” just after he talked with Alison and before he meets with the Devil because of the fact that Elliot has had enough courage to talk with her but cannot make it when it comes to have a relationship. So, the dramatic need of both characters is to have a relationship with the women that they have been in love with. Furthermore, Stanley has same physical features throughout the film whereas Elliot changes regarding physicality and nationality due to the fact that the American diversity is given with its stereotypical representations such as inarticulate, moron basketball player, famous rich and gay New Yorker writer, and historical figure like Abraham Lincoln (See 2.3).



Picture 2.3 *Bedazzled* (2000) Elliot's appearance changes in each wish

Another important character is the Devil. The main difference between the original and remake versions is in the original version the Devil is male whereas in the remake version the Devil is female. They both have become the best friends of both Stanley and Elliot and even developed intimate bonds with each other and that is given in the original one as the Devil says to Stanley, “Call me George” to indicate that they are close from now on. The Devil in the original version has a staff of seven deadly sins: Anger, Sloth, Pride, Envy, Gluttony, Lust and Greed in order to degrade the prohibitions of the Christianity whereas in the remake version the Devil does not have that kind of specific staff related with the religion because of the fact that mocking the Christianity is not the primary aim. The female Devil is sexy and British. Although she does not mention about her nationality, her accent and her being British actress (Liz Hurley) give her away and this situation is an attribution to the original version as well as putting the devilish blame on the British ironically. Choosing her as a female serves for creating the attraction for the audience as well as changing the concept of the devil as a male and also this has a connotation of women being evil themselves. That is the reason she does not have any specific name whereas in the original film the male Devil has a name as George Spiggott. This means the female Devil can be anyone, rather than a specific person, she represents any woman and regarding the fact that what Elliot has got into the troubles in order to have Alison, women are the very cause of the evil itself. The female Devil tries to convince Elliot with using her oozing sexuality. Here is different than the original one regarding using both physicality and words (See 2.4).

- The Devil: What if I told you that I had the cataclysmic power to give you anything and everything you have always dreamed of?
- Elliot: Who are you?
- The Devil: Promise not to tell anyone.
- Elliot: Okay.

- The Devil: (seducingly whispers into his ear) I am the Devil ... I am the Devil, Satan, Lucifer, Beelzebub, the Prince of Darkness. Well, the Princess of Darkness anyway. Here is my card.

As the scene and the dialogue above suggests, rather than using her devilish gifts of her, she uses her womanly “gift” of sexuality as regarded the devil attitudes to convince Elliot.



Picture 2.4 The female Devil is on the left (*Bedazzled*: 2000) and the male Devil is on the right (*Bedazzled*: 1967)

In addition, the aim of the Devils differ in each film. In the original version, the aim of the Devil is to be accepted by God again, after he collects hundred billion souls before God does. In the remake version, the Devil does not have the feeling to be accepted by God again, she only does the mission as God has given to her. Her aim is to show both evil and goodness are placed on the earth. Whereas in the original version the Devil just describes himself as “Prince of Darkness, Beelzebub, ... ,The Horned One, The Devil” and then he gives his card to Stanley. As a man, the Devil, is more trustable to his words whereas as a woman, the Devil, has to seduce Elliot with using her body and she uses more adorned words to convince him. After that, she insists to continue as shown below:

- The Devil: I want you to be happy, Elliot. You have such potential. All you need is a little push in the right direction.
- Elliot: I am happy.
- The Devil: Oh, please. You don't have to lie to me. I know every dark thought in your tiny little mind. I know that every night you go home to your horrible little apartment and you eat your little frozen dinner and you make your little bowl of popcorn and you watch TV and you can't keep your eyes open anymore. And then you crawl off to bed and wonder why you are alone and nobody likes you.
- Elliot: Not every night!
- The Devil: And you cry.
- Elliot: (ironically) Yeah, sure!
- The Devil: I know what is in your heart, Elliot. You could cry right now ... I am talking about reinvention. Taking control of your destiny. You wanna be liked? You wanna be loved? How about respected? How about feared?

First of all, she uses the weak parts of Elliot against him, especially telling him about his crying, which is a direct attack to his manhood that is attributed to women mainly and seen as a weakness when it comes to the men. In addition, she tries to take control of Elliot with selling the love, respect, fear and etc. which are the issues required to be achieved rather than being bought. After the Devil takes Elliot to her club Dv8 she still continues to convince Elliot that she is the Devil.

