13 “New and Improved Subtitle Translation”
Representing Translation in Film Paratexts

Carol O’Sullivan (University of Bristol)

The purpose of this volume is to look at how languages and cultures are represented through audiovisual translation (AVT). Empirical, case-study-based research over recent decades has given us a lot of data on the kinds of transformative actions carried out on audiovisual texts by the operations of dubbing and subtitling, which are the principal modes of AVT. But a related question also needs to be addressed—namely, the way in which AVT is itself represented in the paratexts of films.

This may seem a slightly rarefied topic, when we already know that AVT shares in the invisibility problem of translation as a whole (Venuti 1995, 2008; Nornes 1999, 2007). But it is timely to look again at the visibility, or otherwise, of AVT. The United Kingdom, where I am based at time of writing, has recently seen a rise in visibility both in literary translation (Tonkin 2017: 8) and in subtitling, particularly on television (Frost 2011; Lawson 2016; Tate 2016). The DVD format, which revolutionised the consumption of AVT, turned 20 in 2017, in which time it has seen a substantial reduction in market share1 in favour of streaming and downloading. There has been a surge in interest in fan-produced and user-produced AVT. It is therefore a useful moment to consider how all of this has affected the profile of AVT.

I argue in this chapter that AVT enjoys certain forms of visibility in the paratexts of film that invite analysis and that speak to the ways in which those translations represent other languages and cultures. At the same time, these forms of visibility contend with other film-paratextual practices which tend to ignore or sideline AVT.

What Is the Film Paratext?

The concept of paratext was introduced by Genette in his 1982 work Palimpsestes (Genette 1997: 3) and developed in Seuils (literal meaning: thresholds; 1987). Genette’s concept is a book-based one which takes for granted the status of the book as a privileged cultural artefact. The paratext frames, and indeed sometimes substitutes for, our reading of a book; no book can exist without some kind of paratext. Genette draws a distinction between peritext, which is located “within the same volume” (Genette
1997: 4) and ‘epitext’, which is “located outside the book” (ibid.: 5). Peri-
texts may include titles, authors’ names, epigraphs, prefaces or postfaces,
chapter titles or notes and so on. Epitexts include letters, diaries, promo-
tional interviews, posters and external textual material which has in some
way a framing function.

Genette already foresaw an application of the concept of paratext to
film (Genette 1997: 407), but, as has been argued elsewhere, his distinc-
tion between peritext and epitext is problematic for film (Tybjerg 2004:
486; O’Sullivan 2011: 158–9). Subtitles are particularly difficult to clas-
sify in Genettian terms; while for many decades subtitles were physically
burned onto the print of the film whose dialogue they translated, today’s
viewer can choose between a selection of subtitles, or between subtitles and
no subtitles. The intertitles of silent film are similarly problematic in their
paratextual status; they were often shipped separately to the film; they are
often missing from surviving film prints and have to be reconstructed; they
are very often reworked in translation.

Genette’s concept of paratext is very author centred (Klecker 2015: 403)
and casts the author as the ultimate authority over their work. Genette’s
model is therefore much more concerned with understanding how authors
consider that their works should be read and understood than with un-
derstanding how books are promoted in the marketplace. Film, as Alberto
Pezzotta has observed (1989: 6), requires a more market-oriented view of
paratexts (as indeed does literature, but that is beyond the scope of this
chapter).

It has been asserted, in an excellent recent piece by Cornelia Klecker
(2015: 404), that the distinction between peritext and epitext “can be eas-
ily transferred” to film. I am not sure I agree. Undoubtedly, there are some
film paratexts which sit intuitively easily with Genette’s distinction, e.g. title
sequences as peritexts; posters and promotional interviews as epitexts.3 But
film does not share the stability of the book format. The home video revolu-
tion did, admittedly, create homologies between film and book by introduc-
ing the film that could be owned in an accessibly priced copy and exhibited
on easily available technologies—we talk about ‘owning’ a film as we own
a book—but compared to the centuries of continuity in the book format,
film formats have changed very rapidly over the decades. Projection of film
prints, with 35mm being the standard gauge, in the first half of the twenti-
eth century was followed in the second half by a choice between cinema or
television viewing. From early on, there were also ‘substandard’ home or
club viewing formats of 16mm, 8mm, Super 8 and so on. VHS tapes were
popularised in the first half of the 1980s. DVDs were introduced in 1997
and have already been partly superseded in home viewing by streaming and
downloading.