- The Devil: I can make the whole world love you.
- Elliot: Come on!
- The Devil: You still don't believe me, do you?
- Elliot: Of course not. First of all, you look nothing like the Devil.
- The Devil: (changing her appearance to a man) Oh, really? I suppose I could have gone this way (See 2.5).



Picture 2.5 *Bedazzled* (2000) The female Devil changes appearance

On the other hand, in the original version the dialogue between the Devil and Stanley is different. After Stanley is unsuccessful in committing suicide, the Devil enters into

his apartment and mocks him in the first place about the story of a million pounds that his grandfather inherited and spent all of it with women and drinking.

- Stanley: I am miserable. I've got boring job. No money. No prospect. I've no girlfriend. I can't get to know anyone and nobody wants to get to know me. And everything is hopeless ... Can't even manage to kill myself.
- The Devil: You know that million pounds I mentioned. I wasn't joking. I can give you that and more. Everything you have ever seen in the advertisements: Fast, white convertibles, blonde women ... If you have all that would you be any happier?

While Elliot tries to hide his pitiful situation from the Devil especially in order not to ruin his image as a "man" towards a woman whether she is the Devil or not, Stanley shares his miserable situation with the Devil from the beginning as if the Devil as "he" can have empathy. Another point is the female devil in the remake version acts like a woman, with her emotions which is a general supposition and stereotyping, and becomes emotional after Elliot gets angry with her about ruining his wishes.

- Elliot: I make wishes, you think up ways to ruin them.
- The Devil: I've ruined them? How can you say that? I'm not perfect, you know. Do you think I enjoy this? (watering eyes) I'm stuck in this horrible job for eternity. Everybody hates me. I can't sleep. And when I actually try to help someone, they turn on me like I'm supposed to be God or something. Well, for your information, my life is a living hell. I work hard, I try to look good for you. (cries)
- Elliot: You do look good. You, you look very good.
- The Devil: I just wanted you to like me.
- Elliot: Oh, come on! I do like you. It's just I'm feeling a little frustrated here.
- The Devil: Don't give up on me, Elliot. I'm not giving up on you. Nobody gets it totally right right away. You're doing really great ... I'm so sorry your wish didn't work out. Friends?
- Elliot: Sure. Listen I'm sorry if I said anything to upset you or make you feel bad. And I'm gonna try to be more sensitive next time.

Regarding the dialogue above, the relation between Elliot and the Devil turns out to be a dialogue between a man and his girlfriend, and her inferiority feelings towards God stems from the fact that God is a male in Christianity and the woman character cannot be like a man even if she is the Devil and she tries hard to be good. As Field suggests, "During this second act the main character encounters obstacle after

obstacle that keeps him/her from achieving his/her dramatic need, which is defined as *what the character wants to win, gain, get, or achieve during the course of the screenplay,*” (25) this is obvious in the devil’s ruining the wishes of the main characters in both versions of the film. On the other hand, there are wishes of both Stanley and Elliot. Stanley’s first wish is icelolly and Elliot’s is BigMac and a Coke. Second wish of Stanley is to be “an intellectual who can get his ideas across when he loves whereas Elliot’s second wish is to be “rich, powerful and married to Alison”. Stanley’s third wish is to be a multi-millionaire, married with Margaret and Margaret’s being physical. Stanley’s third wish is to be the emotionally most sensitive man in the world and Allison to love him. The fourth wish of Stanley is to be “young, sexy, dynamic and Margaret lusting after me,” so he becomes a popstar whereas Elliot’s wish is to be “big, strong, athletic and rich” so he becomes a professional basketball player. The fifth wish of Stanley is done by mistake. He wishes to be a fly on the wall in order to listen the conversation between Margaret and the police detective. The fifth wish of Stanley is to be “smart, articulate, witty, sophisticated, charming, great looking and Alison falls in love with me” with having a big penis. The sixth wish of Stanley is to have a simple life upon the suggestion of the Devil, in which he and Margaret are madly in love with each other and they live in a cottage with children. The sixth wish of Elliot is to be a president of the United States and he turns out to be Abraham Lincoln. The last wish of Stanley is to be “warm, loving, tender person, in love with each other forever, young, white and in perfectly heart” and he becomes a nun. The last wish of Elliot is “I wish that Alison has a happy life” which is so unique regarding the fact that for the first time he wants something for someone else and this does not occur in the original version, and that is why this wish has become a deal breaker and he gets rid of the Devil and becomes

free again. Also, he is rewarded for this wish by God, supposedly, he starts a relationship with Nicole who looks exactly like Allison whereas the selfishness of Stanley in the original version leaves no one for him other than his freedom, which is the biggest gift for him that he cherishes.