For this reason, our assumptions about what film paratext is (and indeed
about what film viewing is) are in part generational. My generation bought
and collected films; they were “available to rent or buy on video” from my
childhood. Pezzotta observes that with the coming of home video, “il film [. . .] acquista l’equivalente della copertina del libro—mentre prima era un oggetto anonimo e ingombrante, chiuso in scatoloni metallici” [“film [. . .] acquires the equivalent of the book cover—while before it was a clumsy anonymous object, shut away in metal cans”] (1989: 9).

Since film paratexts have been in a near-constant state of evolution through the history of the cinema, elements of the paratext may be peritextual in some exhibition contexts, or time periods, and epitextual in others. The Danish director Carl Theodor Dreyer wished to avoid including opening credits in several of his films, including La Passion de Jeanne d’Arc (1928), Vredens Dag (1943) and Ordet (1955) in order to promote greater immediacy of experience for viewers. As Casper Tybjerg (2004: 482) points out, however, during Vredens Dag’s first run in Denmark, audiences had access to the film’s cast and crew details both through a folder published by the cinema for the film’s launch and in the form of the usual ‘program booklet’, much like a theatre programme: “Dreyer himself could have been said to have decided to make this cast list [. . .] part of the epitext” (ibid.).

In recent years, subtitles have become more often epitextual than peritextual. For DVDs and Blu-rays, peritexts include language menus and cover art. Special features are both epitextual (part of the package) and peritextual (because optional): you can watch a film on DVD without ever watching them, and they may be present in some editions and not in others. Epitexts, which include reviews, advertising and promotional material, directors’ comments and trailers, may become peritextual when adopted for home viewing formats in the form of directors’ commentaries and bonus features.

I conclude, following Georg Stanitzek, that different media formats have different paratextual configurations. Stanitzek’s key distinction (2005: 38–40) is between film and television, but I would argue that all the different formats—films projected in their theatrical versions, films on VHS, films on DVD, films on streaming sites—are framed paratextually in different ways and invite different angles of analysis.

There are very good reasons for continuing to use the concept of paratext, while realizing that it has not only medium-specific properties but also period- and format-specific properties. In this chapter, I will be considering the visibility of translation in a number of different paratexual environments, all of which contribute, or have contributed to, film spectatorship and the representation (or non-representation) of translation in the film marketplace.

**Peritext and Translation**

We can most easily speak of the peritexts of film in the context of traditional theatrical exhibition, where the spectator is present in a cinema to see a film screened according to parameters determined by the distributor and the cinema management. This contrasts with more interactive environments, such
as viewing online, where the viewer can start, stop, rewind, etc., at will, or watching a DVD or Blu-ray, where the viewer navigates a series of menu options.

The main peritexts of translation in the context of theatrical exhibition are attributions of subtitling or dubbing authorship. Details of the dubbing were often found in the opening credits in the early decades of sound, but are now more likely to be found in the closing credits. Subtitling authorship attribution is very patchy, even within a single target market (O’Sullivan, forthcoming). In the early years of sound, it was more common for subtitlers to be named in the credits of a film, perhaps by analogy with (inter)title writers in the silent period, some of whom were stars in their own right. Up until at least the 1960s, subtitle credits were sometimes to be found in the opening credits of a film, either as a superimposed title or as part of a credit sequence which was localised into the target language. Now they are more often to be found, where they are included, at the end of films. Where they are available, they allow the audience at least to be aware of a ‘translating presence’ in the transmission of a film; where they are not present, they reinforce the overall invisibility of AVT.

A key factor facilitating the invisibility of AVT today is the fact that these translator credits in the cinema are not usually reinforced by other paratexts. By contrast, in the 1930s and 1940s, it was not uncommon for subtitlers’ names to appear in newspaper advertisements (Weidmann 2014); Mai Harris, the doyenne of British subtitling from the 1930s to the 1960s, is mentioned as author of the subtitles in several press reviews of her films. Herman G. Weinberg, the best-known subtitler in the United States in the same period, is frequently mentioned in reviews. Today, interviews with subtitlers are rare, and the interviews that do get published tend to be in relation to a subtitler’s professional practice in general, and the particular challenges of translation for subtitling, rather than as part of the promotion of a particular film. No ‘author function’ is conferred on the audiovisual translator.

Choose Your Own Translation

The field of translational paratexts is more complex when it comes to DVD or Blu-ray viewing. Perhaps the most immediately obvious peritextual site of translation is the DVD menu. DVD menu choices revolutionised the visibility of dubbing over subtitling; in theory at least, the DVD format offered up to 8 different dialogue tracks and up to 32 different subtitle tracks (O’Hagan 2007: 157). Although discs have sometimes offered a transfer of an already hard-subtitled film, with no more optionality than a ‘play’ command, such discs are in the minority. Almost all DVD menus offer at least intralingual or SDH subtitles for the film; most feature film DVDs offer language options as well. In dubbing territories, these usually include a choice between subtitled or dubbed options in the target language. DVD
makes these tracks available through an interface designed to allow users to set the terms on which they watch the film, within the parameters laid out by the architecture of the interface. The format often offers the possibility of viewing a film with a dubbed soundtrack and subtitles simultaneously. With Blu-ray presentation, technical advances are beginning to allow for viewers to reposition subtitles according to their preference (e.g. within or outside the frame) and even to resize the subtitles (Sanchez 2015: 143–144). After many decades when researchers and cinephiles relied on occasional, sometimes difficult-to-repeat theatrical viewings and rather impressionistic memories of films for their work, the DVD format was to revolutionise the study of AVT (Kayahara 2005).

At the same time as it was making it much easier to study AVT, the DVD format arguably gave rise to an over-dependence on DVD versions as the object of study for AVT researchers. I use the term ‘over-dependence’ not because valuable work has not been done on AVT through the study of DVDs—the format has been fundamental to the development of AVT studies—but because the DVD format, by its very nature, has a number of limitations in respect of its representation of translation. For instance, DVD menus tend to have a very monolingual idea of the source and target languages: these menus struggle with the multilingualism present in films or with meeting the language needs of a heterogeneous range of spectators. This means that the DVD’s representation of a film’s linguistic landscape and its translation is often quite reductive (O’Sullivan 2011).

Another problem for the (re)presentation of translation in home viewing formats is that disc menus may not frame the choice of translated versions as a choice about translation. Some DVDs do—e.g. with terms such as ‘language options’ or ‘language set-up’ in the case of English-language DVDs—but others may simply speak of a ‘set-up’ which turns translation into a technical category akin to the choice of a mono or stereo soundtrack.

Even more problematically, the provenance of translations on DVD and Blu-ray formats is seldom revealed; we rarely know who subtitled the film and in practice never know exactly when those translations were produced. This means that considering the question of retranslation, which is one of the key potential areas of visibility for translators, becomes methodologically difficult.

**Retranslation**

Retranslation is an intrinsic feature of AVT. This has not, to date, been much investigated in AVT studies, which have tended to think in terms of the dubbed and the subtitled version of a film. However, it is common for the same film to be subtitled more than once into a single language for theatrical exhibition, for DVD release, for television, on reissues of restored films). It is also not uncommon for films to be dubbed more than once into a single language (e.g. older Disney titles). The issue is now receiving
some well-overdue attention (e.g. Zanotti 2011, 2015; Di Giovanni 2016; Mereu Keating 2016). Dubbing, in particular, has been assumed by previous scholars to be something that only happens once; Zanotti’s work shows that at least in Italy, redubbing is becoming more frequent, with DVDs of films including *The Godfather* or *Grease* released with alternative dub options (Zanotti 2011: 152). More classic films, such as *Frankenstein* or *The Mummy*, have also been released in Italy in recent years with the option of watching the “doppiaggio d’epoca” (vintage dubbing). In this way, translation becomes part of the textual proliferation represented by the DVD, which has been called “le lieu où se déploient et se recomposent enfin les modes d’existence pluriels du film” (the site where the plural modes of existence of the film are deployed and reassembled) (Quaresima 2008: 141).