Thirdly, there is Margaret in the original version. She is waitress in the cafe that Stanley works and she is indifferent toward him and does not know about him till the detective interrogates her after finding Stanley's note that he has written for his suicide that does not actually take place. But, still, she helps the detective and wants to find supposedly his dead body rather than being inactive. There is Allison in the remake whom works in the same workplace with Elliot but does not know him until he introduces himself. There is not much known about her. Both Margaret and Allison do not have feelings towards Stanley and Elliot and both of them are rejected in the end even when they have enough courage to explain their feelings towards these women because of the fact that Alison states she is seeing someone and Margaret states that she has plans and maybe for another time.

God can be regarded as a character, too. In the remake version, there is a dialogue between the Devil and Elliot about God:

- The Devil: You can ask me anything you like, as long as you don't ask me if there's God. I get that one all the time. It drives me absolutely bonkers ...
Yes, there's a God.
- Elliot: Really? Well, what does he like?
- The Devil: You know, you'd think that meeting the Devil would be interesting enough, but no, all people want to know about is him. Like he is so bloody fascinating.
- Elliot: So, he is a man?
- The Devil: Yeah. Most men think they are God. This one just happens to be right.

On the contrary, there is more information about God in the original version due to the fact that the Devil's aim is more related with the God. Once Stanley asks, "Is he English, isn't he?" and the Devil answers, "Oh, yes, very upper class." In the remake

version the emphasis is on God's being a man, which stems from the stereotypical and sexist approach of the film towards women, on the other hand, in the original version the emphasis is on God's being British and belonging to the upper class, which is the indicator of high class British ego.

Last of all, there are colleagues of Elliot in the remake version who do not like Elliot and despite all of his naive efforts they try to avoid him because of the fact that they do not want to befriend him. Although they try to avoid him with not saying him about their gatherings, Elliot runs into them in the bar. This is the first time they become witnesses of his deep feelings about Alison as she enters into the place. As soon as they have found out that he have not had any conversation with her, one of them says, "You are pathetic." Upon that he goes to have a conversation with her and they laugh at him. All of their encouragement is about mocking him. That is the reason they have roles in Elliot's wishes especially in ruining them. In his second wish, when he turns out to be a Columbian drug lord, his friends turn their back against him with welcoming his enemies. In his third wish, when he becomes emotionally sensitive, his friends become bullies who takes Alison from him. In his fifth wish, when he turns out to be a rich, famous and successful writer, but turn out to be gay as the prize of the Devil, his lover is one of his actual friends. Last of all, in his sixth wish, when he turns out to be Abraham Lincoln, his friends are among the audience around him. In none of the wishes, are they useful and friendly (See 2.6).



Picture 2.6 *Bedazzled* (2000) Elliot's friends go bad in his wishes

At the end of the film, they also see the difference in Elliot's behavior towards them while they still try to mock about him. After his tough reaction, they are frightened in a way with a surprise and change their attitudes from mocking him to normal. On the contrary, in the original version of the film, Stanley does not have any friends or person with whom he has conversation with, his only friend turns out to be the Devil.

2.5 Intertextuality

Intertextuality may be taken as showing respect to the original film and this is obvious that the audience is expected to have the knowledge of the previous one. There is intertextuality in two scenes in the remake version. First of all, the Devil's introduction herself to Elliot in the remake version is the same with the original version. Both Devils give their cards at the end of their introduction. In the remake version she says "I am the Devil ... I am the Devil, Satan, Lucifer, Beelzebub, The Prince of Darkness, well, The Princess of Darkness anyway" and then she gives her card to Stanley whereas in the original version the Devil uses the prince of darkness,

beelzebub and the horned one the devil to describe himself before giving his card to Stanley.

Secondly, when Alison and Elliot are together at beach in his second wish and they are about to kiss each other, it is interrupted by two dogs that belong to a woman – the devil- and she calls the names of her dogs as “Dudley! Peter!”. Peter Cook and Dudley Moore are both the screenwriters and actors of the original *Bedazzled*. Then she says, “I am sorry. They are such little devils” with a reference to the predecessors. This reference is implicit because of the fact that even if the audience knows the original version of the film, it is not highly expected from them to know its creators and actors by heart especially regarding the fact that it is an old film.