The introduction of DVD technology led not only to a huge increase in research into AVT but also a surge in translation itself. The requirement to produce electronic subtitle files for DVD release meant that many films which had been subtitled in the analogue era had to be resubtitled from scratch. DVD also provided new subtitles not only for older films but also for films that had had a theatrical release; the different screen size meant that subtitles needed at least to be reformatted for television viewing, and in practice, subtitles were often recommissioned. However, this labour of retranslation was all but invisible in the medium itself. Unlike in print literature, where retranslation is often marked by extensive paratextual apparatus and position statements by translators, in the new DVD medium, retranslation generally went unremarked.

The main exceptions are the ‘prestige’ publishers, such as Criterion, Masters of Cinema, BFI and Second Run, who have added value to their DVD and theatrical releases by offering new and improved subtitles, and have used these as a marketing gambit (cf. Martin 2017). These new, often restored editions of classic films frequently boast ‘new and improved subtitles’ or ‘newly translated English subtitles’ as one of the reasons for buying the film. The implication is that previous subtitles were of poor quality; resubtitling is always about improving. It was usual in the 1930s and 1940s to subtitle only the most relevant dialogue; many lines of dialogue were routinely unsubtitled. This practice continued into the 1950s and 1960s, but it is now accepted that films should be as fully subtitled as is practical. As a result, many ‘new improved’ subtitle versions are denser than previous versions. Occasionally, this is made explicit in a film’s paratext, as with the Criterion Collection release of Tarkovsky’s *Andrei Rublev* (1966) with “new English subtitles translating 40% more dialogue” as it says both on the DVD cover and on the website.

Other norms have also changed over the decades. Songs were not routinely subtitled in the early decades of sound, when their purpose, indeed, was often to make films internationally ‘sellable’ by reducing the proportion of spoken dialogue. It is now, however, known that songs can be thematically important in a film. One example is Jean Renoir’s *La grande illusion*
(1937), first released in the United States in 1938 and re-released several times as better film elements became available. This film has been subtitled into English several times, most recently by Lenny Borger for Rialto’s 1999 re-release. The film is set in a series of prisoner-of-war camps during the First World War. The film contains several songs. These include the song “Marguerite”, sung at the concert party and other fragments of songs sung by the music-hall star Carette, who plays one of the prisoners. They also include the song “Il était un petit navire” sung by Jean Gabin’s character, Lieutenant Maréchal, later in the film when he quarrels with his companion during their escape. The subtitles also include a number of plays on words and cultural references which were omitted in previous versions. The higher quality and increased nuance of the new subtitles was remarked on by a number of reviewers:

Besides looking so good, the restored “Grand Illusion” has had its subtitles overhauled too. The typography is less intrusive, colloquialisms are preserved and the tone is far more sophisticated. In the older version... Rauffenstein, who considers Boeldieu his equal, dismisses Maréchal’s and Rosenthal’s officer status as “A gift of the French Revolution.” With the new subtitle—“A charming legacy of the French Revolution.”—you can practically see him sniff.

(Anderson 1999)

The former subtitles were inadequate, most notably in the dialogue of the POW who is a former vaudevillian and who speaks in puns and snatches of song. Borger comes as close as is imaginable to rendering his chatter in English. And all of the dialogue seems cleaner, more pointed.

It is above all in this shift from peritextual to epitextual visibility that we can consider the label of ‘new and improved subtitles’ as effectively representing the work of AVT. It is not irrelevant that Borger, in addition to subtitling the film, received a prominent credit for this in the pressbook, which he also compiled. This combination of subtitles, subtitler credit and subtitler involvement in the film’s wider paratextual presentation allowed reviewers and commenters to engage with the new subtitles as a meaningful feature of the film. Borger has subtitled a number of films for Rialto, which has allowed a certain continuity in the visibility of translations with this distributor.