2.6 Turning Points and Transformations

The first and mutual turning point in both films is Stanley and Elliot’s signing the contract after meeting with the Devil. This changes the lives of Stanley and Elliot with making them to enter different experiences and troubles.

Most theoreticians describe the first turning point, for the most part, as a moment of decision. The reaching or not reaching of the hero’s goal leads to the denouement of the drama at the end of the story. In order for the hero to pivot to the pursuit of the goal, he first has to make an important decision. This decision or action constitutes the first turning point, the one that signifies the transition from the exposition to the complications and describes the attempt by the hero to reach his objective goal (Kallas: 80).

Considering the views of Kallas, both Stanley and Elliot give their first decision of signing a contract with the Devil and these are the first turning points of both films and because of the fact that both characters’ cannot achieve what they have wished

for they are exposed to the complications and as a result they both realize the importance of their previous lives.

Second turning point is regret of Stanley of making a deal with the Devil with giving his soul in both films. The only difference is in the original version Stanley has regrets both before and after his last wish, whereas in the remake version Elliot before his last wish and he goes to church to talk with God. In addition, in the remake version Stanley uses his last wish not for himself but for Allison, he wishes her happiness after all. This is the thing that not existed in the original version.

Thirdly, in both versions of the film Stanley and Elliot go back to his old life even if the Devil tries to tempt him twice, he wants to pursue his own life without an intervention. This part is transformation. The fact that the character notices that his goal has been false and fulfills his need naturally presumes that the character changes over the course of the story in a way that improves his moral sense (Kallas: 48).

After all of those experiences that Stanley has gone through he learns to be satisfied with his life especially with taking his own chances. In both versions, Stanley and Elliot talk with the girls that they fall in love and this end up with the rejection. Only in the remake version, Elliot meets with Nicole who exactly looks like Allison and they have a relationship, which is a kind of the gift of God.

2.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the remake version of the film takes the main idea of the original story but uses different narrative elements in order to convey its message. American culture elements are used in the remake version for the sake of marketing and it is done especially via the setting and American way of life like Elliot's being a professional basketball player in NBA in one of his wishes, his becoming Abraham

Lincoln after his statement in his fifth wish, “I wanna do something great for mankind. I wanna help create a better world. I wanna go down in history for doing something really really important ... I wish I was the President of the U.S.” that is the big counter of America to sell itself as a superhero creating a better world and becoming a president is sufficient enough to save the world and the mankind, that is to say making America an equal to the world as if nothing else matters. In addition, one of the America’s important city San Francisco and American brand McDonald’s are used to sell the culture. Furthermore, British and male Devil in the original version is replaced by British and female Devil for temptation of the main character, which is a stereotypical and sexist attitude towards women. Furthermore, British Devil is an implicit reference to the predecessors of the film, the British and it also stems from the American ego as being the super power.

CHAPTER III

THE LADYKILLERS: The Original and The Remake

“So, who looks stupid now?” - *The Ladykillers* (1955)

3.1 Introduction

The Ladykillers is originally a British film directed by Alexander Mackendrick and was made in England in 1955. The American remake version is directed by Ethan and Joel Coen and it was made in 2004. The story and plot are the same in both versions of the film. The film is about a gang and its members who involve an old lady into their robbery plan, stealing the huge amount of money, and upon the lady's being a trouble, they plan to kill the lady but the fate saves her and it ends with the death of the gang members with leaving the huge sum of the money to the old woman. These films are different than the previous ones that I discussed in the previous chapters. The difference is in the remake version the issue of selling the culture of America is in very implicit ways rather than putting American products forward openly and selling the glamorous American city image with the American Dream. Instead, there are stereotypical black American images in the remake version. In this chapter, I compare and discuss the narrative style of both versions of the film by answering the question of “How does the narrative elements change in the remake version?” I answer this question by analyzing the subtheme of Americanization as well as putting stress upon the setting, characters, intertextuality and turning points and transformations.

3.2 Americanization

The Americanization is different in this chapter than the previous chapters because of the fact that there is not any explicit cultural products or a city to be productized throughout the remake version. Instead, there are American characters that show the diversity in America and there are stereotypical black American characters. That is the reason the Americanization of the characters is the issue of this part. Paul Cobley states, “Narrative is therefore also bound with the notion of large-scale identities such as nation” (38) and in the narrative of the remake version the notion of being American with virtues is given with the narrative especially with a character, Miss Munson, while the other characters are doomed to die due to the fact that they do not fit within the virtuous American character. The remake version Americanized all of the original characters, and in contrast to the previous films there is not any British character. At the beginning of the film, Mrs. Munson goes to the sheriff to complain about the neighbor’s son and hip-hop music that he listens to.