Subtitles must constantly contend with the cognitive environment of subtitling, which requires that subtitles be as unobtrusive as possible in order to work effectively as part of the multimodal text. As the distinguished subtitler Henri Béhar has commented, “If the subtitles aren’t invisible, you fail” (Rosenberg 2007). Creating a space for subtitle visibility can therefore be a mixed blessing. The only instance I am aware of in
which a film was released with two sets of subtitles by named subtitlers is
the Criterion Collection’s release of Akira Kurosawa’s 1957 film *Throne of Blood*, an adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. The disc offers two subtitle translations: one by Linda Hoaglund, who translated a number of other films for Criterion, and the other by film historian and Kurosawa expert Donald Richie. The sleeve notes also include translators’ notes by the two subtitlers. Hoaglund’s approach is avowedly creative and foreignising, characterised by archaisms, swear words and other marked linguistic choices. Richie’s subtitles are designed to be unobtrusive. The two have also both subtitled other films by Kurosawa, including *Seven Samurai*. Fan responses to Hoaglund’s subtitles for this film were negative (Martin 2017) to the point where subtitles were modified after the film’s re-release (ibid.: 28). In this case, we may say that the profile of translation was very effectively raised, revealing the importance of subtitles to the core fan base of Criterion collectors, to whom translation is far from a minor issue, and the significance of this niche market to the Criterion Collection, whose leaders clearly understand that in spite of their ambition for mass-market penetration, the particular demands of their most loyal customers must be met.

(Ibid.)

The Translational Paratexts of Cult Film

These fan discourses reveal a number of positions on translation, not all of which chime with recent moves towards more target-oriented approaches to translation. The perception of fidelity is still extremely important to fans, and fans’ knowledge of the films and their previous versions is likely to be extensive. When the Criterion Collection released a box set of Japanese films called *When Horror Came to Shochiku*, aimed at a ‘cult’ audience, some fans were dismayed that a particular earlier dubbed version, which was the version in which some fans had first encountered the film, was not included as a DVD extra (Egan 2017). Kate Egan argues convincingly that this represents a double standard in Criterion’s approach to AVT, which privileges subtitled releases over dubbed ones, which were traditionally considered less ‘authentic’ and less prestigious (ibid.: 77). Ironically, fans’ enthusiasm for particular early translations of films mirror film fans’ general commitment to the idea of the ‘original film’ in its most authentic version. In the case of fans who are invested in a particular approach to AVT, and in the teeth of distributors’ attempts to ‘improve’ audiovisual products, a certain nostalgia for ‘originality’ has simply been displaced from the original film to its translation.

The earlier example showed how the nature of the DVD or Blu-ray as a consumer product also has potential for raising the visibility of translation through viewer engagement. Another good example of an epitextual
controversy which raised the profile of AVT can be found with 2008 Swedish thriller *Let the Right One In*, directed by Thomas Alfredson. This was released in the United States by Magnet on DVD with a set of subtitles different to those which had accompanied the film on its US theatrical release. A post on the Icons of Fright website (RobG 2009) provided a close comparison of the two versions, and fans were unhappy with the differences. Later that month an announcement was made that the distribution label, Magnet, would be manufacturing the DVD with the theatrical subtitles from then on. Fan pressure had both acknowledged the differences between the two sets of subtitles and obliged the distributor to provide a preferred set. Interestingly, the suggestion from posted comparisons between the two sets of subtitles (ibid.) indicates that it was the more extensive, and therefore plausibly more faithful, theatrical subtitles which were preferred. In this case, the retranslation was far from an improvement.

As we can see, paratexts about subtitling are not restricted to high-status cultural products; there is a body of editions of (largely Asian) cult film whose paratexts engage with the specific history of ‘Hong Kong’ and anime subtitling. These paratexts have the potential to increase awareness of translation issues among audiences, though we must also ask how much individual editions, however interesting, can create real change in popular perceptions of AVT in an era of streaming and downloading where paratextual opportunities for making translation more visible are fewer and further between. I have written elsewhere (O’Sullivan 2013) about the phenomenon of cult film releases which deliberately incorporate obsolete or inadequate previous subtitled versions. The 2007 Discotek Region 1 DVD release of Herman Yau’s *Ebola Syndrome* (1996) offers conventional English subtitles and “crazy Hong Kong subtitles”, accessed via the usual DVD menu. Wilson Yip’s *Bio Zombie* (1998, released on Region 1 DVD by Tokyo Shock in 2000) also offers a choice of English subtitles, although it does not make a feature of this on the cover of the DVD. The viewer can choose: Cantonese original dialogue, an English dub, Cantonese dialogue with English subtitles or Cantonese dialogue with ‘Engrish’ subtitles. The ‘Engrish’ subtitles are the original subtitles for an earlier Mei Ah DVD release. These two subtitle tracks diverge very extensively (see O’Sullivan 2013).

The intense viewer engagement which characterises the fanbase for Asian, and particularly Japanese, films can also be illustrated by an interesting paratextual feature on the

2005 Region 1 Animeigo release of *Incident at Blood Pass*, also known as *Machibuse*, which offers ‘Japanese with full subtitles’ and ‘Japanese with limited subtitles’. One might think that this involved a choice between denser/more detailed and, more sparing, subtitles, but on enquiry to Animeigo, it transpired that the ‘limited subtitles’ were headnotes translating cultural references, plus titles for in-vision verbal material, without any dialogue titles. The full subtitles included all of the above, plus dialogue titles. I was informed by the company that they have many viewers with enough
Japanese to enjoy listening to the dialogue, but not necessarily enough Japanese to read Japanese script in inserts and captions easily, or catch cultural references. They therefore included this feature on this and other DVDs to cater for the specific language knowledge and cultural interests of their target audience. Here it is clear that the increased visibility of AVT in film paratexts is not only a source of audience awareness of AVT but also a result of it.

**Behind the Scenes**

Dubbing has greater appeal as an observed process than subtitling; this may be one reason why dubbing appears in films themselves, as part of the plot, more often than subtitling (e.g. Denys Arcand’s 1989 *Jesus of Montréal*). The process of dubbing in particular has considerable entertainment potential in itself. The DVD format, with its ceaseless search for new and improved extra features, offered an excellent opportunity for raising the visibility of dubbing. Paratexts for dubbing are aimed at both mainstream and more niche audiences. A successful and widely disseminated epitext of the 2013 Disney film *Frozen* was a video clip ‘mash’ of the song “Let It Go” sung in 25 of the 41-odd languages in which the film was localised.8 At the time of writing, the video has nearly 70 million views, suggesting that the appeal of this foregrounding of dubbing, and the different dubbing voices and languages, was very considerable.

Another example of a paratextual foregrounding of dubbing can be found in the “coulisses du doublage” (backstage at the dubbing studio) format. A good example can be found on the 2000 French Region 2 DVD edition of the Aardman Entertainment stop-motion animated feature *Chicken Run*. The DVD extra feature, “Les secrets du doublage des voix françaises”,9 running just under 27 minutes, presents the filming of the dubbed version starring Gérard Dépardieu, Josiane Balasko and Valérie Mercier. This includes extensive footage from the filming of the voice-over and interviews with the actors. Much of this kind of epitextual material has now moved online and can be found on sites such as Allociné.

**Conclusion**

We have observed so far that 1) certain appealing affective aspects of AVT are being used as secondary ways of marketing audiovisual artefacts, 2) paratextual discussions of AVT are in particular used to market to a cult/geek and to a high-culture market and 3) the discourse of ‘new and improved subtitles’ to some extent reflects a more complete representation of source text dialogue in subtitles.