- Mrs. Munson: Sheriff, do you know what they call colored folks in them songs? Have you got any idea?
- Sheriff: No, ma’am. I don’t think...
- Mrs. Munson: Niggers! I don’t even want to say the word. Now, I won’t say it twice. I can tell you that. I say it one time in the course of swearin’ down my complaint ... 2000 years after Jesus! 30 years after Martin Luther King! The age of Montel! Is that where we at?

This is a criticism about the American culture from the eyes of a traditional and religious black woman. This is also selling American culture because of the fact that the problems of Black Americans become the problems of the whole world. Hip-hop music is widely spread not just in the United States but also around the world. It conveys the selling the culture in a different way than the other films that I have analyzed so far. With this character, there is an option for the audience to have empathy with the old lady in a way thinking about the corruption of the youth.

The “black problem” also takes place when Gawain is fired after his improper behavior at work. There is a conversation between him and his boss.

- Gawain: You can't fire me. I'll sue your ass.
- Boss: Sue me? For what?
- Gawain: For fuckin' punitive damages, man!
- Boss: Punitive damages.
- Gawain: Yeah! Punitive damages. You goddamn skippy! I see why you firin' me, Mr. Gudge. Yeah, it's simple and plain. You firin' me 'cause I'm black.
- Boss: MacSam, everybody on the custodial staff is black. Your replacement is gonna be black. His replacement, no doubt, will be black!
- Gawain: Well, the fuckin' judge is goin be black, muthafucka.

This dialogue also shows how stereotyped black Americans use the issue of racism in order to make them right and this is a clear criticism of it. Cobley says, “Memory embodied in narrative made a significant contribution to the formation and maintenance of the self-image of peoples” (38) and memory about the criminal black man takes place in the narrative. In addition, there are criminal black men who want to take the money from a doughnut shop that one of the characters, the General, owns in the remake version. This is a stereotypical reflection of the “black problem” and they are criminals with guns who want to get money without working (See 3.1).



Picture 3.1 Two men enter the Doughnut shop to steal the money

3.3 Setting

The setting of the original film takes place in a studio of England. It is set as London. The remake version of the film is set in a studio, too, as though in

Mississippi. Another setting is the houses of old women in both versions of the film. First of all, there are the houses of Louisa Wilberforce and Marva Munson. The house of Mrs. Wilberforce in the original film is an old and a kind of dilapidated house due to the fact that it is harmed by the bombings in the World War and it is close to the railway. The house of Mrs. Munson in the remake film is tidy and cared house that is close to the river. Railway and river are important places for both films because of the fact that they serve for getting rid of the dead bodies of the gang members. Second place is the police station. In the original version it is typical police station and in the remake version it is typical sheriff's office. The sheriff's office in the remake version is important for showing how the town does not have any criminal activities and is a peaceful place due to the scene of jail inside the office, in which there is spider web because it is not used for a long time.

3.4 Characters

In both versions of the film, there are five gang members and an old lady. But there are differences in characters in the remake version. First of all, an old lady in the original version is Louisa Wilberforce. Mrs. Wilberforce is an old British lady whose husband is dead long time ago, and she lives alone with her parrots that are left her from her husband. She lives in a neighborhood that everyone knows her, she is dutiful to her country and she is honest. There is not much background information about her. In the remake version, an old lady is Marva Munson. Mrs. Munson is a Black American who lives in Mississippi. Her husband is dead as Mrs. Wilberforce's is. She has no children and she lives in quite neighborhood in which she is known. One of the main differences is she is black and another one is she is religious. She attends church properly and she lives her life according to the religion. Her dead

husband was religious, too, as she mentions. Although the characteristic features of these two women are alike, there are differences in their reaction to the stolen money and gang members. Whereas Mrs. Wilberforce wants the gang to return the money even if she is found guilty with helping them to steal the money, Mrs. Munson thinks keeping the money as reasonable in the first place until she looks at her husband's painting and she says "No, I'm sorry it's wrong and don't you be leadin' me into temptation" and she suggests not only returning the money to the sheriff but also she wants them to visit the church for redemption. Mrs. Wilberforce has been careful about not disturbing the gentlemen who live in her house as sublet, while Mrs. Munson is strict about not smoking in her home and slaps Gawain into his face when he swears. In addition, Mrs. Wilberforce keeps the money for herself at the end whereas Mrs. Munson donates all of it to Bob Jones University for the sake of charity and for serving to the Christianity.

The head of the gang is Professor Marcus in the original version. There is not much knowledge about him. His first name is unknown and whether he is a professor or not is not obvious. If he is, in which expertise is unknown. He introduces himself to Mrs. Wilberforce as, "My name is Marcus, Professor Marcus ... Some friends and I have formed a small musical group." In another scene, upon Harry's mentioning him as doc for doctor he says, "Not doc this time Harry." It is either he previously referred to himself as a doctor in another crime or he tries to conceal his original identity. In the remake version the head of the gang is Goldthwait Dorr and there is a detailed introduction of himself to Mrs. Munson. He says, "Allow me to present myself, formally, Goldthwait Higginson Dorr, Ph.D." Then he continues to explain after she does not understand completely.

Ph. D. is a mark of academic attainment bestowed, in my case, in recognition of my mastery of the antique languages of Latin and Greek I

also hold a number of other advanced degrees, including the baccalaureate from a school in Paris, France, called the Sorbonne.

Mrs. Munson replies, “Sore. Bone. Well, that fits,” because of the fact that the Professor has been injured while trying to save her cat that climbed upon the tree and it is obvious that she still does not understand his remarks. When Mrs. Munson shows the house he continues, “I am currently on sabbatical from the institution where I teach, the University of Mississippi at Hattiesburg. I am taking a year off to indulge my passion ... for the music of the Renaissance.” Actually, it is not obvious if he tells the truth or he pretends to be a professor, at least, he reads poems of Edgar Allan Poe that makes the others think he is a professor. The Professor in the remake version uses the old lady’s faith in order to convince her not to turn them into the police. He makes speech to her.

Madam, we are not musicians of the late Renaissance. Nor of the early, nor mid period. We are, in fact, criminals. Desperate men, Mrs. Munson. We have tunneled into the nearby offices of the Bandit Queen gambling emperium and relieved it of its treasure. The Bandit Queen is a den of iniquity, a painted harlot luring people into sin by exciting the vice of greed with her promise of easy winnings. Oh, yes. Her gains are ill-gotten. But, I offer no excuses, save one. We have men each pledged one half of our share of the booty to a charitable institution. In compensation for the use of your home, we had planned to donate a full share to Bob Jones University, without burdening you with guilty knowledge by informing you of shame. But now you have wrested the information from me.

In this speech, he tries to use the good intentions of the old way especially with doing this in a way of seeking for redemption in terms of Christianity, he confesses his sins and he tries to cover up his criminal activity again with attributing the place, the casino, as a center of a sin. All of these do not take place in the original version due to the fact that there is not any indication of religion or religiousness as well as sinning.

The other gang members are different from each other. In the original version, there is Major Claude Courtney, Mr. Lawson, Harry Robinson and Louis Harvey. There is not much given about their personal lives and expertises. As far as it is understood, they are all British. On the other hand, in the remake version there is a background information for the gang members. They all have jobs other than the theft. There is Gawain who is black American young boy works in the casino as a cleaner. There is General who is Chienese and owns a doughnut shop. There is Garth Pancake who is white American and he is married with a woman called Mountain Girl. Last of all, there is Lump who is football player and stupid. Lump is always humiliated by the others. When the Professor introduces all members to each other he introduces Lump with using deragotary language that Lump is not aware of. He says:

... to look at Lump, you might wonder what specialized expertise could he possibly offer our merry little old band of miscreants. Well, gentlemen, in a project of such risks, it is imperative to enlist the services of a hooligan, a goon, an ape, a physical brute. Someone who will be our security, our battering ram, our blunt instrument.

In addition, when Lump and the Professor remained after the other gang members have died, there is a dialogue between them.

- Professor: It falls to you to finish the job. The comedy must end.
- Lump: You know, I've been doin' some thinkin', Professor. Maybe we should be goin' to church. Maybe she is right.
- Professor: Oh, dear, Lump. I feared those would be your words. Not that I don't appreciate you giving the matter the benefit of your thought, but recall, my dear boy, our respective functions in this enterprise I am a professor. The professor, as you yourself so often say. The thinker. Trained, in fact, in the arts of cognition. You, Lump are the goon, the hooligan, the dumb brute, whose actions must be directed by a higher intelligence.