Clearly, the paratexts of films offer considerable scope for foregrounding AVT, but there are several ways in which this paratextual space also works against the visibility of film translation:
1) Translation is anonymous. Where no attribution is made to subtitler, laboratory, dubbing director, scriptwriter or actors, the impression is reinforced that AVT functions as a mere conduit, as opposed to a mediation and reframing of the audiovisual text.

2) Sometimes, paratexts actually seek to conceal the translated text. This is notably the case with trailers, as B. Ruby Rich has shown in a 2004 article (Rich 2004).

3) It is sometimes the case that translational phenomena are made available in the paratext, but not seen in translational or linguistic terms. An example is the inclusion of vintage translated credit sequences on the 2016 BFI Region B Blu-ray of Jean-Luc Godard’s 1964 feature Bande à part. As Casper Tybjerg (2004) has shown, credit sequences are part of the work of translation of a film. The BFI Blu-ray labels the extra feature as “The Outsiders: Alternative Presentation of UK Theatrical Release Credits”, which tends to situate this translational feature as part of an alternative cut, rather than an alternative language version. The same happens with the 2015 BFI DVD re-release of Roberto Rossellini’s Journey to Italy. The DVD includes as a bonus feature, “the alternative, Italian cut” of Viaggio in Italia, running at 83 minutes (the English-language version runs 100 minutes). Here, effectively, the user is presented with the option of watching a version of the film in Italian, but it is not presented as ‘the Italian version’.

The conflation of textual variance and translation is very understandable in re-releases of classic films, because very often the translation coincides with a restoration. Thus Michael Atkinson (1999), reviewing the Rialto re-release of La grande illusion, enthuses, “This living, breathing, 61-year-old experience is running in the most pristine version this nation’s ever seen. (That includes new subtitles, which clarify the puns and uncloak the frank sexual references.)” It does, however, risk obscuring the breadth of the role of AVT in the international circulation of films. Films are not only dubbed or subtitled but also recut, shortened and censored; their credit sequences or insert shots may be reshot for another language market; they may have additional credits for a subtitler or the cast and crew of a dubbed version. There is thus a risk that current representations of AVT offer a relatively restricted picture of what these processes entail and how they are intrinsic to the work of filmmaking and distribution.

Where paratexts do engage with translation, they may have the potential to increase awareness of translation issues among audiences, but it is also necessary to acknowledge the extent to which the paratexts of film disguise and de-emphasise AVT. The current intense activity by fans and amateurs in the area of AVT may spur a more critical awareness of the modalities of translation in film and help with the overall task of film “to produce insights
into the cultures and languages represented”, as Marie-Noëlle Guillot puts it (2012: 479), by helping to raise awareness of the ways in which those representations are inflected through translation.

Notes

1 After years of declining DVD sales (Sherwin 2010, Wallenstein 2016), in 2017, streaming sales overtook DVD sales for the first time (Sweney 2017).
2 Cornelia Klecker makes the point that this was not the first use of the term ‘paratexte’ by Genette; he had used it in 1979 in Introduction à l’architexte, but was unhappy with his definition of it. We can therefore consider his use of it in Palimpsestes to be the first use of the term in the sense in which it is now known.
3 Pezzotta includes under the heading of paratextual elements of film: title, director’s name, opening and closing credits, dedications, distributors’ logo, place of projection (at the time he wrote his article, home video was only taking off), posters, press advertisements, trailers, television channels and programming contexts and press books.
4 There are a number of interesting examples of ‘cartons de doublage’ or dubbing credits at www.objectif-cinema.com/blog-doublage/index.php/Cartons-de-doublage.
5 The film’s webpage can be found here at time of writing: www.criterion.com/films/300-andrei-rublev.
6 I am grateful to Mr Borger for these and other materials relating to his translation of this film.
7 Extract from a review in the New Republic of 23 August 1999 by Stanley Kauffmann kindly provided by Lenny Borger.
8 At time of writing, the URL for the clip on YouTube is https://youtu.be/OC83NA5tAGE under the title “Disney’s Frozen—‘Let It Go’ Multi-Language Full Sequence”.
9 Available at time of writing at www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKNzAj2QiWc.

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