Lump accepts all of these scoff because of the fact that he does not take them as an insult until the professor says, "You stupid boy, you very very extremely

stupid boy and Lump points the gun towards him saying “who looks stupid now?” Unfortunately, he fires the gun at himself and dies. This is irony within the irony because of the fact that Lump is such a stupid character that he just understands the word “stupid” as an insult while the Professor has said worse words to describe him. Lump becomes a stereotypical brainless, white trash character attributed to the white American youth.

When Pancake brings his wife Mountain Girl to the cafe that the gang gather and talk about their plan, Gawain shows reaction to the situation as “You brought your bitch to the Waffle Hut?” and upon his repetition the same sentence a couple of times Pancake gets angry and Gawain takes out his gun and points it at him. This is stereotyping Black Americans as criminals and ready to point a gun I previously mentioned in the Americanization section. In another scene, Pancake and Gawain have argument and Pancake tells his story about coming from Pennsylvania to Mississippi inside the group called as Freedom Riders.

- Pancake: The Freedom Riders, my fine young man, were a group of concerned liberals from upnorth, all working together, just like we are here. Involved citizens who came down here so that local black folk could have their civil liberties. So that people like you could have the vote.
- Gawain: You know what, man?
- Pancake: What, brother?
- Gawain: I don't vote. So fuck you.
- Pancake: You little fuckin' ingrate.

Pancake has conscience towards black people and he worked for them for their being a full citizen whereas Gawain as a stereotypical black American gives the message of every effort is useless if someone wants to make their condition better because “they” are not proper citizens even if you give them the right to be.

The death of the gang members in the remake version is given in details and with reasons whereas in the original version all members face death with the same motive. For example, Gawain is the first to draw the shortest straw. He cannot kill the old woman, and as a reason he says, “I can’t do it. She remind me of my mama.” Upon that he and Pancake have a fight and Pancake kills him with his own gun by mistake.

3.5 Intertextuality

There is not much intertextuality in the remake version of the film and there is just an implicit part that refers to the predecessor of the remake version. This differs from the other films that I have discussed so far because of the fact that in previous films there are conflicts in the American version with the British regarding superiority over the predecessors. But in this film, in the remake version there is not that kind of a struggle with the British. The intertextuality just serves as a reminder of the original. When the gang members decide to kill Mrs. Munson, they want to draw straws as it is the same in the original film. But the Professor says “I believe it is traditional in such circumstances to draw straws” referring to the original film (See 3.2). The portrait of the dead husband on the wall is placed in both versions of the film. In the remake version, the portrait changes faces according to the situations. For example, when there is an explosion in the roof cellar the face of the dead husband in the portrait changes to the surprised and the looks of him also prevents Mrs. Munson to accept to keep the money as the professor tries to convince her.



Picture 3.2 Drawing straws - *The Ladykillers* (1955), right, and *The Ladykillers* (2004), left

At the beginning of the original version, the coming of Professor Marcus into the city brings dark feelings with him like the weather becomes cloudy and rainy suddenly with a mood of creepiness, the background music changes, his shadow appears on the front door of Mrs. Wilberforce and her birds scream “help”. In the remake version, Professor’s coming to the town creates the same scary feeling like Mrs. Munson’s cat gets nervous, the candles inside the house go out, and the shadow of the Professor falls onto the front door of Mrs. Munson. The reason why this is regarded as intertextuality is the shot is used in the same way (See 3.3).



Picture 3.3 The Professor has arrived – *The Ladykillers* (1955), right, and *The Ladykillers* (2004), left

3.6 Turning Points and Transformations

In the original film, the turning point is when the gang members stole the money and packed up to leave the house all of Mr. Lawson's money spread around and Mrs. Wilberforce saw it. After that all of the incidents start to happen. In the remake version, Mrs. Munson goes to the cellar and sees all the money all of a sudden. Interestingly enough, none of these characters have a totally transformation in their characters for good. Just gang members are previously thieves but then they have tried to be a murderer but by chance they all end up dying.

Different than the films in the previous chapters, in this remake version there is one scene that in the order of the events it takes its place different than the original one. Syd Field says, "Every scene occurs at a specific *place* and at a specific *time*" (163). This is the animal rescue scene. In the original version, one of the parrots of Mrs. Wilberforce runs away in the room and she asks for help from the gang members who are supposedly practising music in the room. In this scene, she has already met the gang. On the other hand, in the remake version, Mrs. Munson's cat

goes out of the house when the Professor first shows up at the old lady's front door. This is the first time that they have met with each other to rent the room.

3.7 Conclusion

To sum up, the remake version of the film uses Americanization mostly as a criticism towards black Americans from the perspective of stereotyping them as criminal, under-educated youth whereas the old lady is virtuous but it is not related with her being black rather it is more related with her being a Christian and her religious lifestyle gives her virtue. I refer to it as Americanization because this issue is familiar for the audience outside of the United States and it is expected for “the others” to see and “realize” the black problem. This kind of Americanization differs from the Americanization I have discussed in previous chapter in that it is not about selling American culture and the American Dream. On the contrary, there is not any explicit marketing of culture.

In addition, there is not any British character depicted in the remake version in contrast to the previous films that I have analyzed so far. There are only implicit references in the film narrative to the original. Hence, there are not any implications of American superiority over the British. Instead, there is a creation of a totally American narrative out of British narrative in order to criticize the American people.

CONCLUSION

“What is it all about?” Alfie (2004)

It is obvious in these three American remakes that Hollywood puts an invisible signature of their being an American product especially onto the narrative. As I have put forward so far, the narrative is the key part in this study to compare and analyze the American remake versions of the original British films. Paul Cobley states, “Narrative is therefore not just a matter of paying attention to individual incidents on the time-line; it is most importantly about ‘expectation’ and ‘memory’: reading the end in the beginning and reading the beginning in the end” (19). Hence, American remakes both use the original narrative and American image and unite them as a memory to present.

The first argument is about Americanization in the remake versions. Janet Wasko states, “Thanks to technological developments, commercial motivations, and globalization trends, Hollywood has moved ... beyond the silver screen” (4). Both the narrative and America carry commercial motivations within in order to sell American culture and the American Dream and make the remake version global with offering a nice slice to the foreigners to taste and get addicted to it. The remake versions of *Alfie* and *Bedazzled* differ in the issue of Americanization then the remake version of *The Ladykillers*. *Alfie* and *Bedazzled* have mutual points. In the remake versions of both films, the main character is British although they are American films. The main character Alfie is not innocent and a hero after all, he uses women according to his pleasure and he tries hard not to have emotional bond with his lovers as well as his child. Because of the fact that Alfie is sexist and opportunist

as a character, he appears as British instead of American, so Americans do not take the blame on themselves and it is easier to create a British scapegoat. In *Bedazzled* the Devil as one of the main characters is British. It is ironic to make the Devil as British because the Devil tempts the other main character Elliot. Although Alfie mentions that he is British there is not any statement of the Devil, but her accent and originally her being a British actress makes this an implicit reference.

Another issue of Americanization is the setting in both films. *Alfie* is set in New York and *Bedazzled* is set in San Francisco, which are important cities of the United States. These settings have become a counter for selling the American culture and American Dream. These cities and their glamorous views becomes a means of selling the culture. On the other hand, there is not any British characters in *The Ladykillers*. Americanization is different in this film. There are American characters in all walks of life especially there are black American characters. There is self-criticism about black Americans and stereotypical representations of them. Paul Cobley states, "... representation in terms of the *re*-presenting the sequence, time and space, and the separation of the process of *re*-presentation into plot, story and narrative" (216). So, there is not just a representation of the American characters but also representation of the original British story from an American point of view. There is not any cultural selling via setting especially because of the fact that Mississippi is set rather than having shots from the original city. There is a mutual point in all three remake versions. This is there is church and issue of Christianity exist in all although there are not any depictions of it in the original versions except the original *Bedazzled*.

The second argument is intertextuality in the American remake versions. In all three films there are references to the predecessors, the original British films. These

are not explicit references, they are implicit and not understood clearly without a close look. This sometimes appears in an ironic way as it is in *Bedazzled*, the remake version as the names of two main actors' are given to the dogs in one scene.

The third argument is about characters' turning points and transformations. Christina Kallas states, "The character does not need to know that he has changed – the audience knows it and that suffices- he must, however, demonstrate this in some way" (48). Hence, these are not transformations that the main character is aware of, rather these are changes that have occurred at the end of the film and become obvious to the audience.

To sum up, these remakes are not just for re-telling the story but they are also for advertising America and its culture by implicitly bragging over the predecessors. Christina Kallas states, "We will see that different writers will create different final scenes, that is, different "messages," even if they tell the same story using the same characters" (141). The stories of the remakes are almost the same and the differentiation in these remake versions is turning the narrative of the British into the American one.

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